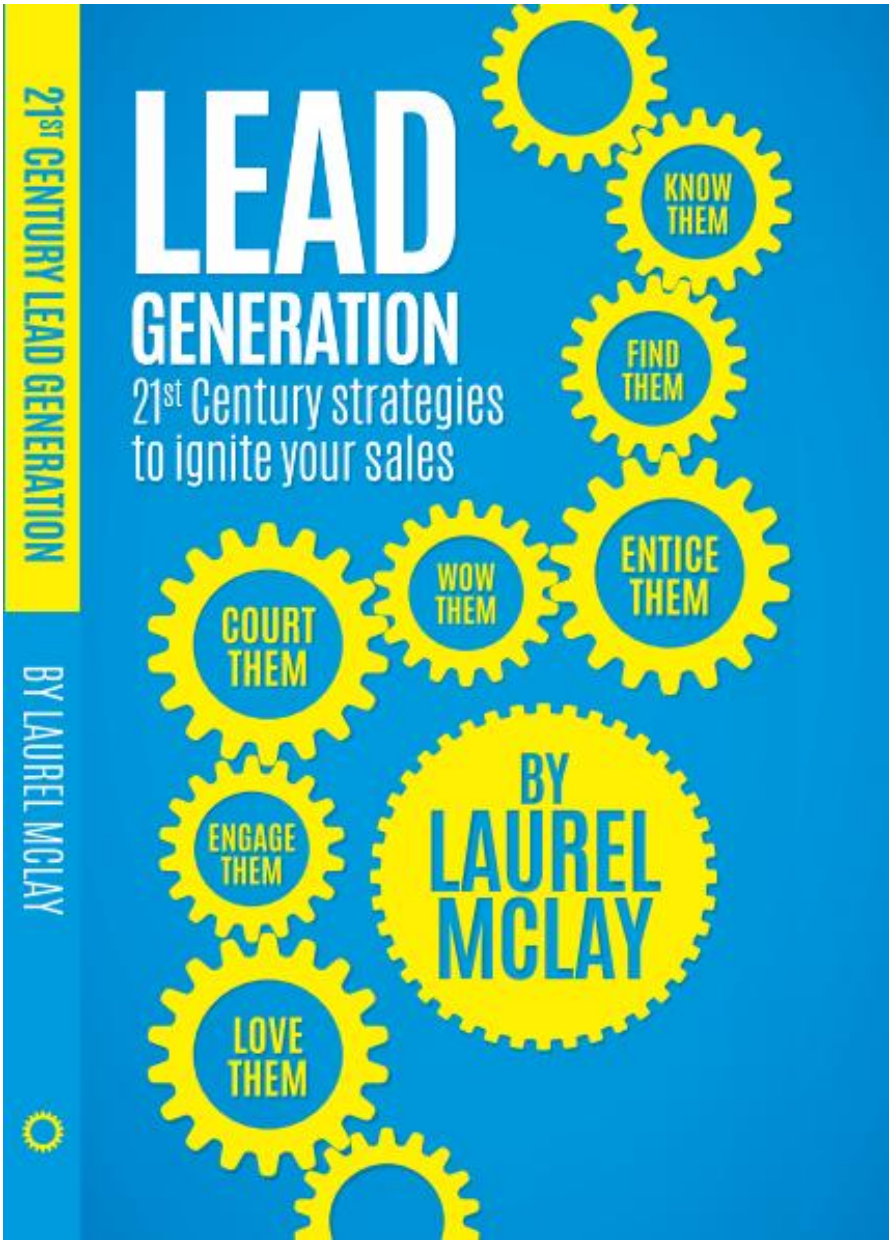
21st CENTURY LEAD GENERATION
BY LAUREL MCLAY
LEAD
GENERATION
21st Century strategies
to ignite your sales
KNOW THEM
FIND THEM
ENTICE THEM
WOW THEM
COURT THEM
ENGAGE THEM
LOVE THEM
BY
LAUREL
MCLAY

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Dedication

To the three guiding lights in my life;

My husband Geoff, my coach Sally Anderson and the founder of Thought Leader's Global, Matt Church

21st Century Lead Generation

Ignite your Sales and Amplify your Success

LAUREL MCLAY

MODELS BY JEANETTE BREMNER

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Acknowledgements

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Mark Porath, who challenged me to explore my purpose, and was the key catalyst for me taking the leap from paid employment into entrepreneurialism.

Foreword

Can you imagine Seth Godin, Tim Ferriss, and Michael Gerber, before they were known entities in the world? The gifts that they have given since reaching such acclaim for their innovative thinking, their creative entrepreneurial genius and their absolute unequivocal ballsy courage to rock the status quo is immeasurable. So what's the relevance? Laurel McLay is right up there in the same genre, one of the most innovative thinkers I know, a pure creative entrepreneurial genius and by crikey one of the most ballsy courageous women I have the privilege of knowing. I heard a quote that so describes Laurel recently:

History shows us that people who end up changing the world are always nuts until they are right and then they are geniuses – John Elliot

For those fellow entrepreneurs out there, most of us at some stage have felt like we were going nuts given the years of investment we have made into our creative endeavors. So when status quo finally sits up and takes notice it's almost humorous the attention we receive. To see Laurel now receive the acknowledgement for her wisdom which she so rightfully deserves is icing on the cake!

Watching Laurel's transcendence to date has been my privilege. Some people change, some people transition to different levels in life, some are lucky enough to know what transformation feels like but VERY few ever experience transcendence where you completely and utterly change in form. Some liken it to the metamorphic process. I have watched this woman go from years of scarcity consciousness to now experiencing levels of abundance some would only dream of, years of betrayal in life and business to being one of the most loyal friends and business woman one could ever wish for, years of disappointment for some key personal goals to NEVER EVER EVER giving up hope that one day they could be achieved, and there

were years of aloneness, feeling different, not fitting in, to now experiencing love at all levels of her existence, almost like some anointed reward for believing in the face of no evidence. Years of knock backs time and time again to reaching a level of serenity that is inspiring. She deserves an award for the level of investment she has made into her own reinvention, and that she continues to invest in; often she has been judged, criticized about why she continually works on self improvement, self awareness, self empowerment, well she is walking proof of the power of ones self determination to live a life that is lived to the fullest.

I have been known to call, endearingly, 'our' Laurel – *Floral Laurel/Effervescent Laurel*…why you may ask. (*Floral Laurel)* for she would without reservation be one of the most colorful illuminatingly vibrant people you will EVER have the privilege of meeting coupled with *(Effervescent Laurel)* an energy level that even an Eveready® battery would feel jealous of, no kidding. She operates at warp factor nine and then some. Couple these two attributes and you know you are in the presence of someone pretty special; she is one of a kind and proud to call her my friend, colleague, peer, teacher, wise counsel.

By now you realize the caliber of the woman, now you can appreciate the body of work now in front of you based on grounded tried and proven methodology over two decades. This legacy now deserves to be in the hands of those making a significant difference on the planet.

If you are serious about working with one of the best in the area of 21st century sales, then look no further. Those dedicated to getting their thought leadership to market are invited to read this book, apply its teachings and pay it forward.

Sally Anderson
Founder
Sally Anderson International/Freefall International Limited

Introduction

WHY DID I WRITE THIS BOOK?

I have been a little bit obsessed with studying the behaviors of successful people (and actually unsuccessful people as well!) and one thing that I have noticed is that successful people just get on with things. One of the biggest obstacles that we face is knowing where to start and just getting on with it, and even getting ourselves out of the way a bit. And that's what I have chosen to do in writing this book.

How many times do we hear that lead generation is a critical element in successful businesses and practices? But the fact is, we'll do anything to avoid getting out there and telling people about what we do and the problems that we can solve for them. We tend to let procrastination, perfectionism, distraction and sabotage get in our way and we avoid doing what is critical to our success.

But so often, when we just give all of that up and just get on with it, it's actually not as scary as we thought it would be! And that's what I have found in writing this book, once I finally started the process.

In writing it, I want to share it with those who have faced (or will face) the challenges that I have. Sometimes we make it so hard for ourselves and apply a heap of extra meaning to situations, and that doesn't really serve us.

In sharing this with you, I would love you to decide after reading this book that you are just going to get on with it and create some effective sales and lead generation activity of your own.

SO WHO AM I TO WRITE THIS BOOK?

I have been living and breathing sales for 15 years. I have also observed others around me who *don't* live and breath sales. Time and time again, people break some very basic rules, and once we are aware of those rules, we can be so much more successful in increasing sales of our business or practice.

We often think we need to understand complex technology and complex ideas, but if you start to think of it as a very basic skill set then you can start to see how basic activities can create brilliant results.

I can't tell you enough how simple, simple, simple it is.

There is no golden nugget to lead generation. It's about getting clarity on what you do, being clever about the way that you share what you do with others, and having conviction that what you do serves others.

It also helps to be a little bit playful, and daring, and take some risks. Why not be a little bit creative because honestly, we can be so flaming significant, dramatic and serious when it comes to lead generation?

WHAT IS THE BOOK ABOUT?

This is no heavy-duty academic tome. It is a practical framework about what you need to do at a bare minimum to become more successful in selling. It gives you no more excuses.

Follow this framework and you will get sales!

The challenge is that most people don't. Lead generation is a key part of successful sales. Let’s face it, there's no point in selling if there is no one in your sales funnel. Amazon has just over 17,000 titles on lead generation, whereas there are over 2.2 million books on sales. That is an interesting split, because lead generation is probably one of the most critical elements in a sales lifecycle.

Having said that I intend to give you more than just lead generation in this book; I will cover the whole sales process. I just want to support you in making your life easier. Did I tell you that sales is actually really simple?!

WHO IS THIS BOOK INTENDED FOR?

This book is intended primarily for people who are experts or thought leaders.

That is, people who are speakers, authors, trainers, mentors, facilitators and coaches. I am an accredited Thought Leader Mentor and not only do I do this myself, but I also work with other people to be more commercially successful by 'selling their thoughts' this way.

Thought leadership is all about positioning. In other words, think of an expert (who knows something) and an authority (who is known for knowing something). The difference is in positioning; get yourself positioned, people start coming to you, instead of the other way around, and your sales increase. I will be covering the thought leadership framework further on in this book.

It's also for owners of small to medium businesses and anyone who is responsible for sales.

It might even be that you don't own the company yourself, but you're responsible for selling. In fact, really this book is for anyone who is responsible for selling. It's probably not super relevant for anyone who is involved in highly complex sales although there will still be some value you can obtain from it.

So essentially, the key market is individuals, either (1) experts, (2) owners of small to medium businesses or (3) anyone responsible for selling!

So what are the challenges that these business owners, experts and sales professionals face?

Well, to start, they're often not trained in how to sell or market. They're trained in something like finance or wellness, or they can manufacture some extraordinarily cool device that helps change people's lives for the better.

