

A series of powerful conversations with some of
the most successful people in the world

\$uccess profiles

With Brian K Wright



Scott Lopez



Jeffrey Gitomer



Eric Lofholm

Mental Toughness and Sales

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Introduction

I am just like you.

As we journey through life, we all have a deep rooted desire to be more, do more, and have more. That's one of the biggest reasons why I started doing my radio show, Success Profiles Radio. Every week I get to rub elbows and have powerful conversations with some of the most successful people in the world. As a result, I have built an audience and have had the show rank on the "What's Hot on iTunes" list consistently for over 2 years.

My goal is to empower and help YOU achieve the same results and success that my guests have. With well over 100 episodes in the books, I have had multiple episodes on several topics. This book focuses on sales and mental toughness.

These topics have universal appeal for a couple of different reasons:

Number one, all of us are in sales whether we believe it or not. If you have ever needed to persuade or convince anyone of ANYTHING, you know what I am talking about! Whether the situation is an actual business sales situation, or perhaps a household issue, sales skills come in handy. The level of success we experience in life is strongly dictated by how well we sell.

Number two, mental toughness is extremely important. Life gets us down, and it is inevitable for things to happen in ways we didn't plan. It's HOW we deal with these circumstances – the mental preparation – that has a tremendous impact on how our interactions with ourselves and others play out on a daily basis.

With that in mind, let me give you a brief introduction to the amazing experts featured in this book.

The first chapter is about having a world-class mindset built on mental toughness. This is the foundation upon which everything else is built. This interview was with Scott Lopez.

Scott has a background as a Marine fighter pilot and world-class Brazilian Jiu Jitsu athlete. We talked about his tenacity in becoming a fighter pilot as he was turned down 3 times before being accepted into the program.

We also discussed mental toughness and how world-class performers separate themselves from the middle-class. In addition, we touched on several limiting beliefs that allow world-class people to think and act differently than the rest of the crowd. Finally, we talked about his coaching program and what his process is like when he begins working with new clients. Anyone who has a coaching program (or wants to start one) would really benefit from this discussion.

My second and third guests discussed sales and preparing to win.

My second guest is someone many of you would recognize, the amazing Jeffrey Gitomer. This was a very special show as Jeffrey was my 100th guest. He is the author of many books, including *The Sales Bible* and *21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling*.

During this episode, we talked about having a winning mindset, as well as what separates excellent salespeople from average ones, and how to build a book of business without cold calling.

We discussed how to ask for referrals and when to ask for them (it isn't when you think!). We also talked about winning a sale that does not involve having the lowest price point, and the difference between your brand and your reputation in the marketplace. Finally, we talked about using social media to build business, and whether or not selling is different in a bad economy versus a good economy.

There were tons of golden nuggets in this interview, and Jeffrey was funny and tremendously insightful!

Eric Lofholm was my third guest.

He is the author of the book “The System”, which outlines a methodology for generating leads, setting appointments, building relationships, and converting sales.

We discussed how he was in danger of getting fired from his first sales job before seeking a mentor that helped him become #1 in his company and in 2 other companies (including the Tony Robbins organization) before setting out on his own.

We discussed many topics, including having a proper mindset to succeed, lead generation, appointment setting, closing the sale effectively, how to ask for referrals, and the best way to do follow up in case your customer doesn't buy the first time.

Eric is one of the best in the business, and the content he presented is invaluable!

I am very excited to share these interviews with you. I hope that you will gain just as much from them as I did.

Let the journey begin!

Brian K Wright

Chapter One

A conversation with Scott Lopez

I want to begin by sharing something that I've been thinking about lately.

For those of you who have not read the book *Think and Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill, I highly recommend that you do so. It's one of the prominent books in the leadership development, personal development and success space.



One thing I've learned from people on my show is that high achievers have higher standards than everyone else, and Henry Ford is exemplary of this. In *Think and Grow Rich*, Hill tells the story of how Henry Ford originated and implemented the V8 engine system for automobiles. There was a point in time when no one thought it was physically possible to do. So he told his employees, his team of engineers, "I want you to build a V8 engine." And they said "It can't be done. You can't put 8 cylinders on one block, it just can't be done." He said "Well, I want you to do anyway. I'll give you all the time that you need, so just do it."

These employees worked on this for six months with no results at all. Then another six months went by and there were still no results.

It was not explicitly stated, but I would imagine that if I was given a task to do by my employer and I hadn't found a solution in a year, I would have reason to worry about my job security. But Henry Ford was very patient. He had very deep pockets, he wanted what he wanted, and he had higher standards than everyone else. People told him it couldn't be done but he insisted that there was a way and that there was a solution. So finally after a year, these engineers still said it couldn't be done, and he said "That's okay. I will keep paying you. Find an answer." And it wasn't too long after that that the solution was found and Henry Ford had what he wanted.

I'll tell you what---having higher standards than everyone else will yield world-class results. That's what I spoke with Scott Lopez about.

Scott Lopez is a world-class trainer. He teaches people about mental toughness. He is a former Marine Corps officer and fighter pilot, a successful sales executive, an entrepreneur. He is a highly competitive Brazilian jiu-jitsu athlete and in 2013 he placed third in the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu World Championships in Long Beach, California. Having experienced the transformational power of mental toughness in his own life he now coaches individuals and corporate executives on how to develop mental toughness, to think better, perform better and increase earnings and profits.

He earned his MBA at the International Management from Thunderbird School of Global Management, which is the number one ranked school in that field in the World. Scott also attended the Defense Information School Fort Meade, Maryland and is professionally trained public affairs officer. He's been a successful corporate executive, small business owner and medical sales device rep, and he lives in Orange County, California.

Brian: Tell us about your background, your back story, How did you get to where you are now from where you started? I know you've got a military background and a Jui Jitsu martial arts background. Tell us about how you started and where you got to how you got where you are.

Scott: To cut to the chase I grew up as a welfare kid. My parents were divorced when I was two and a half years old. My dad lived in New Mexico. My mom lived in Northern California. I was kind of part of the hippie generation back in the days and moved around a lot and went to a lot of different schools. I was always the outsider kid and there was not a lot of stability. My mom loved me very much, but she had to move where the opportunity was so we were on the road a lot. And without knowing it, that gave me a lot of ability to adapt to change, but it also always made me feel like I wasn't good enough. I was always the new kid who got picked last for sports and stuff like that. So I think my self-confidence and maybe my self-esteem suffered a little bit through that whole process.

Going into junior high school I started messing up in school, and then going into high school I was just not doing as well as I could have or should have, and my mom said she had had enough and

she was going to send me to live with my dad. And I went to a small-town, north of Santa Fe, New Mexico. That's where my dad lived. And he was awesome. He whipped me into shape, and I ended up graduating from a small high school of only 72 kids. We didn't even have football. But I got my head on straight.

But you know, a welfare kid in rural New Mexico is not a top candidate to become someone who is going to be a fighter pilot, who would take it to the highest levels or start coaching high-level executives.

I had to figure out a way to make it through college. I wanted to be better. I wanted to be better and better than I was, so I kept striving and striving. How can I get to school? I wasn't a great student, but I had tenacity. And I think somewhere along the line I always wanted to make it big and improve myself. That was kind of something that was always ingrained in me. I really had to thank a lot coaches and teachers and mentors and military officers and bosses that saw potential in me and mentored me along the way.

So, coming out of a small school in Santa Fe, New Mexico and not doing so well in college, I joined the Navy Reserves, got the GI Bill and went to the University of New Mexico. I joined Naval ROTC, applied for a scholarship, switched to the Marine Corps, applied to be a pilot, which I always wanted to do, got turned down three times. On the fourth time, I made it.

I ended up being a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps and was lucky enough, working my tail off in flight school and all the training, to be selected for jets and ended up flying F-18s and became a Public Affairs Officer.

And this is really cool: one of the guys I worked for was an astronaut. I became a General's Aide for him. General Charles Bolden. He actually flew the Space Shuttle and was Marine Corp General. Now he is the Administrator at NASA, picked by President Obama to run NASA. He was always such an inspiration. Again, luckily I've had these people in my life to propel me forward at the right time and the right place.

Brian: Yes, You talked about how you got turned down three times to be a fighter pilot. Why did you continue? What was it inside you that said “I’m not giving up right now?” I ask because a lot of people probably would have given up after being turned down once.

Scott: What would you have to lose, right? What do you have to lose by giving up? You know for sure to give up the answer is going to be no. If you keep going, you still have a chance. When you study leaders and successful people throughout history and even today, I think persistence and tenacity are two of the most important qualities that a person can have. You look at Winston Churchill; he said “Never, never, never, ever give up” in the darkest hours of England during the battle of Britain. And why give up, you know what I mean? I think there is a time to call it quits once a while, if you beat your head against the wall and it’s all bloody but there’s still a chance keep fighting.

Brian: I love that. That is a definitely a world championship attitude. A lot of people would give up after being told no once or twice. History is riddled with examples of people who continued after being turned down many, many more times than even three, but thankfully you made it on the fourth try. That’s really great.

I found it interesting that you said earlier you just didn’t feel good as a kid. Was it the change in environment that really helped, or having a strong father figure in your life that really helped you believed in yourself?

Scott: Well it’s interesting because my parents are divorced and I grew up with my mom in Northern California, while my dad was living in New Mexico. Well, I’d see him for the summers. I didn’t have him during the school year, so I’ve got to give my mom all the credit. She did the best she could, but yes, there were a lot of self-confidence and self-esteem issues and inadequacies, probably because I wasn’t popular, I wasn’t a popular kid.

This is why it is so critical to work with our youth and to develop the self-confidence and the self-esteem. It is that little voice that says

“You’re not good enough;” that little voice that says “Who are you to dream big; who are you to be bold and daring and visionary?” That’s where it starts getting beat out of you; that’s where you start accepting that programming (and it’s just programming). It has nothing to do with reality, but that’s why people get these beliefs.

Brian: Let me ask about your mixed martial arts background. Tell us about why you started doing Jiu Jitsu?

