



VETTED

Trent Brunson

University of Texas at Austin Veteran Accelerated Management Program (2017-COHORT-1)



Motto: "Do it."

Age: 45

Hometown: Houston, TX

Rank: Lieutenant Colonel

Military Service:

1996 - 2017 US Air Force

EDUCATION:

- Wharton Business School–2017 Certificate, Business Foundations
- Syracuse University–2017 Certificate, Project/Program Management
- Argentina National Air War College–2016 Operations, Humanitarian Aid & Disaster Relief (inaugural offering of CEMAC IV)
- Department of Defense–2016 Certification, International Affairs, level II (international sales)
- George Washington University–2010 Certificate, Congressional Operations
- AFSO21–2010 Lean Six Sigma–Green Belt training
- Touro University International–2005 Master of Business Administration, Finance & Information Technology Management
- US Air Force Weapons School–2004 B-52 Weapons Instructor Course
- US Air Force Academy–1996 Bachelor of Science, Physics

Scholastic Honors:

- Summa Cum Laude, MBA
- Distinguished Graduate –B52 Pilot Course
- #1 Academic Honors –B-52H

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

- Deputy Commandant, Inter-American Air Forces Academy
- Senior Program Manager and Director, Air Force Special Operations Command
- Executive Operations Manager (CAG), Air Force Global Strike Command
- Pilot and Weapons Officer, Air Combat Command
- Research Physicist, US Air Force Academy

Nonprofit Experience:

- Sundry positions over the last two decades, from financial clerk to leadership roles, serving the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- Several leadership positions over the last two decades working with the Boy Scouts of America

Tell us a fun fact about you:

The US Air Force Academy rejected me on my first application, but they quickly realized their error, and only two months later, they offered me an appointment!

Why did you join the military?

I joined the military to achieve both of my childhood goals: be an astronomer and a pilot. When I learned in high school there was this Academy thing for pilots I had never heard of, then I saw they had a Space Physics degree, I instantly turned my laser focus to that institution. Then the military became a calling after joining.

What is the greatest single lesson you learned from your Military Service?

Leadership is individual, and as the size of an organization increases, it requires even more focus on the individual. There are three universal attributes that I use to underpin that: humble, approachable, and credible. As the leader you are not there to be the smartest, nor to be perfect. First, be humble enough to own, recognize and correct mistakes –as one aspect of a humble leader. This leads to being approachable, which empowers the leader. And underpinning it all is credibility; even with unqualified successes in the other two domains, credibility is pivotal. Without it, the authority others would lend you and progress for the organization is stymied.

Why did you apply for the Veterans Accelerated Management Program?

I joined VAMP to accelerate my ability to start a second career that will leverage my many talents and continue my life-long habit of professional growth and development.

What do you hope to accomplish in the next chapter of your life, both professionally and personally?

In the next chapter, personally, I will continue to serve neighbors, community, and family. And professionally, I will continue to grow and be stretched with increasing responsibility as a senior executive who will lead the discovery of unrealized solutions to evolving challenges.

What would you tell today's American public about our nation's Veterans transitioning out of the military?

There is a full spectrum of talent and motivation transitioning out of the military, so diverse in fact, that no cliché or stereotype could be appropriate. There is much, much more depth than the Hollywood stereotype of the 20th century.