Generally they don't feel that they're very good at selling. I used to own a sales recruitment company and there were so many people who just wanted to hire a sales person because they just didn't feel they were good at it.

But more importantly they just didn't like it. For some reason, everyone seems to think that in order to be successful at sales, you need to…. *cold call*! Tell me someone who loves to cold call and I'll tell you that they're convincing themselves. I know that we can jolly ourselves into getting out there and pounding the pavements; the good news is that sales can be a lot easier than that.

One other key problem that these individuals face is that they don't follow up. Just because that person you talked to six months ago or a year ago didn't want to buy then doesn't mean they're not ready to buy now. Can you think of anyone who you connected with in the last two years, who you haven’t gotten around to following up?

But I think the biggest challenge that these individuals face is feeling like a failure by not getting out there and doing the sales. They'll avoid it like anything, find all the excuses not to do it, and then they'll feel sick to the stomach, because suddenly they realize that their pipeline isn't looking as fat and healthy as they would like it to.

It's time to not tolerate it anymore.

Take responsibility, get on with it, and you might even enjoy it.

INTENTION OF THE BOOK

One thing that I believe marks the success of a sales approach is relentless and focused activity on one particular outcome. Another way that we might frame that is calling it a campaign.

1. Once you have read this book you should have everything you need to know to launch your own relentlessly focused campaign on at least one of your services or products.

2. You will also understand what makes the difference between successful and unsuccessful sales, and you'll have a lot better understanding of the value of online tools and good old offline old-fashioned practices.

3. Many people are seduced by bright shiny objects. These might be social media initiatives, PR campaigns, media presence and large complex websites. You will learn the difference between lead generation and brand awareness, and understand the role that both play (and the true value of lead generation).

4. You will understand the importance of clarity; what value do you provide, who values that, and what is unique about it?

5. There is some astounding research around the science of motivation and game design. My extraordinary mentor, Dr Jason Fox has written an outstanding book on this called The Game Changer. In this book I outline why being playful and daring can really make a difference to your commercial success.

6. I am not personally an advocate of scripts, but there IS definitely a way to frame a conversation when you are in front of someone and sharing your value (we call these sales meetings belly to belly conversations; you will be learning the importance of these). This book not only guides you through setting up your own

framework to clearly convey your value, but also how to not let them off the hook when they utter those killer words; ‘let me go away and think about it’!

7. Because mindset is such a huge part of selling, this will be covered too. What beliefs and behaviors are holding you back? These beliefs can be tricky little things; you seriously may not be aware how much impact they have; I want to shine the light on these little bugbears, and get you out of your own way and enjoying commercial success.

8. And there is a whole lot more stuff around how to set up your diary, your accountability mechanism, how you manage referrals, celebrate wins; essentially I am sharing what I have learnt and what I know having experienced 15 years living and breathing selling.

if you are really in a bad way, go straight to the triage chapter!

Just a caveat, if you are reading this book because you are in absolute dire straits and are seriously facing the prospect of your business being shut down or having to go back and get a ‘real job’, then I suggest you go straight to Chapter 19, Triage – Stop the Bleeding! This is the intense, immediate activity that is required to elevate you out of this desperate situation. There is some pressure to be applied; it’s not necessarily pretty, but it has certainly altered my course of events for the better, more than once!

The results will show up sooner rather than later when you apply triage principles. Please note this is certainly an ambulance at the bottom of a cliff approach. Hopefully you've picked up this book before it's got to that stage.

OVERVIEW OF BOOK

This book is divided into three primary sections. Part one is the background story on sales. Part two is all about lead generation, and part three is a broader approach on successful selling as a whole. There are some chapters which relate to considerations for your specific situation, ie if you are a (1) Thought Leader or expert, (2) an owner of a small to medium enterprise or (3) an employed sales professional. Additionally, I look at the future of sales and what you should be doing next, straight after reading this book. It's all very well to read the book, HOW are you going to apply it to your business or practice?

To go into parts one, two and three in more detail;

Part one: Background Story

Here, I'm going to share my own personal history and how I moved from absolutely hating selling to fully embracing it as a career. It's funny, people think I am a 'natural' at selling; I can promise you, I got here kicking and screaming, when actually, I didn't really need to be so dramatic about it! I will share my thoughts on the key principles of successful selling; namely clarity, cleverness, conviction, playfulness and daring. I am also going to explore the key reasons we avoid sales and the difference between brand awareness and lead generation.

Part two: Lead Generation

An introduction not only to lead generation, but also to what I call my lead generation machine. This takes you step by step through every part of the lead generation process. We'll look at the ABCs of technology and the ABCs of offline tools.

Part three: Successful Sales

In part three we're going to explore mindset, the importance of face-to-face conversations, whether in person or virtual; and we're going to look at different support mechanisms to ensure that you can stay on track. This is also where I load you up with a whole bunch of tips and tricks to help you amplify your sales pipeline (and convert it) beyond recognition.

IN CLOSING; THE RAPIDLY CHANGING MARKET

I was looking at reviews on top selling lead generation books in Amazon. One of the key criticisms was that some of the information was already out of date, particularly around technology. Sometimes these books were less than a year old!

According to Moore's law the power of computers is doubling every two years.

By the time you are reading this, there could well be a bunch of new sales tools and approaches, which don't even exist right now.

Whilst in the good old agriculture, industrial and information ages, we typically focused around routine cognitive tasks in solving known problems, we now have computers to do that for us.

What we need to focus on now is solving new problems. Problems we don't even know exist yet! And that goes for sales;

We need to focus on solving new problems in selling, that we don't even know exist!

I'm very excited about 21st century learning. The key skill we should be teaching our kids in schools is how to learn, how to unlearn, and then how to relearn. That is simply because what is relevant today may not be relevant even next week.

Additionally, because information is so freely available it is now a commodity, like water or air.

So it's not what you know, it's what you do with what you know that is key and that is what I want you to bear in mind when reading this book.

Don't be wedded to particular technology. Think about the underlying structure and how you can make the most out of that structure.

Be creative about it! What can't be automated? Something that is still uniquely human, that is, creativity and making meaning of all the information overload. Come out with your own approach, but use the frameworks in the book.

It's all about trying something different in a rapidly changing world where typical and traditional sales and retail roles are vanishing quicker than you think. So go on, be a bit brave. Do something different with your lead generation but follow the basics in the book and I know that you'll create a successful and healthy, fat sales pipeline.

PART ONE

- THE BACKGROUND STORY -

Chapter 1 - A Love Story; Me and Sales

I graduated with a degree in psychology from Otago University in Dunedin and set off to find my first 'real' job, full of hope and wonder. I moved to Christchurch and I decided to go and speak with a recruitment consultant to find out what kind of role I would be best suited for, having done a degree in psychology. This was my first ever interview for a full time job, which wasn't even an actual interview; it was more of a fact finding mission. The owner of the recruitment company offered me a role there and then.

Would I consider being a recruitment consultant and working for him?

Oh my goodness, I couldn't believe my luck! As far as I was concerned, I was going to interview people for their dream jobs day in day out; how important was that? It also fitted really well with my psychology background.

The first two months of that role were probably the hardest in my entire life.

Having gone from being a free spirited student I suddenly had targets to make, people to please, and a job to do. The worst thing about it was I had to ... drum roll ... **cold call.** When I think back to the value proposition now, it was actually quite a cool one;

We provided temporary contractors to fill sheet metalworking, turner and fitter roles in engineering firms. The approach was simple;

1. Find companies that were advertising in the local newspaper for a fitter, turner, or sheetmetal worker
2. ring them up, and say, "Hey, if you're looking for someone immediately, we've got some people, some good qualified

people who could help you in the meantime”

Of course all I did was get absolutely terrified about picking up the phone.

I've been taught through my upbringing not to bother anybody, never to be too much of a nuisance, and personally, I was simply blind to the actual value I was offering. I cringed at the thought of annoying these ultra-important people.

I remember my targets were to cold call ten people a week (that’s really not very many calls!), and I used to feel physically sick about it. In spite of myself, I managed to create a very successful contracting business; we ended up with around about 30 people working in the contracting roles, with me delivering a very healthy return to my boss, and also resulting in me being able to buy a car for the first time in my life with the commissions (the fact that I owned that car for less than 24 hours before someone ran into it while it was parked and wrote it off is beside the point).

Of course, I then rested on my laurels for a bit, something that we'll be talking about in Chapter Two. Because I was doing so well, I conveniently gave up making the new sales calls, and my boss was okay about that too, because hey, we were all making money. He was really coming from a good place, because he knew how much I hated the cold calling.

Guess what happened? Eventually the project where most of the people who worked with me were contracted came to an end. There I was steering down the barrel of a very lean, almost non-existent pipeline. I tried, I really tried to muster up the courage to start cold calling again, but needless to say, my future as a recruitment consultant was over for the time being. I ended up working as a “Children in Theater Actor” dressing up as a spider and performing environmental plays to schools (which actually was lots of fun!).

The belief that I fervently adopted in that very moment was;

Sales is bad! Sales is something scary that you just don't want to do.

For about the next ten years of my life, I avoided it at all costs. The sad thing is, now I look back at who I was and how much I loved going out and socializing. I believe I would have been a fantastic salesperson in my 20s and 30s, going out, forming relationships, and enjoying the thrill of the chase of sales. However, after returning from my 'Overseas Experience' and flitting around the world, I chose a far safer, more consultant-oriented role, which really didn't utilize my potential.

Just under ten years later, I met my future business partner, who was extraordinarily persuasive and managed to convince me to start up a recruitment company with her. There I was back in the game where I had kicked off my career all those years earlier.

Again, full of anticipation (and a healthy dose of naivety), I gleefully agreed to start up this company with her. Interestingly enough, I had also just split up from a long-term relationship and moved out of my house, so everything in my life was changing at the same time; sometimes that's not a bad thing. I got so carried away with the thrill and the entrepreneurialism of it all that I overlooked one critical factor; who was going to sell?

My business partner was six months pregnant at the time and she wasn't in a position to go out and start forging the relationships, so there I was again faced with that telephone and going out and connecting with people that I'd never met before. By this stage, I also had a number of key contacts within the IT industry, which is the industry where we focused our recruitment. The interesting thing was this;

Reaching out to people I didn't know to try and sell them something was scary enough. The thought of actually asking people who were my friends or acquaintances, if they would like to buy from me, was even more terrifying!

I found myself in a position where I had absolutely no choice and all I could do was get out there and start connecting with people and sharing what we did. As an aside, what we did was actually pretty cool because we focused very specifically on certain aspects of the IT industry, like just a handful of very specialized roles within it. We also gave great candidate care, responding individually to every single person who applied for a role (in such a way that they knew we had actually bothered to read their cv).