Scott: I have two daughters who are 10 and 13 and when they were really, really young I wanted them to be involved in some kind of physical sports. I don’t want boys beating them up and tackling them and doing what boys do, like I used to do to girls when I was a kid. So I started them in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. I was very vocal and supportive of them, and they were still young and one of the Jiu Jitsu instructors said to me “Well, hey you are a tough guy. Why don’t you put on the gears and join us in the match sometime?” So I got challenged and called out to by the instructors and that was the beginning of it.

The Jiu Jitsu instructors called me out, so to speak, in front of my daughters in front of my daughters’ class. I was in my late 30’s, early 40’s and I was in good shape because I worked out, went to the gym and ran and did weights, but it wasn’t probably in the best shape but I could have been. I had been a Marine earlier on in my life, so I was really familiar with being a lean, mean fighting machine and having a warrior spirit, and I really hadn’t a chance to exercise that in a long time.

Now I am going to say this as on the side. I don’t think a lot of men get the chance to exercise their warrior spirit very much in modern society. I think that martial arts is one place we get to do it, certain parts of business are allowed to do it, but in general we’re not really celebrated as warriors anymore. When a man is able to tap into that warrior spirit, it’s a good thing. Jiu Jitsu is a very close combat grappling sport where guys are trained to choke you up, rip off your arms and force you into submission while you try to do the same to them. It’s a place where you get to go to that is very special and unique and I think it is really good for our psyche.

So as I got into this sport as a white belt I was a spaz. I didn't breathe. I was really frantic in my movements and out of shape and it took quite a while to calm down and breathe, to understand the sport and to get into shape for it. I progressed through the ranks, so to speak, and I tested myself.

So I changed my body type, I calmed down and I learned from these guys. When we talk about mental toughness, can you imagine a better sport to keep you calm, cool and relaxed during the heat of the moment than a sport like that?

Brian: I would imagine there are applications that are transferable between doing mixed martial arts and running a business, in terms of your mindset, in terms of your attitude and belief when you are up against the wall, how you respond, how you react, not giving up?

Scott: Yes, maybe we can talk about mental toughness for a second because the core of mental toughness is controlling your emotions. Emotional control is what it is, and it's before, during and after a performance.

I mean, if you see somebody like Kobe Bryant or Jon Jones who is a top UFC fighter, or any of the greats, Peyton Manning or Tom Brady in the NFL for any other player in soccer, like Messi or Hope Solo, they are in control and they just rise to the moment and nothing seems to faze them. They're mentally conditioned.

So we say, before, during and after performance, controlling your thoughts, your attitude, your emotions, that's a world-class mental toughness perspective, especially in adversity, especially under pressure. And that applies to anything.

So we say from a mental toughness perspective if you're chasing more deals, if you're chasing more sales, if you're chasing better relationships, if you're chasing athletic achievement, weight loss and weight loss is a big one for mental toughness and emotional control... whatever you're chasing, you are a performer. How you think about that going into your performance or sales call or you meeting or your athletic competition or your workout routine, whatever it is, if you're

pumped up before you go into it, that's going to set your tone while you're doing it. If you're enjoying yourself while you're doing it, you are going to perform better, because as you have full access to all your emotional, mental, your physical and spiritual capabilities and you're not blocked, you are not freaking out.

And then afterward, if it didn't go well, how do you react? Do you freak out and get down on yourself or beat yourself down? Or do you say, "Hey, that's lessons learned. We will learn how not to do it"? The same thing applies for business. Universal principles.

Brian: Yes. You know sometimes I think about football or basketball where the underdog is really hyped up for the game and they start really well and they have champions on their heels, but they can't sustain that for the whole game. I think it's the fact that the champion or the team that's favored has that calm, cool collectedness. They say "Okay, we're just going to regroup. We know what we're doing. We've got this. We've been here before." Does that sounds like a reasonable assessment to make?

Scott: From a mental toughness perspective, yes, absolutely. Experience is huge.

You know what's really interesting? When you watch the NFL or you watch Game 7 of the World Series or NBA Finals or top world championship fights, there's this perception that the top performers, the best in class, the Olympians, the professional athletes, even the Navy Seals or whoever they are, that they perform really, really well under pressure, right? It's like "Wow! Here comes Michael Jordan, here comes Kobe, here comes Serena...." They just perform well under pressure. And do you know what? Here's what we have learned: it is not true, it is not true.

Nobody performs well under pressure. It is an inverse relationship – the higher the pressure the lower the performance, the lower the pressure the higher the performance.

So what happens is that they conditioned themselves mentally,

they don't perceive the same level of threat, they don't perceive the same level of pressure. When you watch Kobe he looks like he's sometimes having a good time on the playground. Same thing with LeBron James. They know they are in a pressure situation, but they don't perceive the same amount of pressure. Therefore, that's when they get into themselves and they flow. It's emotional control, that's mental conditioning. It's mental conditioning and it's repetition, it's perfection and mastery, but it has perspective and it's a perspective most people don't know.

Brian: That is fascinating. They don't perceive the same level of pressure that other people do. And the experience probably is very key to that.

Scott: Right. So you know that adversity is a catalyst for growth and change is a catalyst for growth. Therefore, experience is a catalyst for growth. There is only success and there's feedback, there's no failure.

Brian: How does someone become mentally tough? Is this something that we can learn? Is this something that we were born with? Is this something that takes a long time to develop? How does this all happen?

Scott: How does somebody becomes mentally tough? I think there is special training that people go through. I think the Olympians go through this; I think that professional athletes go this; the top military people; fighter pilots go through this. Like I said earlier there's a series of differences in thinking, beliefs, attitudes that they have that other people don't have.

Here is a simple example: you have two people standing in front of you and one person is making \$50,000 a year and the other person is making \$500,000 a year. That's 10 times difference in income. So the person that's making 10 times more, are they 10 times smarter than the other person? No. Do they work 10 times as hard? No. Are they 10 times better at what they do? It is impossible to be 10 times better. Are they doing something differently?

We call this the world class: the top 1% to 3% of achievers out there who are “go-to” people and leaders in all industries. They think differently. One thing they do: first and foremost they take self-responsibility. There is no victim mentality. The masses take the victim mentality.

Here is the key point, and it is very important: nobody, and I mean nobody, is better than anybody else. In God’s eyes, in creation and from a spiritual perspective everybody is equal. However, it is a fact there are exceptional world-class performers and then are average performers. So people are performing differently, it’s just levels of consciousness, levels of perception and how they approach things.

So we can say from a mental toughness perspective, the world-class takes self-responsibility and the middle class sometimes has the victim mentality.

The world-class do things like compartmentalization, which is an emotional technique where they block out everything that’s going on around them and they become laser-focused on the single task at hand. They are present, they are grounded, they are breathing, they have eaten right, they have got the right amount of sleep, they have done visualization exercises, they have done all of that to perform in the moment.

Brian: I want to ask you about self-limiting beliefs. I want to get your perspective on how we hold ourselves back and how mental toughness and the world-class attitude really plays into all of that.

Scott: It’s critical. If you look at society in general and cultures across the world, there are just a handful of people at the top. There are just a handful of people, the one, two, three, maybe four percent of achievers and leaders that are really making things happen and then there’s the rest of us. Usually, not surprisingly, they have all the money and all the wealth and all the power, and so it is what it is. And it is kind of how it’s been set up from hundreds of thousands of years ago and we really don’t need to get it into that philosophy of why it is the way it is. One thing I can say is that here in the US, the best part of our country is that we have the opportunity to break through these limited beliefs and get ahead. And I think you can do it other places, like Australia, Canada and Europe. But it’s really part of our

spirit here that we can be anything that we want to be if we believe it and if we go for it. Our country is founded on that freedom. Freedom of thought, freedom of choice. So what do we choose to believe?

The fact of the matter is the world-class, the top leaders, and we talked about sports personalities but you can put Oprah, you can put Nelson Mandela, you can put Ghandi, and you can put Barack Obama, any President. This goes on and on. One of my favorites right now is the great young visionary Elon Musk, who is the CEO of Telsa, the electric car company, and also the CEO of SpaceX, which is the private entity that launches capsules rockets into space. It's only like the US, China, Russia and SpaceX are the only four entities on the planet that launch supplies up to space station.

They just leased Launch Pad 39-A at Cape Canaveral where Space Shuttles have taken off. They are going to launch this rocket called the Dragon, which is going to be the largest heavy-lift rocket in the history of the world. Are you kidding me? The guy is just changing everything. Who gave this guy permission to do that? He is lives here in the United States. And he is only 42 and he is running two visionary, change-the-world companies at the same time. And he almost ran bankrupt in both of them. He doesn't believe in limiting beliefs, he doesn't have any limiting beliefs. He is incredible.

Let me just give a few pointers here. If they resonate with you, it's because in some of these areas, we all have some of these beliefs. They were given to us by well-meaning parents and teachers and in institutions as we grew up.

Firstly, the middle-class competes; the world-class creates.

Brian: I love that.

Not to break the train of thought here, but in his book *The Millionaire Fastlane*, MJ DeMarco talks about exactly this kind of stuff. The extremely successful people are the producers of things and everyone else is the consumer of things and if you want to move from one part of the line to the other part of the line, you have to have

the mindset that says “I’m going to create and produce the things that the masses are buying.” If you are stuck in the masses’ mindset and you are forever consuming, that’s a treadmill that you will never, ever escape. So that came to my mind when you said that, so the world-class creates while everyone else competes. I love that.

Scott: To that point, think about it this way: if you want to get rich, what is the best way to get rich? What do wealthy people do? They provide the solution to a problem. Now that seems so obvious and simple, but it really is not. Provide a solution, that’s what entrepreneurs do. Entrepreneurs provide solutions to problems and they take them to the market. That’s what Elon Musk is doing; he is providing a solution to a problem.

So for all of us out there, what solution are you providing? Brian Tracy said you’re going to get paid on what the market value of what solutions you provide. So if you are only making \$50,000.00 you’re only providing \$50,000 worth of value or solutions.

Let’s keep going.

The middle class avoids risks, the world class manages risks.