I remember so vividly Wednesday mornings 10:00am till 12:30pm, which is when I would carve out dedicated time to sit down and make those calls. I would have a list[1] to work and I wouldn't stop till I had 10 actual conversations with people.

As a rule of thumb (and I find that it is still the case all these years later), it generally took me about two and a half hours of constant phone calling to have ten actual conversations. I remember striking off each completed call in a tally system, one, two, three, four, and five! I remember drawing a strike (much like being in prison and counting down the days till release) each time I managed to get to have a sales conversation and gritting my teeth all the way through it until I managed to reach those ten people. It was such a fantastic feeling afterwards when I had that out of the way.

As time went on, two things happened.

[1] That's one of the key things about getting on the phones and connecting with people; have your list prepared first, with basic information like name, title, company and contact details. Because we are so easily distracted, you want to have all this information ready beforehand, so you simply go through each call in quick succession. If you stop to find a number or name, chances are you will find yourself not getting back into the call ‘zone’.

Firstly, I began to resent it a whole lot less and secondly, people started agreeing to see me.

We built that company into a multimillion dollar company within three years and it became number two on the Deloitte Fast 50 for New Zealand.

I continued to hold the key sales role through my time with ITmaniacs and actually ended up loving the thrill of the chase of developing and maintaining those wonderfully crucial relationships. After a nasty business partnership breakup (which is another book in itself), I decided that I would do what I now knew and loved, and set up a sales recruitment company all by myself.

We talk later in the book about money beliefs and I had avoided a lot of the money activities within my first business because I simply had such a bad relationship with money. Starting up and taking responsibility for a business is a great way to get very present to managing money, and understanding your relationship with it; simply stated, you can’t avoid it!

With my sales recruitment company, I spent all day either communicating with people who were looking for top salespeople or talking with people who were looking for top sales roles. I very quickly got to understand that there were two types of people, (1) those who are prepared to put themselves out there and we often call those hunters, and (2) those who simply wanted to nurture existing relationships, and they are usually known as account managers.

Please note that I'm in no way judging those who don't want to put themselves out there and drive new business. However, I realized that those who really were courageous in getting out there and creating new business were the ones who were going to be

more commercially successful. I certainly learnt, sometimes through the hard way, what made a great salesperson and what didn't. Of course, again, I was wholly responsible for the actual selling, selling of salespeople, and so my skills were better crafted and honed than ever before.

The irony was that I realized it really was pretty simple, just get out there and do it.

I have to confess that at the time my company wasn't my highest priority as I was very keen to start a family and that was proving to be quite a difficult challenge for me (I was pushing 40 years old after all).

After some heartbreaking miscarriages, I finally managed to have a successful pregnancy and I sold that company to a wonderful industry colleague. The next few years were focused on creating my family and enjoying that precious baby phase.

There were three years between Cameron and Lucas and in that time I actually ended up cold calling for particular organizations. It was super convenient, working from home, charging a decent hourly rate, and having the flexibility, which is so desired by part-time workers who are mums.

Funny to think that after all those years of hating doing it, that is what I was solely doing; cold calling.

As I mentioned right at the beginning of this book, one of my passions is understanding how people lead extraordinary lives and are successful, and personal development has really been my biggest obsession.

Over all these years, I received incredible guidance from my angel and coach, Sally Anderson. The support that she gave me was truly life changing.

Once my youngest boy, Cameron was nudging two years old, the time came for me to choose to commercialize this obsession and I become certified as one of Sally's coaches.

This was probably one of the largest financial investments of my life, but I also knew intuitively it was the right thing to do. There I was again with a service to sell and needing to form new relationships with new people to become commercially successful.

On top of that, I had the added challenge of cringing about the label **life coach**. I am not sure what you think about when you hear that term, but sadly, I have been influenced by meeting a number of 'life coaches' through the years, who are not only 'walking the talk' in having a fabulous life of their own, but have also refused to 'do the work' on themselves. Boy, that sounds judgmental! Thankfully the wonderful coaches I have been meeting recently have bucked that trend.

So how could I differentiate myself from the mass of other coaches in the market place?

Well, Sally is one of the biggest advocates of Thought Leaders Global, an incredible organization founded by Matt Church.

On her recommendation, I invested in a four-day course in Sydney called Million Dollar Expert, which is all about packaging your thoughts for commercial success. It shows you how to be very, very clear on your uniqueness, what problems you can solve and who values that.

Being exposed to this framework was like coming home. I couldn't believe how much it resonated with me, how powerful it was, and how exciting it was to explore it.

In less than a year, not only was I applying the principles to my own coaching practice but I'd also become accredited as a thought leader mentor myself.

In Chapter 26, I give you an overview of thought leadership. If you are an expert, someone who sells your thoughts for a living or would like to be, I strongly recommend you read this chapter as a priority and explore the journey yourself. The legacy program, Million Dollar Expert has now been replaced by the powerful Thought Leader's Business School. 150 of us congregate quarterly for immersion sessions and the results for the students have been astounding.

My uniqueness is all about seizing opportunities and getting out there and infusing other people's unique gifts across the planet. In other words, supporting others to truly live and breathe their legacy.

One thing I can't stand is best-kept secrets, whether it's experts, small businesses, or anything else.

The way to create your legacy, is to ensure you have clarity, cleverness and conviction.

What I've been focusing on recently is helping people to get clear on who they are and what value they provide, and I call that **clarity.** Clarity is all around the thought leadership principles.

I also support them on being very clever about how they get that message out there, and I call that **cleverness**. This is where my years of generating leads come into play.

Finally, I focus on how much people are connected to truly believing that they have value and to knowing and loving their purpose, and we call that **conviction**. This is where the extraordinarily powerful Freefall curriculum pioneered by Sally

Anderson is absolutely life changing.

I have invested over $100,000 and many hours of time learning from the best and experiencing the highs and the lows of running my own company and my own practice and driving both to brilliant commercial success. Now in sharing this story with you, I am excited about you not having to go through that journey yourself in order to experience the same.

Chapter 2 - Why do we Avoid Sales?

Having recruited and coached many individuals who are responsible for selling and observed their biggest challenges, it is all extraordinarily simple.

This is probably the key thing you will learn out of this entire book

Just get out there and start selling!

Simple, isn't it? Obviously you want to make sure that (a) you've got some great clarity, (b) you have a smart way of sharing your story and (c) that you truly believe in what you do.

But let's look at the worst-case scenario; even if you weren't very clear, you didn't have a great strategy for getting your services and products known out there and you didn't even believe that you offered great value, there would probably still be someone who would eventually buy from you!

Yes, clarity, cleverness and conviction are key to being a successful sales person. But by my reckoning, the most important thing is just getting on out there and doing it. It's like throwing mud at the wall, sooner or later, something is going to stick!

So why don't we just get out there and do it?

I believe there are five key reasons. They are:

1) perfectionism,

2) distraction,

3) sabotage

4) spreading ourselves too thin

5) resting on our laurels.

Let’s look at each of these in detail.

1. PERFECTIONISM

As part of my ontological[2] coaching, I know, as you probably do too, that many of our beliefs and behaviors are formed early on in our childhood. In fact, there are generally three primary events that occur in our childhood, which cause to make decisions about ourselves that end up impacting our lives way more than we can imagine.

It might be something that our mummy or daddy said when we were five years old, maybe saying that our picture was really not quite as beautiful as it possibly could be. In that moment, we made a decision that we had to hold ourselves to a higher standard, because we felt so bad about letting our mum or dad down. That resulted in a relentless pursuit of perfectionism going forward.

Brene Brown has been pioneering and groundbreaking in her overt discussions around shame and vulnerability. Many of us would simply feel ashamed if we presented as anything but our best to anyone else. Now, perfectionism is a little bit of an enemy in many parts of our life, but it sure is a challenge in lead generation or sales.

I am amused when I see people waiting until they get their offering just right or wanting their websites to be just perfect before they could possibly consider getting out there and selling. One of the reasons I resonate so strongly with the Thought Leaders' philosophy is that Peter Cook, co-founder of Thought Leaders Business School, talks about just getting out there and selling something.

Something that he shares is that until you're earning around $360,000 dollars annually as an expert, you really only need a phone number and a very basic website, or even just a LinkedIn profile. But so many of us want to get the CRM (client relationship management

[2] Ontology is defined as dealing with the nature of being, or the study of what it is to be human.

system) set up, the website perfect or our marketing collateral looking just beautiful.

The challenge is when we are spending so much time and often money on our stunning websites, we are not getting out there and having conversations with people, which is the thing that is REALLY going to make us more commercially successful.

I understand that more often than not it's actually avoidance that is playing out and that you simply do not want to get out there and start having conversations about the value that you provide.

Look, I think good quality material and programs are fabulous, but the fact is, at some stage you're going to need to get out there. Then you can let the market decide for you whether that approach works or not. At Thought Leader's, we celebrate a 50% failure rate for launching new offerings. In other words, for every offering that we successfully launch, there is another one that we expect will fail!

That's something many people just can't handle.

In summary, give up the perfectionism, embrace a bit of failure, take a risk, get yourself out there and certainly don't be ashamed of any kind of response that you think that you'll get.

You know it's just a story and that the voice inside your head is simply your little five-year-old self, who is just a little bit worried about what mummy and daddy will say!

2. DISTRACTION

Many of my clients have all the best intentions in the world of getting out there and creating some leads, but if something else comes up, it immediately diverts their attention. It might be a perceived crisis, it might be a fabulous new opportunity or it might even be some technology that they feel they really should explore before they start actively engaging in lead generation! In the next section, I talk about bright, shiny objects syndrome and there are many of those to keep us distracted from actually just getting on with the basics.

Examples of this might be a social media campaign, researching search engine optimization or even updating your website to a fantastic new level. Again, I'm not saying there's anything wrong with any of these, but you just need to get the basics done first and start getting out there and generating leads. Distraction is actually another perfect strategy for avoidance and making sure that we don't need to actually get out there and start making the calls. When have you had every intention of following up on some of those people that you met at the networking event only to find that there's some other key thing you need to do in your business which is way more important?

The best way to stop the distraction is to schedule dedicated time in your diary to make the sales calls or reach out in whatever way to generate leads.

We'll be talking about this in Chapter 17, Support and Chapter 18, How do you Manage your Diary? If you choose a buddy to support you, that is another great way of making sure you don't get distracted. Even as I write, I'm about to catch up with someone; a colleague from Thought Leaders Business School. We are spending two hours at my office, at which time we're both getting on the phones and following up with people that we know we need to connect with.

3. SABOTAGE

The following principle is probably not foreign to you.

We all know that we are afraid of our own failure, but sometimes it is actually that we're afraid of our own success.

The fabulous Marianne Williamson quote states;

It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be?

Playing small is the way many humans live out their lives. What we often we do across all parts of our life is sabotage. I'm sure you know of people (or you may even be one yourself) who sabotages not only your business but also fantastic relationships and maybe even other amazing parts of your life, like finance.

Why on earth would we sabotage? Well, we just need to understand it's part of the human condition. One thing that the human species has inherited from our very early days is the concept of deficit thinking. We tend to focus on the stuff that's not working rather than stuff that does. It's just the way we are, and it stems from always having to be on our guard in our communities to make sure there were no wild animals or even other humans about to attack us.

There's no point beating ourselves up about it or making too much meaning out of it, we just be aware and notice when we're sabotaging.

By the way, perfection, procrastination and distraction are three very, very close friends of sabotage. Again carving out some diary time, having a plan and having some kind of accountability

mechanism can free you from sabotage.

But beware; it's not something that just goes away immediately. It's always going to be biting on your heels, so constantly keep a vigil on where you may be sabotaging.

4. SPREADING OURSELVES TOO THIN

Sometimes as a business owner or an expert, we simply take on too much. Suddenly we look at our to-do list and we are completely overwhelmed with what we have to do. In spite of that, we may still decide that we don't have enough things on the go; a typical flaw in entrepreneurs is the bright, shiny object syndrome discussed in the next chapter. In this instance, we may only have only just launched one product or service, when we decide want to go and launch another one[3]

And then there is volunteer work. I am all for people volunteering, but when we are in the early stages of our own business or practice, say for the first two or three years, it's probably something we should keep to a minimum. The same also goes for giving away too much time to friends and family. I am not saying be a completely selfish pratt or to work every hour that you have on your business, it's more about managing where your energy is being spent. I know of well intending people who are chair people or presidents of voluntary organizations, but are house sitting because their business doesn't generate enough to cover rent. That just doesn't seem to be the right focus in my opinion.

You may find yourself in the position where you're simply incapable of fulfilling all the activities required to ensure you have a successful business practice. My incredible mentor Christina Guidotti, author of "Fulfillment. How To Have It All" has a brilliant structure and framework for being mega productive and I strongly recommend you explore her work. For example, she suggests that you carve out time in your diary every day for laser sharp productivity time, without the distraction of emails or phone calls.

[3]A key premise of the Thought Leaders curriculum, is launching one new cluster every three months. What I am referring to here, is even more frequent launching!

The key way to avoid spreading ourselves too thin is simply to get very clear on what we're going to focus on in the next quarter and stick to it. Sometimes knowing this is the biggest gift we can give to ourselves.

5. RESTING ON OUR LAURELS

I must confess this is something I do again and again. One of my first ever mentors and someone who changed my life powerfully is Glenn Ricketts. Glenn was the Non Executive Director of ITmaniacs. He got us out there doing intense activity for three months; just going out knocking down doors and basically adopting the triage approach, which I talk about in Chapter nine. A highly successful salesperson in his own right, he drummed into us that intense activity will be rewarded, but sometimes it can take around three months for those results to appear.

In other words, they often don't come as quickly as we want them to. Thankfully they do **eventually** come and it always surprises me and almost seems like magic. Suddenly you go from having been absolutely petrified with how pathetic your pipeline looks to feeling nice and comfortable and realizing that you're actually generating enough work.

What happens after that? I'll tell you what happens, it's delivery and lots of it. Suddenly you've gone from not having your day full to delivering all day long. Now that doesn't matter whether you're a business owner or an expert, the same equation applies.

It's always a fine balance between sales and delivery. Just like the story I shared in the introduction about my first ever role as a recruitment consultant, we can tend to rest on our Laurels! It is great to feel that reassurance that finally we're actually generating some great revenue. It will continue, but it won't continue forever. At some stage, those engagements are going to come to an end and time and time again I have found my clients suddenly being surprised or horrified at how little work they have coming up.

One amazing colleague in the Thought Leaders community was constantly booking multiple keynotes every month.

In fact, she delivered hundreds of them over the previous three years. She simply kept in touch with the bureaus and the conferences would be booked.

One day she realized she had nothing booked for the following two months. There wasn't any particular reason for it, it's just the way it worked out; up until then there was some steady demand, then suddenly there was none.

She went through some real pain to get back on board and start actively generating the revenue to which she had so become accustomed.

Again, it's one of those distraction things. We surprisingly get distracted actually delivering, but we cannot lose sight of the critical role of selling.

You need to make sure that you dedicate time every week, every month to sales activity.

SUMMARY

The longer I support others with their sales strategies, the more convinced I am that these five human traits are the enemy to sound economic practice.

We haven't specifically talked about procrastination. I think it kind of sits above all of them. The famous quote by Benjamin Franklin 'don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today' says it all really. In fact, I would go as far as to say 'don't put off until this afternoon what you can do this morning'!

Like so many things we put off, often when we just get on with it, it's really not as bad as we thought it would be.

Don't beat yourself up when you find yourself avoiding sales. Just notice it, then do something about it!

Chapter 3 - What’s the Difference between Lead Generation and Brand Awareness?

I think we all have a fairly good idea about what brand awareness is. It's that exciting stuff that makes our brand get better known and more understood. Telecommunications, Fast Moving Consumables brands, utilities and financial institutions spend millions on positioning their brands. They are able to do this, they've got lots of money to throw at this, and research has obviously proven that it creates a result for them. But what about for us? How much should we be spending on lead generation and how much should we be spending on brand awareness?

It would help, firstly, to get a bit of understanding about the difference between the two.

One of the easiest ways to distinguish between them both is that lead generation's all about left-brain activity.

That is, it's about the analytics, it's about the detail, and it’s about measuring, measuring, measuring. To be frank, there's actually that nothing that sexy about lead generation. It's quite dry and statistical.

On the other hand, brand awareness is the stuff that is processed by the right hand side of our brain. It's all the lovely, creative, emotional, colorful stuff that brings a brand to life.

So essentially, lead generation is all about the thinking and the analysis, whereas brand awareness is all about the feeling it invokes and the emotions.

I do love the emotional stuff myself, so let's start talking about

something that I call bright shiny objects syndrome.

I work with a number of people who are all about storytelling. In fact, it's only been recently that I've been introduced to the principles of 'The Hero's Journey' by Joseph Campbell. Here is an outline of the principle of the story, which is not only limited to fiction books and movies, it can even be represented in a high budget advertisement;

1. We meet the hero in their ordinary world (think Frodo and Bag End, Shire, or Luke Skywalker as a farm boy).
2. The hero is introduced to a call to adventure (Gandalf asks Frodo to find the ring, Obi Wan Kenobi asks Luke to join the quest)
3. The hero initially refuses the quest (Frodo likes his comfortable life but then is almost killed by the Ringwraiths, Luke refuses Obi Wan Kenobi's call, but then finds his aunt and uncle have been scorched)
4. Hero is encouraged by wise old man or woman/mentor (with Frodo it's Gandalf and the fellowship, with Luke it's Obi Wan Kenobi when he gives Luke his dad's light sabre)
5. Hero passes first threshold, which is when he enters the special world of the story and there's no turning back (Frodo leaves Bag End, Luke leaves home planet of Tattoine)
6. The hero encounters tests and helpers (for Luke it's Jabba the Hutt and Hans Solo, for Frodo it's Gollum, Shelob the spider and the elves)
7. The hero enters the inner most cave, which is often a representation of their deepest fears (Luke gets sucked into the death star whilst Frodo goes to Mount Doom)
8. The hero endures the supreme ordeal (Luke gets trapped in trash masher and Frodo has fun rollicking around with Gollum in the lava)
9. The hero seizes the sword (Luke destroys the Death Star whilst Frodo and the fellowship enjoy victory over

Sauron)

10. The road back (Luke and co get chased whilst leaving, and Frodo gets rescued by Gandalf and the eagles)
11. Resurrection (Luke constantly looks like he is dead at the end of most movies, then miraculously comes back to life, and the members of the fellowship are united by Aragon)
12. Return with the elixir (there is a party thrown for Luke and Frodo returns with his powerful mates)

It is quite an interesting exercise to google your favourite movie title (eg The Hunger Games, Harry Potter, or dare I even mention it the Twilight Movies!) with Heroes Journey, and you can guarantee someone will have broken down the story line this way!

Essentially we love a story and we love the drama. We love the journey and we love to get taken through an emotional roller coaster. But sometimes this can be too alluring, and when we're thinking about pragmatic, commercial success, we can get a little too carried away with creating the story.

What do I mean by that? Sometimes we get very seduced into doing things that aren't really going to make our business or practice more money. An example of this might be advertising in a more traditional mechanism, like getting published in a magazine or even in a newspaper.

I'm sure I'm going to start getting responses that say, "Don't you dare. It's a hugely important part of marketing." Indeed it might be, but for the time and money you spend on getting that story published, there could be some other ways that you can actually push your message out there in a more structured and effective way.

Another way of looking at it is referring to pull strategies and push strategies. Push strategies are generally what's associated with lead generation, so what we do is we get out there and we share our

message proactively with others. The bright shiny object stuff or the right brain or the brand awareness is all around pulling people to us. It works on the premise that someone sees an advert, reads a newspaper article, or even sees your website, and then they take action. But that's the challenge;

It requires them to take action.

As humans, we are fundamentally lazy, oops, I mean busy. How many times have you been meaning to get round to buying something and you just haven't? For example, I am very excited about purchasing a NutriBullet, one of those fantastic devices that mixes up your fruit and veggies in the morning, and certainly surpasses a blender or a juicer for getting a great nutritional fix first thing.

I have been meaning to get round to purchasing one online for an awfully long time, and I know I will soon; I need to make sure that I'm living healthily and sorting myself out from my wellness perspective in order to keep on top of everything going on in my rather full life.

However, if I just happened to get an email in my inbox or someone ringing me to say, "Hey, Laurel, we'd love to offer you this NutriBullet", then I would take action there and then. Now probably, for a $300 purchase, no one's going to bother doing that, but you get the picture!

Another way of looking at this is by thinking about someone spending all this time and energy and money into creating a beautiful art exhibition. They then display it in a part of town that nobody goes to and they don't sell tickets. That's what I mean by bright shiny object syndrome. It's about creating the most beautiful website, video, or even a book that in the end, no one's actually ever going to see, watch, or read, because they simply aren't aware that it exists. Even some more traditional public relations activities, I think, are a

little misguided. I have seen smallish companies and experts invest widely in PR to get some exposure with very little commercial success. This is simply because the reality is that people see it, they look, they think "fantastic," but they don't do anything about it.

What are your thoughts on social media at the moment? Now this is one of those areas that people take very seriously, so I will be careful with what I say! However, you are probably aware that, at time of writing, Facebook are deliberately only exposing your posts to a certain percentage of your followers, unless you pay. Now, I think there are times that there will be sound commercial reasons to do so, but again, I just see people spend so much money on social media campaigns and websites that are never going to actually end up creating them a great return.