It’s a risky world. Things are changing all the time. What is that one kind of example when they say “What changes society faster than anything else?” You’ll hear examples of the radio telegraph, manual Morse code, and the trains in the old western days, and that changed things and connected cities and people to the frontier lands in the Western United States back in the 1800s. And then it was radio, then it was telephone and then TV. All these mediums of communication have changed society, but nothing has changed us and how we operate faster than the internet and mobile devices. It is just exponentially changing, and the world is changing so fast. How do we handle that? And then it gets risky, and people are getting outsourced and getting hurt, and if you don’t keep up, if you don’t manage risk, you put your head in the sand, but society keeps going and you are going to get left out.

You know I said this to my own family the world-class manages risks, the middle class avoids it.

I think this is really important: the middle class lives in delusion the world-class lives in objective reality.

This is really a critical thinking, critical awareness perspective. But what is the delusion? The delusion is go to high school get good grades, go to college, go work for a company and have a job, etc. Most of the middle class are pretty educated and smart, but they're not getting where they want to go, and they are going to make excuses for it. "Well, you know, I am world-class," but if you are world-class, how come your results don't show it? How come you are only living at this level of fulfilment in all areas of your life? You make excuse after excuse.

But, the better my attitude, the better my results. "I am not going to fool myself nor delude myself. Things are changing. I need to keep up. I need to reinvent myself. I need to be transformed." That's the big one, I think.

The middle class loves to be comfortable, the world-class loves to be uncomfortable.

What does that mean?

Everyone talks about it, time and time again, from so many different perspectives, being in your comfort zone, settling for mediocrity knowing that there's more out there. Knowing that you are capable, that you have the talent, that your spirit talks to you through your intuition, but you stay where you are at. You accommodate the situation because it's good enough. Why push more when good is good, good is great? So why go for greatness?

Well again your results didn't show it. This is the objective reality. If you don't want seven figures in the bank then you don't have to work hard like millionaires work. But that's why you only have four-figures in the bank.

The middle class has a lottery mentality, the world-class has an abundance mentality.

This is really important. How is it that immigrants should show up

from countries all around the world and you know sometimes they are millionaires within one generation? You know, Dunkin Donuts has multiple immigrant franchisees that have multiple Dunkin Donuts stores that are making ten, twenty, thirty million dollars a year in multiple stores. How did that happen? How come an American didn't do that? Because the business owner didn't have these limiting beliefs. They saw the opportunity and they provided the solution.

From the lottery perspective, Lady Luck is going to shine on me. I am going to win the lottery, get hundreds of millions of dollars and I will be really prosperous for the rest of my life. Some people actually believe that and buy lottery tickets all the time. You have the same chance, almost identical, the same chance of winning the lottery whether you buy a ticket or not.

Brian: Let's talk about your coaching career. I know that you are the mental toughness coach and we have talked a lot about mental toughness. When people approach you or talk to you about getting training, how do you take people through their journey? How do you work with people? What is your coaching philosophy?

Scott: I think the first thing is, if somebody is going to be a coach, you have got to walk the walk. How can you coach somebody if you haven't been through some of these life challenges yourself? Coaching is probably one of the best ways to fast track your success in life. You get the right people to help you with your blind spots in life, you get the right pointers, the right tips, the right action plan, and then hold you accountable on – and you are going to accelerate your success. CEOs have coaches. Top entrepreneurs have coaches. Presidents have advisers. Tiger Woods and all the top athletes have coaches. Military people are always undergoing constant training.

Coaching is really important and I think people need to be humble and be aware about it. You don't know it all, and what got you to a certain level of success may not get you to the next level of success in your life. There are always new levels of awareness and consciousness and learning.

So the first thing I do is a strategy session call. I just want to know where their head's at: What are you thinking? What do you want? What are the most important things you're after? I approach it like a doctor and I just diagnose. "Tell me a little more about that. Why's that important? How did you feel when that happens? If you don't make any changes, what happens? What if you do make changes?" And I would get a picture in my mind of whether or not I can help them or whether it's a good fit.

I'll be honest – this is kind of funny but not really – coaches are not therapists you know, and that's really an important part to understand. Therapy helps you to deal with emotional trauma from the past and undoing things from the past. The coaches are really focused on today, moving forward.

I had a gentleman ask me "How many therapy sessions can I get with your coaching?" and I said "Well, there's your answer." He wasn't in the right place.

Brian: That is an interesting distinction. Therapist helps you deal with your past and coaches help you today in moving forward. You are absolutely right about that. I hadn't even considered that before.

Scott: That's kind of how it is. So, how did I become qualified to be a coach?

I have been successful. I have an MBA. I was a fighter pilot, a world champion in Jiu Jitsu. I have done a lot of different things corporately and I am a successful business owner. I have been divorced twice, as well. I have been almost broke before, and I have made transition in the new markets and I have failed a lot. And so how do I keep going and learn from all these adversities? That life experience will help me with somebody who is maybe 35 to 60, maybe they are divorced, maybe they are not, maybe they are single parents or not. I understand. I have been there. And then teaming up with my mentor, Steve Siebold, who is probably the world's preeminent expert in mental toughness, I'm a licensee of his, so I have access to all of his coaching content and programs which I've used and I also work with.

I also work with Eric Lofholm, and I am one of his professional sales trainers as well.

Also when we do a strategy session and we do a diagnostic call, I want to see if the person is a fit for me or not. If the person is not a fit, I don't want to work with them and I would be more than happy to send them to somebody else who would be a better fit. You really have to operate with the highest integrity and authenticity in a place of love for your clients so that you get them the results. That's what this business is about and it is also good for business.

So how do I do it? The first thing I do is to have people do a life vision statement. You have to have a base line. Some people would do a Myers-Briggs test or they would do a 360 assessment if they are executive coaches. You have to have a baseline of what somebody's doing, where they are at, what they are thinking. For me, I have a very specific life vision statement that we have them put together.

Where do you see yourself in five or ten years in your life whether it business, money or relationships, friends, self-image, weight, academic achievements? What are your spiritual calls, what are your social and cultural goals, what is your best self in all these different areas? You can see your self-limiting on your beliefs on that first track. Some people are so negative and some aren't, and it is very interesting.

I had a woman she gave me a whole sheet and the first page of the document was the first meeting was "You need to know about my story, I was abused and I was neglected and I was this and this happened to me" and it was a whole story, and I said "This is great. I appreciate that you have been through a lot, but it really doesn't matter moving forward." I didn't want her to buy into that game, so I deleted it. I said, "You hired me to be your coach. Moving forward, how does it serve you"? And that was the basis of moving forward and now she has launched a new business and she is making money and happier with herself.

Brian: You should not accept responsibility for someone else's failure if they didn't do the work. You can't get mad at some else if you didn't do the work that they gave you to do. So it's all about responsibility again.

Scott: Right, it's "How badly do you want it?" Eric Lofholm has a classic close: "You're going to pay one way or the other. You are going to pay the fee for the coaching or you are going to pay in unrealized dreams, lost business and the opportunity cost of not acting," and that is immeasurable.

Brian: Who inspires and motivate you?

Scott: Who inspires and motivates me? I got to tell you. My daughter just blew me away. My 13 year-old daughter blew me away last week. She's a goalie and two years ago really had a tough experience with one soccer club and got kicked out of the game. She grew really tall and we got her some extra coaching, and now she trains with the US National Team. She is a college prospect, and she is only in 7th grade.

Long story short, last week Thursday, she got an invite to try out for that old club again which is one the top soccer clubs. So they come out and they kicked the ball around for a little bit and they said, "Okay put your gloves on you are going to go on the goal" and for 50 minutes this kid got shot on, shots on goal by three separate teams rotating through and she shut down 95% of them and just stepped up in a way I hadn't seen a 13 year-old kid step up in a long time. It was a big adversity for her and she overcame it. So who inspires me? My daughter did. She faced her past, and it is a redemption story.

Chapter Two

A conversation with Jeffrey Gitomer

Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of twelve best-selling books, including the best-selling book, *The Sales Bible*, *The Little Red Book of Selling*, and his new book, *21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling*. Jeffrey's books have appeared on best-seller lists more than 850 times and have sold millions of copies worldwide. Jeffrey has been inducted into the National Speaker Hall of Fame and he was awarded the designation of Certified Speaking Professional which has been awarded fewer than 500 times in the last 25 years.

Brian: First of all tell us about your background. How you got to where you are now and the things that you learned along the way.



Jeffrey: I think the most important thing is that I literally learned how to sell by getting into direct marketing which is at the time was called multilevel marketing or MLM, and I didn't really have a tremendously successful career there, but I did gain a positive attitude. For the people that throw cold water on direct selling or multilevel marketing, they are totally incorrect.

Secondly, once I learned how, I began to manufacture imprinted sportswear and I took that to New York City to sell. Have you ever heard the expression if you can make it there you can make it anywhere, from the song "New York, New York?" It's very true. New York is the toughest sales environment in the world. I cold called there for several years and had a tremendous success.

Fast forward another twenty years to when I got to Charlotte, North Carolina and I began to write about my expertise. The more I wrote, the more people liked it, the more people called me, the more people wanted me to speak. I wrote a book that became an instant best-seller; that was actually *The Sales Bible*. Eleven books later, here I am with my interview with you.

Brian: You probably had some pretty interesting sales experiences that really helped you become who you are now is there a really good example of one you'd like to share?

Jeffrey: Actually, I don't want to say there's one. It's a matter of gaining your experience sale by sale. There is no instant method of getting good at selling skills, it's a matter of reading, learning, watching videos, training and then practicing. And the more you practice the more sales you're going to make. It's not simply a numbers game; rather it's a matter of creating momentum for yourself and having a kind of happy time at it, looking forward to every sale, whether it's a sale or it's a rejection. If you have a good time at it you're going to win, and if you don't have a good time at it you're going to be disgruntled. You're going to kick your dog and you're going to quit.

Brian: How long did it take you to become really good at selling?

Jeffrey: Not long, sixty years or so. So....let me put it this way. It takes a long time if you believe in what you're selling and you believe in yourself, and you believe that the customer is better off having purchased from you. It will take you forever if you don't have those beliefs.