For any right brain activities, for any brand awareness; that is branding, PR, websites, and even general media exposure, I think it's great to do *some* of this. Just don't spend too much time on it and make sure that you have a corresponding lead generation campaign, to support it. By that I mean pushing that beautiful content out to people so that you have a higher reach, and therefore, greater chance of commercial success. For example, one of my clients has just had an article published in a key New Zealand magazine and we are working out how she is going to use that article for positioning by sharing it both online and offline with prospects.

Now we've talked about the wonderful, creative bright shiny object stuff, let's talk about the more analytical lead generation stuff.

I recently had the pleasure of being taken through a wonderful exercise by Andrew Melville, a fellow Thought Leader. He took me through my life path to identify any common stories that played out. One thing that I had conveniently forgotten about was that I was a bit of a geek at school. I was extraordinary good at maths, physics, and chemistry. I was also obsessed with anything scientific in general, wanted to find out how things worked and wanted to design

things like outdoor furniture and swimming pools.

My first choice for a degree when I was about to start university was actually engineering. However, when I didn't want to leave Otago University, I thought that land surveying would be a great option for me, simply because I was great at maths and physics and I thought I'd like being outside. Side note here, please anyone who is specializing in career coaching for teenagers, make sure you spread your reach far and wide. What a ridiculous thing for me to base my career on; what about my high social need (as a land surveyor you spend a great deal of time on your own)? Thankfully I was having too great a time working in Queenstown on the summer holiday so I didn't want to go back to surveying camp early. At that stage, I chose a very different university degree, which was psychology.

It was probably about that time that I quashed my inner geek. However, thanks to Andrew helping draw it back out of me again, I now realize that this may in fact be a key reason to why I am still so fascinated in things like lead generation.

So what does lead generation actually entail?;

1. choosing a particular course of action to take
2. undertaking the activity associated with it, and
3. constantly measuring the results.

A brilliant book, which goes into this lead generation concept into way more detail, is David T. Scott’s book, "The New Rules of Lead Generation." I have conducted many lead generation campaigns with many different products, services, and different markets. It constantly amazes me how one particular approach for one particular market and/or product or service can be successful, whilst being totally unsuccessful when it is applied to a different product or service. The reality is, we simply don't know what's going to work. That's why we have to take a bit of a mad scientist approach, embrace our inner geek, simply start getting on with it,

and make sure we can measure how well we are doing. That is one of the key focuses of this book, measuring the success, and amending our approach accordingly.

I'm sure you've heard of a fascinating approach in website design called split testing. Any good web designer will create one website, which maybe has the video on the top left and the outline color scheme in green, and another version, which has the video on the bottom right and the outline of the color scheme in red. They'll then go and test the target market and see what is most preferred. It is uncanny how often one of those options is strongly preferred over the other.

If you go and ask the respondents why they chose that particular version, they simply can't answer; *this is the key with lead generation and why you can't use logic, you have to use measurement.*

We will be going into lead generation in more detail later on in the book, but essentially, there are some industries that will respond better to online or offline strategies. There are some that will respond better to stories versus analysis, and different calls to actions, but we just simply don't know. In fact, there'll probably be variance within those industries.

So here are the guts of essentially what lead generation is all about;

1. Decide the product or service you're going to market.
2. Decide the audience that you're going to market this product or service to.
3. Choose an approach to reach out to this market[4]
4. Design the strategy around it[5].

[4] This is covered in the lead generation machine section later in the book. For example, are you going to send something in the post, make a phone call, or reach out via LinkedIn?

5. Get out there and do it.
6. Make sure you understand the cost.
7. Measure the response rates.
8. Identify the cost per lead.
9. Either decide to progress, enhance, or abandon this particular campaign.

It's really as simple as that.

Next time you're getting tempted to rebrand with a fantastic new color or concept, invest in a huge road show, or launch a multimedia interactive website, start thinking. Are you merely creating a beautiful piece of art for an exhibition that no one can buy tickets to?

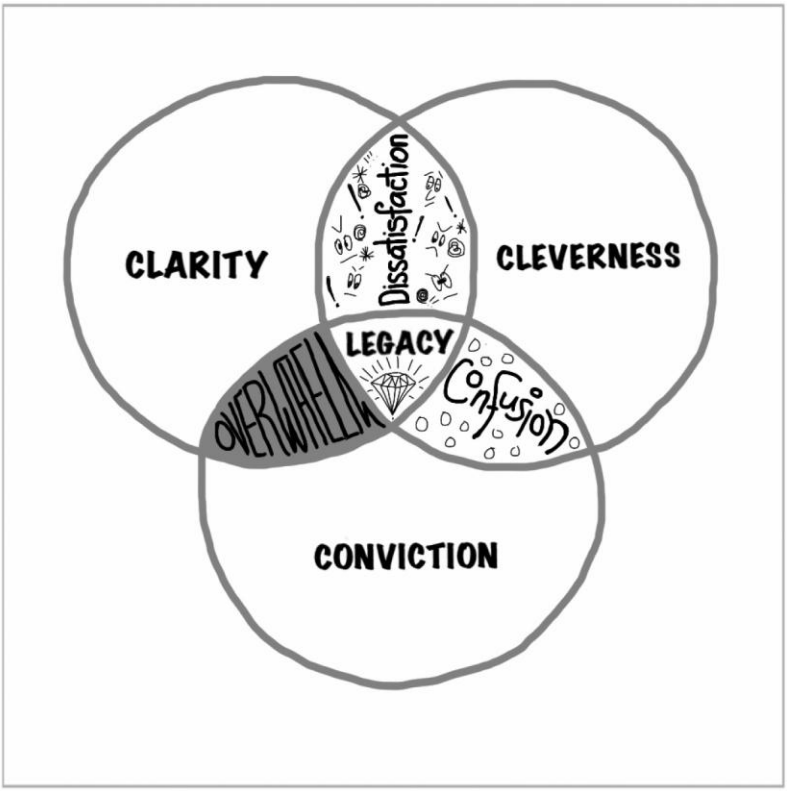
[5] What is it going to be that we invite them to, what's the follow up, and any other particular details?

Chapter 4 - What does it Take to be Successful in Sales?

As mentioned in the introduction, there are three areas that you need to consider to be successful in sales;

1. Clarity
2. Cleverness
3. Conviction

Now is the time for us to get clear on what each of these actually are all about.



CLARITY

I have the equivalent of a post-graduate diploma in confusing people. I have a tendency to go all over the place and share with so much enthusiasm and excitement about what I'm doing at a particular time that people just get completely lost. They simply do not get the point about what I am all about. I kind of despise that saying "less is more" because I just completely love more is more. I get so enthusiastic and carried away that I just want to share more and more.

The fact is that confusing people is a complete pain and certainly not very commercially successful. I had one wonderful fellow coach who said to me recently, "Laurel I just really don't know what you do." Thanks to the brilliant methodology of Thought Leaders Global, I think that people actually do know what I do now!

Thought leadership is all about gaining clarity. Primarily that comes down to 2 things;

1. getting very very clear on your absolute unique value and your amazing ideas; I like to call them the diamonds in your head
2. unpacking those diamonds in your head in such a way that they can be commercially successful for you.

It's kind of like taking those diamonds out of your head and polishing them up so they are beautiful, bright, dazzling and expensive.

The way that thought leaders ensure those diamonds gleam is that they can articulate their value in such a way that anybody gets them, whatever way they think.

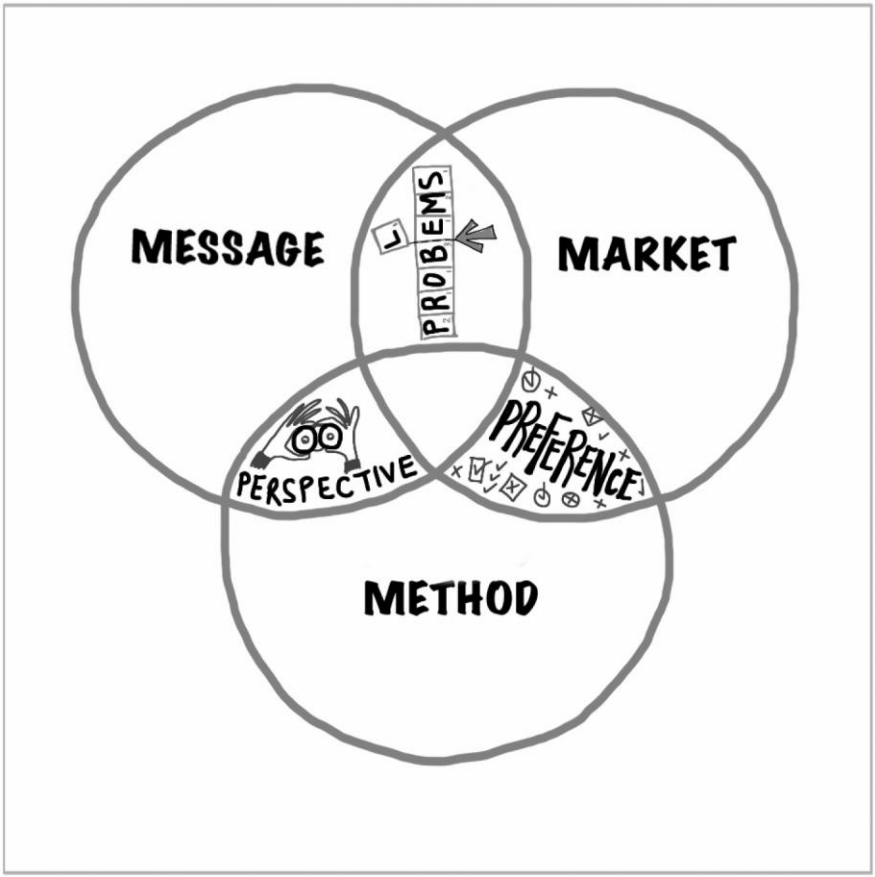
That means it doesn't matter if they are left brained, right

brained, high level or detailed thinkers. The difference to commercial success between before and after I adopted the thought leaders approach is like night and day.

In this book I'm not going to go into the Thought Leaders methodology too extensively. Chapter 26 covers the selling aspects of thought leadership but I will give you a very quick overview of the methodology here.

Essentially it comes to 3 key areas:

1. What is your message?
2. What is your market?
3. What is your mode or method?



In other words, what do you do? What value do you offer? Who values that? Who is your market? How do you get that message across? We define the way you get the message across as a mode or method, for example speaking, authoring, training, mentoring, facilitating or coaching.

However, this is also a way that small business owners can create some clarity. In other words, it's not simply limited to people who sell their thoughts for a living, according to one of the modes listed above.

The key solution, or the reason that this works, is around *the problem*, the intersection between the clarity, which is the

message, and the audience, which is the market. One thing we often say is that there are an awful lot of people who go around offering a cure for disease that people don't realize they've got.

Get people present to the problems that they have that you specifically can solve based on your own unique thought leadership. Now that is regardless of whether you are an expert or a small to medium business owner. That's the answer to clarity via thought leadership.

To find out more about the brilliant Thought Leaders program, go to www.sellyourthoughtsbook.com and purchase the book. You will also get some videos for free with it.

If you aren't going to invest in the thought leadership program then another very simple way of understanding your clarity is to simply go out and ask a bunch of your clients what they value in you. You'd be surprised at what they can come up with.

CLEVERNESS

Once we've got the clarity we need to make sure that we are clever about how we get our message out there.

This is really what the crux of this book is all about.

I touch on clarity. I touch on conviction. But really this book is all about cleverness.

Cleverness comes down to lead generation, measuring and monitoring. It also comes down to having structures in your life. Structures around accountability, structures around your diary and structures around support. If clarity is what you are all about, then cleverness is how you get known for that. How do you get your message out there?

Parts two and three of this book delve into cleverness into greater detail.

CONVICTION

The final piece of the equation is conviction. Not only is conviction based around the value that you know you can provide this particular market, but it's also conviction in yourself, conviction around your own mindset and how faith, whatever that looks like for you, plays a part.

The conviction piece is very much around you and your essence and finding out your purpose in life, who you are and truly owning that.

In Chapter six, I reference a lead generation machine. This is an end-to-end lead generation process that you can create for yourself. However, that generation machine will only be as effective as the fuel that drives the cogs and wheels. What is that fuel? Your conviction. How many times have we heard that people aren't buying you, they're buying your conviction?

If you're stuck in an industry selling for someone else and selling something that you don't wholeheartedly believe in, then you're not going to be as successful as you could be. I know that this is extraordinarily obvious but seriously, there are so many people out there doing just that. I used to sell cold call training services and I enjoyed it because I loved working with people who had the guts to get out there and make things happen. However, I've long understood that actually cold calling isn't the be all and end all. It may have been once in the past. I was trying desperately to convince myself and others that it was a really valuable activity. But I no longer had the conviction around it. Don’t get me wrong, I still believe it plays a critical part in successful lead generation but it certainly isn't the only part.

Get present to your conviction and your commercial success will be realized sooner rather than later.

What about if you don't have all three?

We've already mentioned that without clarity you get confusion. What do you get if you don't have cleverness? Well there are two scenarios here. You can either have overwhelm because you're not being smart in the way you're managing getting your message out there or you can have no results to speak of whatsoever. That's because as we've already mentioned, there's no point in having a great service if nobody knows about it.

Finally, what do you get if you don't have conviction? Dissatisfaction and that's something none of us should have to tolerate.

Chapter 5 – Know, Play and Dare

There is another slight variation of this model that I also think is worth expressing here. Once you know what you're here to do, there's nothing more helpful than being a little playful, or even daring, about how we get that message out. It's very difficult to ignore that tsunami of change that is affecting us right now, particularly around the way technology is disrupting industries like never before. But what can't technology replicate, at least not yet? Creativity and human emotions. If we're going to continue to be commercially successful in an ever-automated and new problem-oriented world, then we need to get pretty creative.

That's where the playfulness can come in. As human beings, we can be a little too dramatic, serious, and significant about things. If infectious enthusiasm is alluring to people, then a sense of playfulness and fun is even more so.

Have you heard the expression that we are here to teach what we are here to learn? If you think back through your life you might find some recurring themes that play out around your significant milestones; the highs and the lows. For me, I have attracted a fair bit of drama in my life. In my teens, twenties and early thirties, I used to be quite a drama queen, and loved nothing more than something dramatic going on, and for me to be involved. At some level, it made me feel significant, and sometimes any attention is better than none.

It took me quite a few years (and a fair bit of investment into personal development programs) to realize that all of this energy I was spending and drama I was attracting was preventing me from living a life of freedom. I eventually chose to adopt a more playful approach both to how I work and how I live. At some level, I believe I am here to teach people how to lighten up a bit, and that is certainly the case with lead generation. By being more playful and unattached

when you are engaging with prospects, you do become more appealing. Chapter 12, The Audrey Process explains this in more detail.

How can you be a little more playful in the way that you spread your message?

What about being more daring? We have this interesting learned level of appropriateness in our conditioning, and it often can be traced back to our childhood when we were encouraged not to put anyone out or rise above our station. Thankfully, I believe the Millennials are rebelling against this and don’t have the same limiting beliefs.

There are people who we might consider to be oh-so-important that we dare not reach out and invite to something. Don't you think it's incredible on LinkedIn that we could connect with almost anyone we want to? Certainly in the expert's world, there are amazing people out there who would probably respond to a Facebook invite or message that you sent.

People in positions of influence have never been more accessible by the general population, but why don't we dare go out and connect with them? Who is your hero? Who is someone that you truly believe is the most inspiring person? Why don't you send them an email or even drop them a card and just let them know what a difference they have made in your life?

What is one of the biggest fears of human beings? Public speaking. As thought leaders, we also know that public speaking is one of the most effective lead generation strategies available to us. Why don't you take a risk and go and offer to speak at an industry event? Give up the perfectionism and the sabotage and just see what happens if you go out and make it happen. I thoroughly recommend Matt Church’s speakership program for learning the craft of speaking. But even without formal training, if you're enthusiastic and

playful around your delivery, then people are going to get a great sense of who you are.

Lighten up. Take a risk. Just have some fun and pluckiness, and see what magic comes into your life.

PART TWO
- LEAD GENERATION -

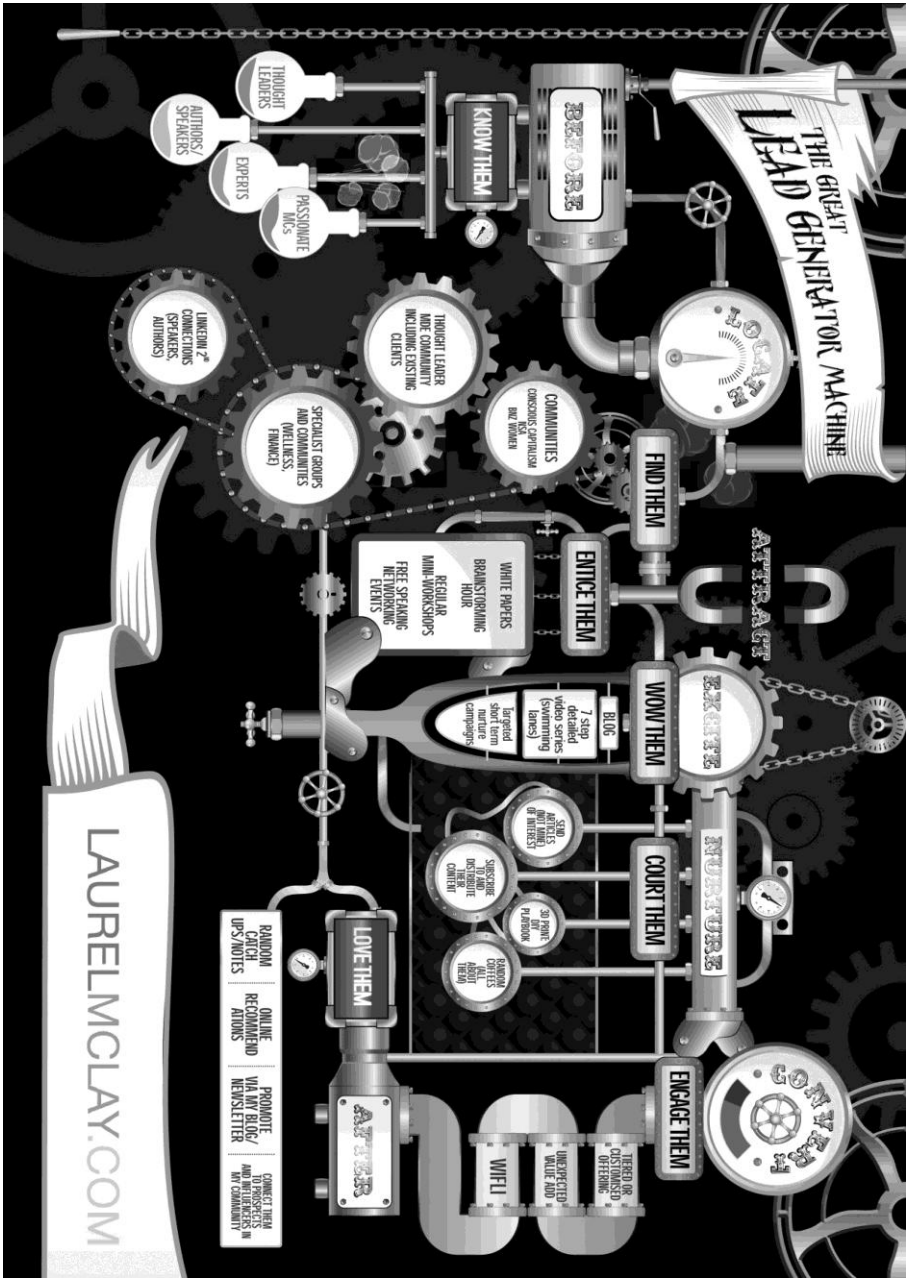
Chapter 6 – Creating your very own Lead Generation Machine.

What I am covering in this section is how to create the step-by-step process to take prospects from not knowing you at all to being happy and referring customers. I suppose the correct term for them is actually 'suspects', because when we pop them into the machine, we don't yet know if they are prospects.

When I was first introduced to Infusionsoft (a powerful marketing automation tool), and became aware of their clever customer lifecycle model, I was really taken with how simple the process was. But I wanted to do some tweaking to it; I wanted to make it more personal and relevant to the experiences that I had personally had with lead generation.

At the time, I was being mentored by the incredible Dr Jason Fox, an extraordinary thought leader who is all about motivational design; making the *work* more interesting, rather than motivating from *within*. Under his expert tutelage, I created this machine, which has been the cornerstone of my lead generation practice ever since.

In Chapter 8, ABCs of offline tools, I refer to the importance of design. Historically, I am not the most visually inspired human being. Sure I love beauty, but I am not one of those people who really really makes an effort into things looking good. You could almost say I am a wee bit sloppy (just ask my dear neat freak husband Geoff). Jason, on the other hand is very keen on things looking as beautiful as they can be. To that end, I agreed to engage the services of the very clever Jen Jackson of Jaxzyn Ltd, who, with her team, created this lead generation machine for me (refer to next page).