Brian: True. That's really true. That's really true.

Jeffrey: the easiest way to make sales is love what you do and the sales just automatically happen. There's no way that you can go in someplace and have the Vulcan mind meld. You know what I'm talking about? The Spock thing? It doesn't happen that way. It only happens day by day. It happens incident by incident. It happens success by success or rejection by rejection.

Brian: Okay. Absolutely. So which industries were you selling in? I mean were you in a pretty wide variety of industries when you were getting started?

Jeffrey: I only sold for my own business. So at first, I manufactured

leisure furniture and that was before I learned how to sell, but I still had the gift of gab. Then I manufactured imprinted sportswear. Then I did consulting for a decade, and then I had a couple of trade and technical schools. So every business that I had had sales at its core.

When I came to Charlotte in 1988, I began to do consulting, sales consulting or business consulting, but I began to write and writing led me to wealth. Not selling. Yes, I made money at sales, but when you have a body of work and you have people calling you to give talks, and you begin to customize those talks and you begin to learn about those businesses, you become literally a global expert at the selling process.

Brian: Who were some of your mentors as you were learning how to do this?

Jeffrey: I had several. First of all, obviously my dad who was a businessman of the first order. Second of all, I had other sales people along the way or business people along the way who I put myself in front of and didn't actually ask for their help. I didn't ask them to be my mentor. It just sort of evolved.

I was a person who gave help. I was a person who gave information and as a result I got information. When someone calls me and says will you be my mentor I say no. I'm busy. If someone calls me with a value proposition and I feel that there is an exchange of value I'm way more than willing to help them till the end of the earth. Just think about that.

I had several people along the way either business model guides, people that started their own business and grew it to \$100 million. People who became chairmen of boards or other professional speakers that I admired, and I got close to them and became friends with them, and occasionally I'd ask them a question or ask for their advice or something like that, but I didn't milk it, if you know what I mean. I would try to give advice and at the same time I took advice.

Brian: When did you decide that you wanted to start writing a book?

Jeffrey: I didn't. That was not a decision. What happened was I wrote a column and the column was in response to some idiot that wrote a column about sales that I thought was wrong. So I wrote the right thing and people started to call right away. And I thought "Wow, I've got something! In fact, I've got this column, and if I just write one hundred of these columns, I can put them together and get a book. So I never actually wrote a book I just wrote a column and the column evolved two years later into a book. The Sales Bible was just the first one hundred of my weekly writings.

Brian: That's really wonderful and anyone can do this. Anyone can do this. Jeffrey: Well, let me explain how anyone can do it. When I started in 1992, if you weren't in print there was no way to get published. The internet hadn't been invented yet or it had been invented but it wasn't doing me any good. So if I wasn't in a business newspaper or magazine of some kind I had no exposure whatsoever. Today, if you start a blog which you can start on Word Press for nothing or you create your own website you can be more popular than the New York Times. You're instantly out there and Mother Google will come over and search your keywords and make you an expert, and put you on the front page in a heartbeat. Right? People don't understand the value of the internet right now in building a brand. I built my brand slowly but when the internet came about it exponentially grew. So my challenge is I learned without the internet and I succeeded with it.

Brian: Yeah, it certainly can catapult your success all that much faster.

Jeffrey: Right. You can become known in your market place or with your customers or in your neighborhood, or wherever you seek to become known you can do it. Especially if you have a good mailing list and you're proactive with it and you don't blast people with your stupid ads.

Brian: So, your brand new book is called 21.5 Unbreakable Laws to Selling. Let's dive into some of the things that you talk about in that book.

Jeffrey: Let me interrupt for just a second. The introduction to your show mentions the success principle of "If I can do it, you can do it." That principle is only partially correct.

If I can do it you can do it, if you do the same things that I did with the same intensity that I put into it. Not just anybody can replicate what's going on and for me...not everyone is going to agree with my principles and my philosophies, but no one can say that I don't work my ass off, and I challenge my audiences and I challenge my readers: let them say the same thing about you. I go to sleep. I wake up early every single day of my life and in the middle I work my ass off. I think that that's something that doesn't exist much more in our society. People are looking for a short-cut or the best way or some quick fix. They go on the internet, they get a one-minute solution, and they think it's going to work and it doesn't. It never does.

Brian: I would further add that it had to happen within the context of the skill set and the gifts and talents that you've already been given.

Jeffrey: True and you've got to love it. If you don't love it you're not going to make money at it.

Brian: Let's talk about having a correct mindset because that really is prerequisite to succeeding at anything. If someone's going to be in sales, you have to have a strong belief and passion for what you're already doing or it's never going to work, so let's talk about what kind of mindset a really successful salesperson has to have.

Jeffrey: I talked a little earlier about getting a positive attitude when I was in network marketing. I cannot stress enough that when you wake up in the morning, you better be happy – and you better read a little bit about happiness instead of watching something stupid on television, which is all about what happened that was bad. Who got bombed, who got beat up, who's going to jail, who got killed. I mean it's totally crazy. Even the weather is crappy. You have to expose yourself, you have to have a different success environment first thing in the morning to kick start your day. That's the most important thing you can do by, by beating your head and then telling yourself it's going to be a great day. Then you start out with the right mindset to be able to get to the next plateau. Without that, you're toast.

Brian: Absolutely. So, passion is certainly a very important part of this equation too, right?

Jeffrey: Sure. I would say that it's easier to describe by the word "enthusiasm." You have to be an enthusiastic soul and that enthusiasm has to be contagious. You know, "I'm so happy, I'm so slap happy that that you feel good hanging around me," because you don't feel good hanging around most people.

Brian: Absolutely! There are a lot of people out there like that and I'll tell you what, when you are enthusiastic and passionate about anything you're a magnet. People gravitate to you and when people like you and trust you, they want to do business with you.

In addition to having a terrific mindset, what really sets a good salesperson apart from someone who's merely average or not very good at all?

Jeffrey: The salesperson's product knowledge or service knowledge has to be a given. The thing that separates the good guys from the great guys or the fair guys from the great guys is understanding how the customer produces more, how the customer profits more and how the customer wins after they take ownership. What is the projected outcome after the purchase? The guy that knows that or the woman that knows that is going to win a hell of a lot more than the person that does not.

Brian: That's fantastic. So let me ask you something else. A lot of people are told by their managers to make so many cold calls a day and you talk about this in your book. Everyone hates doing cold calls, the percentage of success is ridiculously low. How do you recommend building a book of business if it doesn't include cold calling?

Jeffrey: First of all, let us go back and address the symptom. When a manager says "Go cold call," usually the manager does not teach you how to make a cold call. In fact, if you sat down with a manager and asked him or her to make a one hundred cold calls next to you their results would pretty much be the same. So, not only is cold calling a waste of time it's a negative drain on your energy and your attitude. More salespeople quit over the crapola of cold calling than any single other thing. Lousy bosses and rejection are the two biggest reasons salespeople quit. You might think that they went for more money. More money is the symptom, not the problem.

There are many salespeople that will stay at a company for less money because they love the place, they love the boss, they love the product, they love the customer. My personal research over a forty year period of time has shown me that rejection and poor management are the two biggest reasons of a salesperson leaving.

Let's talk about the fact that cold calling is a stupid waste of time. You're calling people that you don't know, that don't know you, they probably already have what you are selling and you're interrupting their day.

Would your mother let you cold call somebody? Answer. No, she would not. No. She would say "You go make an appointment. You find out another way to know them." Your mom needs to teach you about LinkedIn, too, which is the new cold call. You can research anybody using keywords. It's very simple. It's free. It's part of the LinkedIn process. You can find anybody with any keyword within a certain range of zip codes of you and find a hundred new customers that you never knew you had. And you can introduce yourself on LinkedIn. It's so easy if they're within your group, your first connection, second connection, third connection.

Your job is to get introduced in a way that allows you to provide some kind of value. Not, "I want a meeting," but "These are the five things that I've found out about the product that I offer, I'm sure you're using it and you may not know about this. If you want more information just link with me and get back to me and all of a sudden you're going to get another hundred connections.

LinkedIn is the new cold call and any salesperson that doesn't use it is a fool, and any manager who is telling you salespeople to cold call is a bigger fool.

Brian: Exactly. Because they wouldn't want to do it themselves so why do they ask other people to do it?

Jeffrey: Not only would they not want to do it, they can't do it. Sales managers are typically not that great at selling.

Brian: That is interesting. That is actually very true.

I had a sales manager once who actually told me and the group of people in my department who were calling people “I couldn’t do what you’re doing,” and I’m thinking to myself “Then why are you asking us to do this? This is ridiculous.” It wasn’t fun and he didn’t inspire confidence. He was all about himself and didn’t really care about the people that were working for him.

Jeffrey: I ask my salespeople all the time “How many of you ever worked for a boss who was a jackass?” They all raise their hand. Every one of them raises their hand. Then I ask them “How many of your bosses are here and you can’t raise your hand?”

Brian: Besides LinkedIn, how would you propose building a strategy of growing a book of business? Going to meetings, networking, going out and meeting people?

Jeffrey: If you have a dozen customers and you service those customers in a memorable way and you ask those customers for referrals, they will give you referrals. There is no easier, faster, better more profitable way to begin to build your book of business then by a referred customer. And the only way you get that referral in a genuine way is to earn it.

So, the challenge for anybody who’s doing what we all do, which is try to make sales, the challenge for you is to make certain that you are providing value not adding value but providing value to each one of your customers all the time.

I’m going to make a specific recommendation. Every salesperson should have a cup of coffee with a customer or a prospective customer every single morning. Two hundred and fifty cups of coffee at a Starbucks or a local coffee shop will net business and relationships. “Well my customers may not want to meet with me.” You know what, that’s a bunch of crap. Bring a referral for them and they’ll be there in two seconds.

Brian: If you're bringing something to the table first then obviously they're probably going to want to reciprocate.

I want to touch very briefly on the value of asking great questions. It's been said that the quality of your life is determined by the quality of questions that you ask, and it seems like in sales, people are taught to ask the same questions, such as "What keeps you up at night?" or "What would it take to earn your business today?" How can we be more creative in our question asking?

Jeffrey: You can't necessarily be more creative, but you can think about it from a standpoint of, what do you want to be asked?

So for example, if I'm going to sell life insurance, which is the hardest thing in the world to sell, I'm going to walk up to somebody and say "How much money do you think you need to retire?" And the guy's going to give a number like two million dollars. Okay great. And then I'm going to say "How much of that do you have right now?" This is the most embarrassing question on the planet because the guy's not a millionaire. He's not even a thousandaire or a hundredaire.

I'm going to say "Look my job is to help you get from where you are to where you want to be. Bring me what you have over a cup of coffee. If I think I can help you I'll tell you, and if I don't think I can help you I'll tell you that too. Fair enough?"

Now I've just made an insurance appointment in the single hardest, in my opinion, category of sales on the planet and I made it easy. I didn't ask, "Who you were using?" I didn't ask, "How are they treating you?" I didn't ask, "What keeps you up at night?" I didn't say "Are you protected?" I didn't say anything about anything other than a personal, direct question about you and your potential success.

Brian: Talk about the art and the practice of asking for referrals.

Jeffrey: Our managers always tell us to ask for referrals. They don't always tell us how, they almost certainly never tell us when, they always say "Ask after they say yes to the sale." Is that the best time

to ask? No. Actually, it's the worst time to ask. If you just made a sale to somebody, you haven't done anything yet. You haven't proven yourself, there is no value exchanged.

The dialogue should go something like this:

The sales guy says "I'm happy you made the purchase. You've made a great choice. I'd like to get back with you in couple or three months for an informal breakfast or lunch or a cup of coffee, and talk about how the relationship is going. If you love how we're doing, I'll make a proposal to you. I'll bring you a referral if you give me one."

Now, 99.9% of salespeople will never do that because they're greedy, and because their relationships are weak. I don't want to say they're stupid; they're not thinking in the right direction. They're thinking "me, me, me" when the salesperson should be thinking "you, you, you." The more you give, the more you get. You've heard it. It's better to give than it is to receive.

So I'm looking at this from the perspective that the salesperson has to be a giver, not a taker. If you sell me something and you call me and ask for a referral, I will not give you one. If you call me again and say "Hey I asked you for these referrals a couple of weeks ago, how are they coming along?" I will never take your call again as long as I'm alive. And neither will anybody else.

So any boss that tells you to ask for a referral is doing it the wrong way. You earn the referral by providing value after the sale, and by giving the person more than they could ever expect with respect to service or with respect to help. If you do those two things, service and help, you're going to earn referrals.

If you give a referral, I promise you the guilt factor will get you referrals by them thinking "Aww, man! The guy gave me one, I think I better give him one." That's what you need to do. The salesperson needs to put himself or herself in the position where they earn the referral and not ask for one because it's so awkward to ask.

Brian: Sure. That seems to apply very well when you've sold something that is very consumable and someone uses over and over again and keep buying. We talked about life insurance a little bit ago. You buy it once and hope you never have to use it but eventually you will have to use it one time. Does this principle work the same if you're selling a service?

Jeffrey: Sure. Let's say you're selling life insurance. Where's your weekly newsletter that talks to people about how to live life? I don't want to buy life insurance thinking I'm going to die. I want to buy life insurance thinking I'm going to have a good time. So why don't you tell me about the five best weekend drives within a radius of a 100 mile? Why don't you tell me about how to keep my front yard safe, or my attic warm in the winter and cool in the summer? Why don't you give me some things where I can build equity, or some things where I can have a little bit better health? Why should I eat avocado versus Snickers? Tell me things that are good for me and begin to build value with me so that when I call you on the phone you'll gladly take my call, or you'll take my weekly email magazine and send it to your aunt Nellie and she'll become a subscriber.

Brian: That's really a great point, too, because as I think through the list of people whose email lists I'm subscribed to, very few of the people that I've bought something from have continued to follow-up with me on a very regular basis, and it happens to be a mortgage officer from when I bought my home. I get monthly newsletters from him and most of the emails I get are from people who are still trying to sell me something, which is really annoying.

Jeffrey: The ones that have value are the ones you're going to read and forward. The ones that have no value are the ones you're going to delete.

Brian: Let's talk about building your brand. Email is one way you could probably do that, but what really is your brand and how do you build brand? Are brand and reputation synonymous or are they two different things?

Jeffrey: Brand and reputation go hand in hand but they are not synonymous.

Reputation is what you've done in the market place and brand is how you've built your name in the market place. How recognizable are you?

Let's talk about brand for just a second. Mother Google these days determines your brand and the recognition or recognizability of your brand. Someone's going to Google you before you walk in the door and they're going to Google your company, but they are predominantly going to Google you and whatever pops up, that's what determines your fate. It's your brand and your reputation rolled into one. Do you have a blog? Do you have a LinkedIn profile with more than 500 people? Do you tweet? Do you have a YouTube channel? Do you have a Facebook business page? What are the things that are going to actually put you on the branded map?

And not just your company, this is the most amazing thing, Brian. Salespeople think "Well, my company will do that." That's a bunch of crap. What happens if you quit your job or get fired? You have no brand. I recommend that every single salesperson build their own brand starting with a blog, starting with an email magazine, starting with a LinkedIn account, starting with a Google reputation and when they have that, the customer is going to be way more impressed than they are with your literature or any other crap that goes with you on a sales call.

Brian: Let's talk a little about reasons why people buy. Lots of people see to think that if I offer something at the lowest price, I'm going to win. But we know that's not true. If that were true there would be no Lexus, there would be no Audi. You know, there would be no million-dollar luxury homes. None of that would exist. So price is obviously not the determining factor most of the time, but a lot of people think that it is. So how do we win a sale if we don't want price to be the focus and we don't want to attract what I call the bottom feeders to our customer roster.

Jeffrey: There are two predominant reasons; one is perceived value and the other is perceived differentiation. If my customer perceives a value in me and I can prove that I'm different from my competitor, I have a shot at them buying. That's a reason for buying.

They may have a great need. I may be there to fill that need. The greater the need, the less price matters. You know if you need a ticket to someplace on an airplane you'll pay anything. If you don't need a ticket, you'll shop around for price. And 30% to 40% of people do shop price, there's nothing you can do about it. That's how Amazon is dominating the world. But the value buyer is the one you want to look at because the value buyer will give you your profit. They perceive that there's a greater value in doing business with you than doing business with someone else whether it's the same product or similar product.

It's about your reputation. It's about what the word of mouth is about you on the street. And in order for the salesperson to be able to create that buying atmosphere, they have to provide what's known as proof. Proof, in my opinion, is best provided by using voice of customer. A testimonial from somebody that bought your stuff, that loves it, thinks it's great and is willing to go on video to be able to talk about it. That video goes on your YouTube Channel, and when you have a prospective customer they will find your YouTube Channel and play those ten videos they'll go, "Wow, this is pretty impressive."

So you've differentiated yourself from your competitor by proving that you're the best by voice of customer. You're providing a valuable service to that customer by talking to them about what is the difference between doing business with you and brand X and you're going to win. You're not going to win every time, but you're going to win the marginal sale.

Brian: What do you think is the most important lesson you've learned in your career?

Jeffrey: If I don't love what I do, I ain't going to do it. That's the single most important lesson. You can tell in a heartbeat whether a salesperson believes in his stuff or not. You can tell by his enthusiasm, by his passion. You can tell by the way he carries himself, by the way he smiles, by the way he talks. The mediocre sales guy is going to give a mediocre presentation and the customer is just not going to buy it.

Brian: Absolutely. It does come down to passion and enthusiasm and whether you believe in something or not, and you can read that a mile away.

The people who are passionate and enthusiastic are magnets, and the people that are not are definitely repellant.

Do you think that selling in a bad economy is different from selling in a good economy, or does it really just come back to the salesperson?

Jeffrey: It's both. I think that if you're in a bad economy, it's going to be a struggle. There are going to be sales made, but less of them. The superior sales guy will shine and the guy with the best relationships will shine in a lousy economy. But the bottom line is anybody can make sales in a down economy if they're willing to work hard. And the person that's sort of stored nuts in the winter by building good relationships in a good economy... that's the person that's going to thrive.

I'll give you a classic example of the real estate market. For a ten-year period of time up until 2008, it was the biggest real estate boom in the history of mankind. Not in the twentieth century, but in the history of mankind. All the real estate agents were making sales hand over fist. As soon as the market burst, nobody had an email address, nobody built a list, nobody was doing a weekly email magazine, and all they started to do was complain about the fact that the market was down. Save for a handful of people that dealt in short sales and actually had customers or clients that were loyal, most of the real estate agents went broke or suffered severely. That's because when it was raining sales they did nothing to build for their future. Absolutely nothing. Same in the mortgage business. They did absolutely nothing to build for the future.

I think that's a remarkable case of stupidity or arrogance on the part of the salesperson that is totally unacceptable in any market place. So as a salesperson, if you're doing well you better be building your base of customers that love you and are willing to be loyal to you right now.

Brian: We talked about how going back to your customers is the best way that you can gain business and making sure they stay happy.

You write about that an awful lot in your book, but you also draw a distinction between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. They seem like the same thing, but they're really not.

Jeffrey: Customer satisfaction is the single dumbest measurement of customer service that exists today. Customers may call you up complaining all the time and still do business with you. They're not going to score very high on the satisfaction level, but they score high on the loyalty level. And I only care about two things with the customer. Will you do business with me again? And will you refer me? That's it. That referral is the single biggest report card that I can get, but let me explain the bogusness of customer satisfaction.

You ever see those JD Powers customer satisfaction awards? They give them to airlines. Is there a category that an airline could possibly win an award for anything other than maybe least crappy. That's a good category. Least rude. I mean there's no way. Those things are totally bogus. They're paid for, they're stupid. And one millimeter below satisfaction is dissatisfied or unsatisfied or angry or worse.

To me if you want to find out about a customer or a potential vendor you don't go to JD Powers for your research. You go to Google. You go to their Facebook page. You see what their customers are posting about them. You go to Yelp. You go to Trip Advisor. You go someplace where independent people like Amazon are reporting on the value of the product they just bought. This is the biggest paradox I've ever found. I go to Amazon to buy stuff like everybody does and I read the one star reviews.