THE GREAT LEAD GENERATOR MACHINE
LOCATE
BEFORE
KNOW THEM
THOUGHT LEADERS
AUTHORS/ SPEAKERS
EXPERTS
PASSIONATE MVPs
LINKEDIN 2nd CONNECTIONS (SPEAKERS, AUTHORS)
FIND THEM
COMMUNITIES CONSCIOUS CAPITALISM BNI WOMEN
THOUGHT LEADER MBC COMMUNITY INCLUDING EXISTING CLIENTS
SPECIALIST GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES (WELLNESS, FINANCE)
ENTICE THEM
WHITE PAPERS
BRAINSTORMING HOUR
REGULAR MINI-WORKSHOPS
FREE SPEAKING NETWORKING EVENTS
AFTER
WOW THEM
BLOG
7 step detailed video series (swimming lanes)
Targeted short term campaigns
EXPERT
COURT THEM
SERIES ARTICLES ABOUT THEMES OF INTEREST
3D PRIVATE PLATFORM
SUBSCRIBE TO AND DISTRIBUTE THEIR CONTENT
RANDOM CONTEXTS ABOUT THEM
INFLUENCE
ENGAGE THEM
TIERED OR CUSTOMISED OFFERING
UNEXPECTED VALUE ADD
WIFLI
CONVERT
LOVE THEM
RANDOM CATCH UPS/NOTES
ONLINE RECOMMENDATIONS
PROMOTE VIA MY BLOG/ NEWSLETTER
CONNECT THEM TO PROSPECTS AND WITH MEMBERS IN MY COMMUNITY
AFTER
LAURELMCLAY.COM

This is a very powerful structure and if you take the time to set one up for yourself, then it will be well worth your while. In fact you can think of it as a well running machine, and as long as you maintain and constantly enhance it, it will generate you wonderfully valuable leads for years to come.

But! Like many machines, it requires fuel to run optimally. It's important to focus on the fuel that charges this clever machine, which is your conviction; this is covered in Chapter 9, mindset.

When I first created this machine, along with all the instructions for each component, I truly felt that I had made an incredible breakthrough in the area of lead generation, and couldn't wait to share it with my clients. And here's what happened;

Some clients just took to it, and created results, and that was great. Some clients said thank you very much, then proceeded to do nothing with it for their own business or practice. And some clients DID do the work, but didn't get the results.

It was this final group that perplexed me; why weren't they getting the results they deserved? And then it struck me, they simply didn't have the self-belief, or self worth to allow themselves to be successful, and that's what got in their way.

I used to only have what I call 'appropriate conversations' with my clients. I would simply focus on the 'easier to digest' principles of lead generation and thought leadership. I usually didn't delve into belief and behavior land, or in other words, the underlying belief processes that were so critical in determining how life shows up for someone. This was kind of interesting, considering I had invested significantly into becoming a Freefall Certified Coach; a curriculum that is beautifully designed to navigate that land! The only time I ventured into such discussions was when my client was clearly blocked from progressing because of something going on in their head. At that stage I would ask their permission to engage in an

exercise to unblock that. Needless to say, I wasn't serving myself to be holding out more often than not, and I was certainly not serving them. Now I make no apologies, and go to wherever I have to go to ensure that people's lead generation machines are working for them.

So that was my long-winded way of saying that actually Chapter 9, Mindfulness in Part three of this book is probably the most important chapter of this book.

So let's get on with dissecting this beast, and going into it in more detail. Remember that I am not talking about an overall lead generation machine for your entire business or practice. This is the framework by which you craft every individual campaign, and you will most likely be launching one campaign per quarter. You will see that it is broken into seven parts;

Part one: Know them

In this section you will get to define *who* your market for this specific campaign is, in as much detail as you can.

Part two: Find them

Here, you will work out where that market hangs out, what online groups or networks they belong to, what resources you have access to which will identify them, and what they read, watch and listen to.

Part three: Entice them

Once you know where they hang out, you want to be able to access them, and entice them somehow. There are a few ways to do this, and I have detailed a range of options in this chapter.

Part four: Wow them

Ok, so you have kind of got their attention, now let's *really* get it. Once you have their ear or eye, you want to give them an experience to get them far more interested. In traditional marketing speak, this is called 'surprise and delight'.

Part five: Court them

Timing is everything. We all know that just because someone is interested in our services, it doesn't mean that they are ready right now to purchase from them. Here I investigate strategies to keep in touch until such time as they are ready to commit.

Part six: Engage them

This is where they stop being a prospect, and turn into a customer. It is a significant milestone, but the machine hasn't

finished its job yet!

Part seven: Love them

So many thought leaders, sales professionals and business owners ironically stop giving the love once the prospect turns into a customer. I can't imagine why, but believe me, it happens. At some level, we all know that our existing customers are one of our best resources for new customers, and so often they are ignored.

Now that you have seen the structure of the end-to-end machine, let's go into each step into more detail. Do note that this machine does cover the entire lifecycle of a customer, and the piece that we are primarily interested in, considering that this is a book about lead generation, is the entice and wow section. You will notice that I go into way more detail in this section, than any other. Getting the entice and wow section right is the key to your success (along with the right mindset!).

I have also grouped some of the steps into two, because they are quite interrelated.

Please note that as I have already mentioned, technology is moving at a very fast pace. At time of writing, there is quite a bit of dialogue going on about how Facebook is limiting the number of people who see your posts, and many people are considering other options versus paying for reach. If any of the online strategies detailed seem a little out of date to you, apologies, and do your own research on line to get a more recent option that works for you.

KNOW THEM AND FIND THEM

The first thing you need to do when setting up your lead generation machine is to know who those people are that you're selling to, or wanting to attract. What kind of industry are they in? What kind of size are they? Are they private sector or public sector? Who in the organization do you want to target? What are their problems? Are they typically conservative or liberal? Has anything been happening recently that you should know about in their industry?

In Thought Leaders, we talk about an avatar; that is thinking about your ideal prospect, and painting a detailed picture about them. I am a fan of Natalie Cutler-Welsh, who runs a very successful online networking group called Go to Girl. Recently they had a webinar where the participants each identified their avatar. Who was their ideal client? It was fun watching the different scenarios that people set up: the cars that the client drives, where they live, where they shop, what they wear, how many children they've got, what their interests are.

I know this sounds like marketing 101 but to have clarity around your customer base and prospect base is golden. We also want to make sure that we're selective. We want to be clear on who we *don't* want to work with as well. If you see some of our thought leaders' websites you'll see that when we're promoting an offering we often say "Who is this ideal for, and who is this not ideal for?" Of course we don't want to be too fixated either on a particular type of prospect, when really there might be other prospects who are just as in need of your service, and who value what you do.

But particularly for the purposes of a lead generation campaign it pays to get real clarity on who they are. Invest in the time to really be able to identify them.

Once you've worked this out, think about where you might find them. What kind of networking groups do they belong to? What kind of publications do they read? Are there particular LinkedIn groups that they may be part of? What about communities both online and offline? Who do they know? Who do you know that knows them? Do they tend to reside in a particular geographical location?

I remember walking around New York many years ago and being fascinated by the inner city streets. For some reason they had the same types of shops set up in various streets. For example, you'd walk down a block and see blender shop after blender shop, and in the next block there would be a bunch of shops that sold those funny mannequins holding a tray that you see outside restaurants. Then in the next block there would be a string of chandelier shops. Anyone who knows New York will know that 8th Street is the best place to find shoes. There are masses of shoe shops available down the main strip.

Maybe New York can teach us a thing or two. There is some real value to identifying a patch where you congregate with similar businesses. Think also about Silicon Valley, Chinatown, or the Financial District. It's important to know where to find your prospects because that's where you are going to go in order to connect with them. If there are people who can introduce you, that’s even better, so it also pays to find out who they know. Once you've found out who they are and where to find them, then you need to look at the next step, which is how to entice and wow, and that’s the most important stage of the process.

ENTICE AND WOW THEM

In this section, we explore various ways in which you can entice and wow prospects into your lead generator machine. It really depends on

- Your preferences (e.g. technical savvy)
- Your specific markets and offerings, and
- The investment you can make into this highly critical part of the life cycle.

This is by no means exhaustive, but will give you an idea of how you can shape your lead generation strategy going forward.

Firstly, what you want to create is some content; something that you can give away to give your prospects a taste of who you are and what you know. This section showcases the various ways that you can share this content. Seth Godin once wrote in a blog that it used to break his heart whenever he went to farmer's markets and saw produce makers giving away little samples of their cheeses, pickles, ice-cream or salamis. He saw it as profit being literally consumed by tyre kickers; people who generally had no interest in purchasing.

The beautiful thing about content is that you can reproduce it relatively cheaply and in this section, I have outlined the different ways that you can share that value. This is where the prospect is going to be enticed by you, and literally experience a bit of what you can offer.

The section has been split into four separate approaches;

1. Typical online strategies
2. Next generation online strategies
3. Typical offline strategies

4. Next generation offline strategies.

The approach that I am really excited about personally is covered in the offline strategies section. People get so obsessed with technology advancing their lead generation, whereas actually, it is the mix of both online and offline that can achieve pure magic. A beautifully positioned complimentary workshop, or well designed booklet/playbook can engage people at an emotional level, and brings a little bit of nostalgia into an otherwise isolated world; as humans we still love to meet face to face, and touch and feel material.

Have a look through these options, and start to think about which ones stand out for you. I suggest you choose both (1) a proven more conservative way, that you know works, and (2) a more out there and risky way that somehow excites you. For each strategy, rate them as a 1 to 3, with 1 being very unlikely to consider them, 2 neutral about them/open to them and 3 very keen to find out more about them. Once you have gone right through the list, have a look at the options where you marked them as 3, and start thinking about how you can use them for your next campaign.

And remember that this list is by no means exhaustive. If you feel that there is a key approach that isn't included here, please let me know what this is. I think we don't use collaboration enough in working out how to provide comprehensive information.

TYPICAL ON-LINE STRATEGIES

A1. e-books and white papers

Although a little traditional, this good old way of delivering value has definitely proven results. Make sure you get the look and feel right. Check out www.fiverr.com or www.elance.com for countless numbers of international freelancers only too happy to make your little gift look beautiful.

Did you know you could upload your whitepaper or book for free on Amazon Kindle?

The best price to pop them on for is between $2.99 and $9.99 (you get 75% of the purchase price; note that former best sellers (not new releases) are selling at the $9.99 end). Also know that in order to be able to state the lofty claim of being 'an Amazon #1 best seller', you only need to be leading in your category for an hour. So how do you do that? Just get a bunch of your friends and connections to shell out the nominal sum, at a given hour in a given day. Make a game of it; people want to support you!

Something that people haven't really explored with e-books, is embedding videos into them. Imagine how impactful it would be to introduce each chapter with a two-minute video, providing an overview of what you were addressing in it? This really belongs in next generation strategies, but is an example of how a simple shift can bring your enticement to a whole new level.