The bottom line is to understand where the value is. Not the satisfaction level, but the value. They have to go to the internet in order to be able to find it or word of mouth. If a car sales guy says "this is the greatest car in the world" and you talk to your next door neighbor and they bought one and it's a piece of crap what are you going to do? Are you going to believe the car sales guy? I don't know, they got the customer satisfaction award.

There's nothing dumber than customer satisfaction, nothing. Well there is something dumber cold calling. Then satisfaction comes in second.

Brian: It's interesting you talked about going on social media to research companies. There are a lot of companies out there that are definitely afraid of social media because of that very reason. They don't want people to find out that stuff about them on social media. Let's talk about how people should be branding their business online - what do you use? What are your preferred social media channels to build with?

Jeffrey: I use every social media channel. There is no one better than the other. And the reason is people go to different channels. Business people tend to go to LinkedIn sometimes Twitter, definitely YouTube. Consumers tend to go to Facebook. Sometimes You Tube, but there's no one thing that's better than the other. You have to do them all and for the people that are afraid of using it, they are idiots because the customer is posting everything about them anyway.

My feeling is that if you're afraid of the internet or if you're afraid of social media it's because you don't know all about it. You don't understand the value of it. You've never tweeted. You've never gone online or done anything that will help you build the base of your business reputation. Go to my social media. Go to my Twitter account, look at my Facebook account. Especially look at my LinkedIn account. You're going to find thousands of people have connected with me because I provide what is known as personal perceived value. And my customers will come on and tell you. They'll tell you this is a great column or this is a great piece or this is a great piece of advice and then they'll go tell all of their friends.

Brian: Absolutely. That's great. So what are your goals going forward?

Jeffrey: "Gitomer Certified Advisors" is our next big thing. We're licensing people to use my sales training, and my classroom training, and my internet training, my web-based training, to resell that. If you're a coach or a consultant or you have some kind of training business, you can become a Gitomer Certified Advisor and use my brand to help you build your brand, and use my information to help you build your base of information. And it's working. It's working like crazy. If someone wants to invent their own material and content they can license out yours and there's no reason to reinvent it; my stuff is already the best.

Brian: Jeffrey, who inspires and motivates you?

Jeffrey: I'm actually inspired by people who are good and inspired by people who are bad. I don't think it's fair for me to name names because most of the names would be obscure to most of the people listening. But there are inspirational people out there and you gravitate towards them. There are also negative people out there and they serve as a great example of what not to do. But I would say it is not just a matter of who you expose yourself to – it's what you expose yourself to.

I tend to read older books, you know turn of the century books from the 1920s, 1930s, 1950s at the latest. Those books contain original information. They contain original ideas. Those are the things I do. I expose myself to people that are very successful. I expose myself to great speakers and presenters. I try to expose myself to thinkers, people who are creating ideas in the world or doing things in the world that make a difference.

So between reading, watching some video, and meeting other people or listening to other people in the seminar, that's what inspires me. I'm inspired by other people. I'm also inspired by other things. When I travel, I look at what's cool about wherever I go. I don't care if it's raining or snowing. The weather doesn't affect me. The time zone doesn't affect me. What affects me is the wonderment of it. What am I seeing that's amazing? What am I experiencing that I've never experienced before? What corner can I turn and see something brand new?

If you go to Paris, you take the Number 7 Metro to the Trucadero stop and get out walk up towards the Eiffel tower, and you can't see it until you're one hundred yards into your walk. All of a sudden you turn to the left and there is the most incredible edifice on the planet, and your job is to just soak it in. That will inspire you to go to the next place and the next place and the next place.

Chapter 3

A conversation with Eric Lofholm

Eric Lofholm is a master sales trainer who has taught his proven sales systems to thousands of professionals around the world. He's the president and CEO of Eric Lofholm International, an organization he founded to professionally train people on the art and science of selling.

Eric is the author of *How to Sell In a New Economy, 21 Ways to Close More Sales*, and his newest book which is called *The System*.

Brian: Tell us a little bit about your background, your backstory, where you started, what you overcame, and how you got to where you are right now.



Eric: As I got started in sales I went to work for a real estate entrepreneur and I had an experience like the show “The Apprentice” with Donald Trump. I went in my 20’s. I had never accomplished anything businesswise in my life before, and I wanted to be mentored by this multimillionaire real estate investor. He hired me to be his assistant. It was a part-time job, and I had to do something else for him when I wasn’t being his assistant. He said, “I want you to do sales for me.” So that’s how I got my start in

sales. I had received no training and I was terrible at it.

At the end of my first year, in addition to being his bottom producer, I missed quota two months in a row and nearly lost my job. I was introduced to my sales mentor, Dr. Donald Moine and received professional training for the first time. What Dr. Moine did for me was he broke it down step by step, like an engineer’s mind, and I understood it for the first time ever. Then, once I understood it, boom, I just took off and went from worst to first in sixty days.

My natural gifting is teaching. So once I had Dr. Moine’s sales system. I started teaching people in my early 20’s what he taught me and I started producing sales champions. I then went and worked for Tony Robbins for three years and then fifteen and a half years

ago branched off and started my own company. We're a global sales training organization, and what we're all about is teaching people systems, step-by-step ways that generate more leads, set more appointments, and close more sales.

Brian: What was it like working for Tony Robbins?

Eric: It was interesting. He's one of the most charismatic human beings on the planet. He is a very systems-oriented guy. At least the division that I worked in was very step-by-step. We had a wonderful plan that we focused on and so I learned a lot from just being immersed in his culture and how his systems worked, and that was really the foundation for the success of my company. We model a lot of those systems so it was a great experience to prepare me for what I'm doing now.

Brian: That's really great. So you took a lot of the same types of systems and implemented them into your company and just really modeled what he was doing right?

Eric: Yeah. Part of Tony's backstory is he worked for Jim Rohn for five years. So Tony learned systems from Jim Rohn, brought them into his company. I learned some of those exact same Jim Rohn systems and brought them into my organization. So there is a history in how I do things dating back to Jim Rohn – and it works very predictably. So it's been great.

Brian: One thing I love about Tony Robbins is he says that success leaves clues and if you do things in a certain way, then you are going to get a certain set of results, and if you don't do things that certain way, you're not going to get those results.

You talk about having a championship mindset, or having a positive mindset, or having your mind in the right place when it comes to going about your day, going about your business. Let's talk about how important that is and how it can affect your sales.

Eric: Well, one of the most important things I've ever discovered about producing sales results is that selling is a very intentional style of communication. So one of the habits that I've developed before

I go in and deliver a presentation is I get really clear, “What is the exact result that I want to produce?” That’s a mindset thing. Then tactically, the how-to part, I think through the presentation specifically around the sequencing of the presentation. I get crystal clear on how I’m going to close so I know exactly how I’m going to wrap the presentation and I craft that presentation to guide the prospect towards the desired result that I want.

In my experience, most people don’t do that. They lack the preparation and advance the presentation. They tend to wing it and in a lot of cases, they are like “Hey, whatever happens, happens” as opposed to “willing” a sale.

If you think about a sporting event, there are a lot of times the last two minutes of a game, a team will come from behind and they will literally “will” that victory. Like they’re so far down, they’re down ten points in a basketball game with a minute and 20 seconds left and somehow they win. It is because they imposed their will on the other team and I have done this over and over and over again, and I have willed so many sales out of my intention because, when two people meet, Tony Robbins taught me, the person that’s the most certain will almost always influence the other person.

So mindset is a huge aspect of selling.

Brian: A lot of people have a somewhat aggressive attitude or somewhat arm-twisting attitude towards sales and that’s not really your philosophy at all. In fact, you’ve got a mantra that you live by: “Selling equals service.” A lot of people don’t think about that. They think about getting the sale, getting the money, taking commissions and running away, so to speak. But that’s not really what it’s all about.

Eric: Yeah, the commission part, the closing of the sale, that’s a byproduct of focusing on adding value. So certainly there are some people out there that apply high-pressure techniques. There are pushy sales people and so forth; I don’t believe in that. It still works, but it doesn’t work that well because people that do that get negative reports on the internet. There is no repeat business. So what I teach is elegant influence and it’s benefit-driven selling. Where you really focus on adding value to the prospect, and when we focus first on

adding value and serving the prospect, we have an essence to us. The other person will feel that. If we're being pushy, they feel that. If we're serving them, they feel that as well.

We're still going to close. We're still going to ask for the order. But we're going to do that after we've added value and we've made sure that the product or service that we're recommending truly creates more value for the prospect than the money we're asking for. When you do this, people will buy from you again and again. They'll refer you. Doors will open up for you that never would have opened before. Some of my greatest successes were doors that opened for me out of who I was being, how I showed up as a human being, and that they felt that they could trust me because they could. That's a huge part of sales greatness.

Brian: One of the things that you also talk about in your book about is staying in the conversation. Is that presale, during a sale, after the sale, what exactly does stay in the conversation mean?

Eric: It's an Eric Lofholmism and it really has to be explained because it wouldn't have meaning to somebody just looking at it by itself.

So, what I teach is I language my ideas as distinctions. So it's a set of distinctions and a distinction is an understanding beyond common knowledge. The number one distinction that I teach is stay in the conversation and what it means is that when a student starts training with me, what they initially learn is not the real value that I can bring them.

The real value comes from a series of conversations, whether those conversations happen by reading my book or listening to my audios or coming to a seminar that I do or one-on-one coaching with me. So the real value is the ongoing conversation to develop the ideas and so it's a way of me communicating to a student, you get the most value by continuing the conversation.

Brian: Building a relationship, that's really what it's all about.

Once you have a proper mindset and you know what your end goal is going to be in terms of developing not just the sale, but the

relationship, you have to have someone to talk to first and so it starts with generating leads and setting appointments. This is the part of sales that most people hate doing. How can we do this effectively and even make it fun?

Eric: So, there are three key systems that I teach to grow your business: lead generation, appointment setting, and lead conversion.

There are three ways to elevate your sales results: Inner game, which is mindset; Outer game, which is the how-to's; and then Action. So it all starts with lead generation, and we look at lead generation as a stand-alone system. So in other words, we forget all about appointment setting and lead conversion and it starts with "How many leads do I need? What is my lead inventory goal?" There is a vocabulary that sells greatness and part of that is lead inventory. We want to get leads in terms of systems, and we want to think in terms of online systems and offline systems. That could be a referral system, it could be a system over social media, it could be paid advertising, it could be warm market, it could be adjusting database, it could be cold calls, door knocking, and probably the simplest thing to do is look at the best practices in your industry. Then from those best practices, model them.

So like in my industry for example, I have a free magazine called I Love Selling. We create a lot of value and we don't charge for it, and that's a lead generation tip. If you give something that's truly valuable and you don't charge for it, you will attract people to you like a magnet. So we're in 60 countries with that magazine. The thing has just taken off because it's a really high-valued magazine, but we don't charge and it's digitally delivered.

In terms of lead generation, the first thing is systems and then look at what people in your industry are doing, model that and then what Jay Abraham taught me, my marketing coach, was model what people are doing in other industries. If you can model the system from another industry, it may create a breakthrough for you. You might be the only person in your industry doing it. So those are just a couple of different thoughts when it comes to lead generation.

Brian: Is there value, then, in trying things that nobody in your industry is doing just to see what works? Or would you suggest doing what other people are doing as potentially building your bread and butter and then branching out once you've got a baseline?

Eric: Both. Your baseline is what you're currently doing. So keep doing your baseline, but absolutely try other things. I tried something the other day on social media where I advertised a webinar where I was teaching the Jim Rohn speaker model, and it was a brand new concept that I came up with. In a typical webinar, we'd get 200 registrations. We got 900 registrations because I tried something new. But I didn't ditch my bread and butter, my baseline. Keep doing your baseline and then absolutely try new things. You never know when you're going to hit on something that could be huge.

When I did my sales magazine, I'd never done a magazine before. I'm like "Hey, we're just going to see what happens." Whatever happens, happens. We got on the iTunes new hot magazine list and we got in 60 countries and the thing just took off.

Brian: That's great. Do you think selling is different in this economy versus what it was a few years ago? Or does it really just come back to being a good sales person and being good at what you do?

Eric: Well there is one fundamental shift. Selling is selling, that hasn't changed. What's changed is the integration of technology into the sales process. Like what we're doing right now. Do you consider this to be a radio show or a podcast? What do you call this?

Brian: I can call it both actually. I call it a radio show but it is a podcast that people can listen to afterwards.

Eric: Perfect, here's the point. Ten years ago, you don't have a platform to do a radio show. The change in technology, ten years ago I'm not doing a magazine. Ten years ago I'm not delivering sales presentations over video streamed on the internet. So the point is that the fundamental change is the integration of technology into the sales process where the technology does some or in some cases all of the heavy lifting. The people that are adapting to that are the ones that are out there doing incredibly well. In 2008, when the economy

shifted, I recognized the trend, so I changed my entire business model. We do our seminars, not all of them, but a lot of them are web-based seminars. We still do live trainings, but they're done over the internet. So the people that are adapting at that level I think are the ones who are having the greatest success.

Brian: I think it's so interesting what you said that ten years ago we would not be doing this show or you would not be having your online magazine. It's all about learning skill sets and being very adaptable, for sure.

In any sales situation, people typically don't enjoy hearing objections to their offering. They think "Oh, they said no," or "They're asking questions" or "I hate questions." We should actually embrace that though, right?

Eric: Objections are a part of the process. There isn't a scenario where we eliminate them 100%. I mean we can do things to reduce the number of objections we get, but it's a normal, natural part of the sales process. So we don't want to avoid them by any stretch, but we do want to be very strategic in how we address them.

Brian: One thing that you suggest in your book is to have a list of objections that are pretty common. In fact, there are certain objections that are pretty common through any industry, whether it's "I don't have money," "I don't have time," "I have to talk to my spouse." You talk about having a script or having some idea of how you're going to respond to those in a very systematic way all the time.

Eric: It's interesting because if you ask most people what do you think of when you think of a script? It's canned, rehearsed, and mechanical; it's not authentic, it's just not me, it's robotic, so they resist it. Scripting is actually the most profitable idea that I've ever learned. There are many reasons why it's so persuasive, but one of them is that human beings respond in predictable ways.

So, when you ask for the order, if you're selling one-on-one, the way that I teach, you ask for the order and you're silent because part of the language of influence is silence, it's like giving the prospect a hot potato. So then, when you do that, they're predictably going to say

yes, no, or they're going to give you an objection, and it's just going to happen that way. If they give you an objection, such as "I don't have the time," now they gave you the hot potato back. Now you want to give them the hot potato back, or give them the hot potato back and ask for the order.

This is what happens between a dialogue with a sales champion and a prospect. So we can model that, and we can prepare for how we're going to respond when they give us those common objections. A simple script that anybody can say for virtually any objection is "Tell me more about that." "So how do you feel about moving forward?" and then you're silent, you're asking for the order. They go "Well, I need to talk it over with my wife". Okay, so now you've got to respond. You say "Well, tell me more about that." Now, at that point, they're now going to need to give you more information. It's probably not going to close the sale, but it keeps the conversation going.

If we can develop a series of responses that we're comfortable with, it's like we've got them on our success tool belt. It's going to give somebody a lot more confidence when the prospect raises an objection. So there are many different things that we can do. One of the techniques is, "Tell me more about that", another one is, "Is that your only concern?"

You handle an objection with a question. "The price is too high". "Is that your only concern?" Again it's probably not going to close the sale, but it's going to keep the conversation going. So the more confident you can get and the more responses you can become comfortable with, the more successful you're going to be.

There are typically 7-12 common objections in any industry. Not that many. Take the time, script out your best responses, ask people in your industry, "How do you handle this one? What do you say here?" Ask people in other industries, "How do you handle the time objection?" You document all of it, you practice it, and then when you're live with a prospect you're going to have a lot more confidence and you're going to have some really great responses.

Brian: When you say ask the people in your industry, do you find that people are open to helping you with stuff like that or do you find that people are guarding that stuff as almost proprietary trade secrets?

Eric: You know, it just really depends on the individual. Like for example you and I, if I asked you questions about your show and how you made it so successful and how you get your guests and the format, you'd probably be like "Oh yeah, not a problem." If you asked me questions about my magazine and how I did it, not a problem. I'd actually tell you to ask my partner because he's the brains behind the magazine. I'm the promoter of it, I get people to subscribe. He does all the mechanics of it. But I'm very collaborative in how I communicate and share with people. There are very few things that I wouldn't share with somebody else. It's just part of who I am as a person.

Some people are more secretive though. So you find out if they're open to it, and if they are, you pick their brain. Like you said earlier with Tony Robbins, success leaves clues.

Brian: I find that the really successful people want to help, and they are collaborative. They're only secretive about very few things like you just eluded to. In fact, I had a chance to speak at a high school graduation about a week and a half ago and that's one of the things I told them was if you are looking for ways to become successful and there's something you want to set out to do, ask someone how they did it. Ask for as much help as they're willing to give you. The successful people will help you because while you have a lot of common interest, it's just overlap. I mean your interests and their interests aren't completely compatible. There is going to be a uniqueness about you that you have to find.

Let's ask about getting referrals. The most cost effective way that someone can get new business is to look to your current customer list if you have some. What are the most effective ways of doing that? Do you just come right out and ask or is there a more subtle way of doing it? Is there a timing issue of when you should do it?

Eric: Here are a couple of specific things. Selling is a very intentional style of communication. So you can go in before you start the

presentation and have an intention that you're going to get referrals, which you then figure out at what point in the presentation I'm going to ask, you develop a script and you can do it in a very systematic way, and you can predictably produce referrals presentation after presentation. That's the first thing you can do.

The second thing is a reciprocal referral relationship, I call that RRR. You find somebody who can provide you leads on an ongoing basis and in return you provide them leads on an ongoing basis. I might go to somebody who's a copywriter and I don't consider myself a copywriter. I write sales scripts. So I might go to the copywriter and go "Hey, if you know anybody who needs a telemarketing script, refer them to me and if I come across anybody that needs any copywriting, I'll refer them to you," and they say, "Cool." We just set up a reciprocal referral relationship.

My favorite strategy is the POI (Person of Influence) strategy. Typically, when we get a lead we want to sell our product or service to that lead. That's our mindset, I get a lead, I deliver a presentation. With a POI, we leverage their network. It's a shift in thinking where I would look at you and instead of looking at you as buying a product from me, I would look at your network and you would be more valuable to me, with all the people in your network, maybe 100 times more valuable, than you as a client for me. So like Bill Glazer for example with Glazer-Kennedy, years ago, he promoted me to the Glazer-Kennedy database, one of the largest marketing databases in the country.

I didn't try and sell Bill Glazier my protégé program. Okay, I said "Bill can you promote me to your multi-thousand person network?" and from that, over 500 leads came into my database and I probably did \$100,000 in business. So Bill was far more valuable to me leveraging his network.

A lot of sales people, they don't even think like that. So sales people meet me, and I have a 21,000 person database all over the world, and they'll try and sell me their product, and there's nothing wrong with that. But, I might be 100 times more valuable to them as a referral

partner. It might be better for them to say, “Eric. You can have my (whatever) for free, will you promote me?” “Would you put me on a call with 100 of your top prospects or clients?”

This is a very powerful way of thinking. I have hundreds of these types of relationships, where I gain access to people’s networks. Sometimes I have them buy from me, but that’s probably my number one lead generation strategy.

Brian: Absolutely and that reminds me of a story I read in a book called *Three Feet from Gold* by Greg Reid and Sharon Lechter. It’s a great book and you talk about the power of influence, the person of influence concept. There was one specific part in that book where Greg, the main character, was talking to somebody, I think it was about the development of Velcro as a technology, and he said so how’d you build this big empire? How many sales did you make? The guy said I made one sale. I sold the concept to the most influential person in the manufacturing industry and then he spider webbed it out to his whole network and that’s how he got rich and it does work. The POI thing really does work. So if you are out there listening, thinking about who is your center of influence in whatever industry you’re looking at, find a way to become friends with them, approach them, and think about the network and not just the one sale.

I want to ask about how to close. How do I make more sales? Do you have specific strategies to recommend?

Eric: You know, there is a lot to answer that question. The number one closing tip that I teach is to have the prospect want what you’re offering, before you get to the close. So, in order to do that, you have to deliver a benefit-driven presentation. The heavy lifting is done in the body of the presentation, not in the close.

A second tip is that in a sales presentation, everything counts. You can get better in closing more sales by improving any one aspect of the sales presentation. So if you get better at trust and rapport, in theory it could help you close more sales. If you get better at identifying

customer needs, it could help you close more sales. Break down the sales process into every step and incrementally improve each step. If you improve each step, it makes the overall presentation far more persuasive.

One of the things that it comes down to is the structure of the close: you've built rapport, you've identified the need, you've brought the benefits to light, and you're now at the end of the presentation where you've created a desire on the side of the prospect to want your product or service. Then we've got to explain it to them and ask them for the order.

So I teach closing is as easy as one, two, three. Step number one is transition into the close. This is a bridge statement from the body of the presentation into the close. It's your way of saying to the prospect "Hello, we're closing now," and it's done elegantly. We really want to pre-frame this. Pre-framing is where you let the prospect know in advance what's going to happen. So we pre-frame them. There's going to be an offer at the end and then you transition to the close. It could be as simple as "What I'd like to do now is share with you how I work with clients like you." That would be an example of a bridge statement or transition statement.

Then we have the body of the close, step number two, and this is where you cover all of the components of the close. So what you want to do is make a list of every key thing that needs to be covered in the close. Key things are the price, the guarantee, the warranty, what's included, bonuses, method of payment, terms of payment, all of the structure things that need to be covered. You make a list of all those things and then you put that list in order and that's what makes up the body of the close.

Then step number three is the final, final close. In the final, final close is where you ask for the order, where you ask for commitment. In the final, final close, think of the Girl Scout selling Girl Scout cookies. So they'll say, "Would you like to buy some Girl Scout cookies?" and then they're silent. You have to respond and that script sells millions

of boxes of Girl Scout cookies. Well, we as entrepreneurs, business owners, salespeople, etc., we've got to close. You've got to ask for the order. I'm not saying be pushy. I'm saying you've got to ask. So I end every sales presentation with a clear and compelling call to action. I call that the final, final close.

I know before I get going to a presentation, I know exactly how I'm going to say it at the end. I know the language I'm going to use, I know the website I'm going to direct them to.

I'm going to talk about closing mechanism here. The mechanism is the order form, or they go on their iPhone and punch in their order or they go to a website or call a certain number. You need to know your order mechanism. You want your close to be clear and compelling. The more clear and compelling it is, the more confidence you're going to have when you're closing. So those are all things that make a difference in the close.

Brian: Once you have made the close and you have the deal in hand, that's where the relationship really begins. But what happens if the deal does not happen? Then, of course, there is something called follow-up. A lot of people are not very diligent about it. They think that it's the customer's job to call them back if they want to do it. No, that's not right. So let's talk about what you call in your book "The \$50,000 Idea" as it relates to follow-up.

Eric: Yeah, so the one powerful idea that you can all get from this is that selling is intentional. So I don't sit back and wait for people to call me. Sometimes they call me and I get organic sales, but I'm very proactive and intentional and follow-up is very intentional.

When you deliver a presentation and somebody does not buy from you, but they're still interested, there's the \$50,000 idea. If you actually did this, it'll put an extra \$50,000 in your pocket in increased commissions. It's this: follow-up, follow-up, follow-up until they buy or die. You take the sale to a conclusion of a yes or a no.

What most people do, they deliver the presentation, and the person says I need to think about it. Call me on Tuesday. Salesperson calls them on Tuesday and they don't answer and then that's it, they never call them again.

So what we do is, we're committed, we're committed to resolution. That's really the bottom line. We're committed to resolution. So we're going to continue to follow-up with this person until they give us answer one way or the other. We're going to be politely persistent. I have closed many, many sales by applying this philosophy. If you can just be intentional: intentional with your lead generation---if you go to a networking event and you want to pull five leads, five business cards... intentional in your marketing, number of calls you make on a daily basis. You get intentional, you're going to produce the result and it's one of the secrets to producing outstanding results is having that intention. You do it with your radio show. It's once a week that you do this, right? So you have an intention, like I'm going to have a guest on every week and if you didn't have one-on-one time maybe you do the show yourself, but it's out of that intention. You reached out to me and I said yes.

You caused me to be on your show. I didn't try to reach out to you, because I didn't know about the show. I knew of you through Facebook, but I didn't know you had this awesome show. It was highly rated on iTunes and all that. So when you reached out, it was an easy yes but you caused this out of your intention. Steve Jobs, when he was alive, he talked about this. That we have unbelievable influence over our life and what we produce out of our own intention.

Brian: Talk specifically about how you've built your business online. As you mentioned before, the development of technology and its impact on the selling process has exploded in just in the last 10-15 years. Now we're really embracing it and trying to figure out what we're really going to do with it. Some people have figured this out really well, and others are still trying to figure out what exactly they want to do with their business in terms of an online platform. So, let's pick your brain about social media. Which platforms do you use the most and are most important to you? How do you build a community online? How do you build a following?

Eric: So I'm most active on Facebook. I do have a Twitter. I'm on LinkedIn, a little bit on Google+, but the majority of what I do is on Facebook. How I use it strategically is I post and I think about the end user that's going to read my post. If you think about people on Facebook, let's just face it, people are addicted to Facebook. So they're on there and they stalk and I'm not saying that in a negative way but it's just the reality. There are people I stalk too, people stalk Facebook profiles. In other words, we have our favorites on Facebook and we check those pages when we're online.

So my thought is, I want my page to be a page that people stalk. I want to create so much value that I don't want to just show up on the newsfeed and if they happen to be online when my post goes through the newsfeeds, which only 11% or something go in the newsfeed of your friends' posts. So I don't want to rely on that. I want to create so much value that people go on my page and they like ten of my posts in a row or they comment on three of my posts.

I have a tremendous amount of activity on my Facebook and the reason is I don't post negative stuff, I never post negative, I always post positive. So I attract people that are interested in reading positive posts and then I have a couple of signature posts. Every day I start off my first post of the day is "Today is a great day" and I always post that. That's my signature post, and then I'll do an affirmation and then I encourage other people to post an affirmation. So then it's another positive thing.

I have certain pictures that I post over and over and over again, not necessarily every day. Then I will post thought-provoking things when I'm understanding something in my life that's just raw and in the moment. I'll write it in a positive, encouraging way for people to learn from it.

So those posts typically get 50-100 likes on them. I've done that as a strategy and it's been really successful.

One interesting thing about our posts; you have no clue who is reading your posts. One funny thing, just a side note--- let's say somebody says they're single and complaining that they can't find a boyfriend

or a girlfriend, and that's their post. Why would you post that? You're repelling everybody from wanting to connect with you. Because the reality is nowadays if somebody is single, they might end up meeting them on social media. It's just one of the ways we meet people.

Brian: Who inspires and motivates you?

Eric: The person I'm probably most inspired by lately is no longer alive and that's Steve Jobs. I'm so thankful that there are documentaries on him, there are books on him, there are audios, videos on YouTube, and I watch these same audios and videos over and over again and I'm so inspired by his way of thinking. He became a billionaire in two different businesses, he changed multiple industries, and it was never about money for him. It was always about creating quality products, thinking about the end user. Design was important to him, innovation, thinking in combinations. That's inspiring to me.

Epilogue

As you can see, these were three outstanding conversations with people who are experiencing high levels of achievement in their lives and careers. Clearly, success is not a straight line. None of these guests had their success handed to them on a silver platter. They all had to overcome many obstacles---sometimes very serious ones----along the way.

The important lesson we can all take from this is that no matter where we came from, no matter what material blessings we experienced growing up, no matter what our family lives were like, everything we want is out there for the taking.

The first step is having absolute clarity about what you want and WHY you want it. You can have all of the tools, resources, and connections you could ever need...but if you don't have intensely personal reasons why you want to achieve your dreams, you will quit at the first sign of trouble.

Secondly, have a plan. There are lots of people giving advice on how you should structure your goals and how far in advance to place them. I will tell you what gets me fired up---set a 6 month goal. In fact, set 5 of them. If you set too many goals, you likely won't achieve any of them. Once you have that figured out, decide where you need to be after 90 days, then 60 days, then 30 days. This is reverse-engineering as taught by Gary Vaynerchuk. When I did this for myself recently, I realized the 30 days goals were completely attainable, yet they still stretched me.

Finally, you have to work the plan. Having goals and doing nothing is useless. All of the great champions in this book had to overcome and make a decision to keep going when things got difficult. In fact, once you commit to a direction and start moving toward your dreams, you WILL get tested. You need to remember why you started, and what achieving your goals would mean to you.

To stay connected to me and what I am working on, you can subscribe to my newsletter at www.briankwright.com to get FREE access to 7 more of my earliest interviews.

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It was a pleasure sharing this journey with you

A series of powerful conversations with some of
the most successful people in the world

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Brian K Wright is the host of Success Profiles Radio, and his mission is to motivate and inspire others to discover their unique talents and follow their dreams in life. With extensive experience teaching and training in academic and corporate environments, he understands that many people live far beneath their potential, primarily because they don't really believe they deserve success. Through his experience and research, Brian has learned and practiced the principles he teaches in his book "Student Leadership Strategies: 21 Easy Ways to Become a Center of Influence in Your Group," and the forthcoming book "Success On Your Own Terms".

Throughout his career, Brian has been a top performer in the areas of sales, customer service, training, and has also written resumes professionally for students, working professionals, and executives. He is available to speak on the topics of motivation/inspiration, leadership, and goal setting. He resides in the Phoenix, Arizona area.

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