A2. Regular blogs and newsletters

Yes, we are a little tired of the ubiquitous email, but for people who have a particular interest in your area of specialty, this is a tried

and true formula. It probably fits more appropriately in the 'court' phase of the life cycle, but I have included it here because it is a nice way to *entice* your prospects, e.g. someone shares a fabulous blog post of yours on their Facebook and one of their friends now chooses to connect with you and sign up to your blog themselves.

There are no hard and fast rules re what day of the week, time of the day, or how frequently you should send out your blogs/newsletters. Seth Godin, who I love, posts at least once daily, and I know others who think that once a month is too much. Go with your gut (or at least ask some trusted advisers).

MailChimp, iContact and Constant Contact seem to be the platforms of choice. All have the ongoing issues of being 'grey listed' (where they are neither black nor white), and ended up in junk folders or the promotions tab of Gmail.

If you want to grow your list relatively quickly, then make a habit of subscribing people you have just met (or signed up to webinar, or who have come along to one of your events) to your newsletter list. But at least let them know by dropping them a quick personal note to say that you've taken the liberty to subscribe them, because you feel that they might find it valuable. Include a simple way for them to opt out there and then, even if it is simply replying to your email with 'no thanks'. This is what we sometimes refer to as the 'forgiveness versus permission' principle.

When you do undertake the activity of subscribing people yourself, you run the risk of being 'marked as spam', but really, the spam police are more interested in those who send over 100,000 emails at a time, so the benefits probably do outweigh the risks.

Just make sure that you include a great subject line; I know this seems obvious, but people are super busy, and email wary, so you really do need to 'sell' them the idea of opening your email.

Don't put "!", "?" or the word 'free' in it, because your recipients' mail filtering software will rank it as spam and there will be even less chance that it is read.

What's the difference between a blog and a newsletter?

The main difference is their location; a blog generally sits on your website whilst your newsletter is pushed out to your list via email. Another difference is that a blog can be a little mini story, reflection or case study, whereas a newsletter can be full of a bunch of snippets about all sorts of findings, musings and what's coming up. It really doesn't matter too much if you choose a blog or a newsletter, just make sure you are communicating regularly.

At time of writing, SMS marketing was really coming into play, that is, delivering your content, or inviting people to view your content by text message. The open rates are significantly higher, and it also positions you as being a bit ahead of the game.

Sean McDonald, who introduced me to Infusionsoft in the first place has created a brilliant platform called Mobit (www.mobit.com), which provides you with a very simple mechanism for creating your own campaigns and distributing them via SMS. You can do this within Mobit, or by very easily integrating it with Infusionsoft or other CRM/marketing automation platforms.

I cover the technology behind blogs and newsletters in more detail in Chapter 7 ABCs of Online Tools.

A3. Website

Let's face it, this is about as simple a platform as you can get to showcase your content. But don't get caught into the trap of getting a full on fancy interactive site. Simplicity wins hands down, as does a full content management system, like Wordpress, Strikingly or

Squarespace. All of these not only have the ability to include videos, images, galleries and text blocks, but you can also to embed any web forms from the likes of Infusionsoft or MailChimp. They are also ridiculously easy to use!

You also want a dynamic platform, that is one that is changing frequently, which Google loves. You probably also know that Google likes video, so do consider it seriously (we cover that further in this chapter).

Make sure that your website is responsive. What that means, is that it can actually be viewed easily on a smart phone or tablet, which are obviously the devices of choice for more and more people. Again, Strikingly and Squarespace are responsive platforms, meaning your site will look great on a smaller device.

A4. Social media posting

Confession time, I am not an expert in social media, and don't use it a lot, except for LinkedIn, but it is obviously a key strategy. There are many experts who will show you how to increase your reach/number of likes significantly. Just make sure you don't pay for someone who simply goes somewhere else and 'purchases' likes. There are actually 'like' factories, where highly underpaid (and desperate) workers simply spend their days clicking on liking Facebook pages without any interest in the content whatsoever.

Just a cautionary tale; Our business lives have blended with our personal lives on social media, and we are actually competing with loved ones for the attention of our prospects and clients By that I mean, that you will see a post from your mum arranging your dad's birthday party right above a client's case study.! However, I do find that friends and family get a little snippy if I go on too much about business (and more often than not promoting my clients' content). It does pay to separate your family profile from any kind of business

profile in your social media. In other words, use your personal profile for keeping your friends and family updated about your life (photos of kids etc) and keep your clients and prospects updated by using a business page or fan page.

Both Instagram and Pinterest are gaining in popularity for business use. Have an explore of these platforms; we all love vibrant images and it is a nice way to position yourself by being associated with them.

NEXT GENERATION ON-LINE STRATEGIES

B1. On-line video series/blogs (or one off videos)

You would have to have been living under a rock not to know that video creates outstanding results, especially for those of you who are thought leaders/experts.

When done well, it is just so compelling, and the results are astounding. Check out the queen of video blogging Jody Jelas (www.jodyjelas.com), who claims that every single piece of business (including the 5 figure days) has come to her as a result of her video blogs. You can download her free book, 'The Ultimate Guide to Setting up your own Professional Video Studio for under $200' at her website.

As a side note re Jody, she is a brilliant example of someone who has followed her heart, and is now doing exactly what she loves, rather than something safe. It was easy for her to position herself as someone who shows you how to create online sales funnels, but what she is now doing is showing people how to have epic freedom and live extraordinary lives full stop. That requires giving up looking good and being way more vulnerable and gutsy, particularly in affairs of the heart. Check out www.ladyballsthebook.com to find out about her upcoming book.

We all know that when video is done badly, it is done SO badly. You have got to get the light right, the sound right, the picture/ juxtaposition right, the focus right, the energy right, the editing right AND the continuity and content right –phew! If even one of those is slightly out, then the whole thing looks amateur. Yes, I advocate vulnerability, but really, your brand is at stake and there is nothing worse than spending 15 minutes talking to camera (on tripod) and finding out half your head is chopped off, or you just look plain grey.

The good news is that you only need change a handful of things in order to get your video looking beautifully professional. Buy a couple of soft lights from Amazon, or just get a standard quartz halogen bulb and a simple lapel microphone from www.jaycar.co.nz or www.jaycar.com.au. Jody uses the microphone provided with your iPhone, in fact she uses her iPhone camera to video!).

Simply use Windows Moviemaker or iMovie to edit, and make sure that you turn them into bite-sized chunks of no more than about 60 to 90 seconds long. People simply switch off after that amount of time.

Find a teleprompter if you must (eg http://www.scottmartineaulive.com/teleprompter/) works for me. But be wary, you may think no one actually knows that you are reading off a script, but if you have a look at the eyes of inexperienced presenters on TV, you can tell by the give away movement of the eyes.

Getting professional tuition in being in front of a camera, which can be really confronting for some, is a great investment. I have attended Paulus Romijn's Presenter's Platforms classes in Auckland , and not only are they extremely valuable, they are massive amounts of fun.

Get a whizzy intro and outro done with special effects on your logo by some good (and inexpensive) person on www.Fiverr.com, www.elance.com or www.99designs.com and invest in a video buddy (it really is easier than talking to a wee tripod).

However, I do believe you cannot go past getting your videos done professionally, particularly for your first bunch of videos.

For Aucklanders, I totally recommend Tanya McQueen from Global Spirit Films. Check out my first ever video on www.laurelmclay.com. On the day that I was filmed for this, I was

actually feeling really sick, and it is amazing that the videos look as good as they do! Getting your hair and makeup done is highly recommended too, and Tanya provides that service for you. Not only do you look just gorgeous, but also we all know that you feel so totally elegant, glamorous and confident afterwards, which is a huge influencer of the quality of the video.

B2. On-line audio series (or one off)

This is a kind of retro offering (kind of like old fashioned radio broadcasts). Download something like VoiceRecord Pro onto your iPhone, then upload to Dropbox, an FTP Server, Soundcloud or Skydrive to share with your audience. Sometimes we over think things, and time spent sitting in a car is a great place to up skill, and hear more about your expertise. A proviso here, I have found it hard to download mp3 files on to my iPhone, so you may wish to simply submit your audio as a podcast to Apple for inclusion in the iTunes store. If you do this, remember to 'episodize' them to make it easier for people to retrieve them.

B3. Email micro series

And if you want to get really basic, why not subscribe your prospects to a 5, 6 or 7 part email series? Sometimes the information we want to share is pretty long winded and cutting it down to bite-sized chunks is a smart strategy. Of course you run the risk of the emails simply not getting opened, but that is why you need to ensure that not only the content is compelling, but also the subject line invites them to open.

B4. Other lead magnets, diagnostic tools/ checklists

Does anyone remember how excited they were to answer those Cosmo magazine quizzes? I am imagining this is something women related to more so than men but as humans, we have a fascination

for measuring ourselves against others, and then somehow rating how we are going.

If you can create something of a diagnostic nature, for your clients to rate themselves, then bring it on. Examples of this include Roger Hamilton's wealth profile, Gallup's strength finder, and Get Dotted, brilliant communication profiling tool that is facilitated by a brilliant fellow thought leader of mine, Amy Scott. What could you create out of your own IP to offer to clients?

Again, www.fiverr.com or www.elance.com may provide the all-important 'making it look official', if you have no creative resource available locally.

B5. Online webinars, seminars, Google hangouts

Although many people talk about hosting webinars, the uptake is still not particularly high. If you do host webinars, there is always that anxiety about who is going to turn up. Does it really matter? I had a client who had no one show up to her webinar, and she went ahead and delivered it anyway! I think there is something quite cool in that, as she was honoring her commitment and getting competent in her delivery by practising. Some people I know who host regular webinars start with very few participants, but if they keep on consistently delivering, say once a week or fortnight, then their audience inevitably starts to grow.

Webinars (GoTo Webinar or the increasing in popularity Google Hangouts) are particularly powerful for small and regular catch-ups. You can get wonderful statistics on uptake rate, and even reward participants who stay on to the end with a special offer.

B6. Sliderocket, Prezi, Jing, Camtasia and other whizzy platforms

We have all heard about 'death by PowerPoint'. Now there are

some really neat ways to pictorially present your content. Sliderocket (now Clearslide) allows you to truly interact with your audience (and you can measure how they engage), whilst Prezi takes you on an animated journey, which can be highly effective, or induce motion sickness. Jing and Camtasia allow you to capture your movements on your PC, whilst narrating. This can be great if you are using some kind of concept demonstration as a part of your entice and wow process.

B7. Down selling strategies (e.g. pilots, modules, DVDs, online options)

There is a lot of talk about up selling, and cross selling; remember the old adage " it's easier to generate revenue from an existing client than a new one", but down selling is a very interesting positioning strategy. Basically it means offering a high value product for a more accessible price, through the principles of leverage.

An example of this is Sally Anderson's brilliant Freefall curriculum. The 3 day weekend costs around $3000 and is life changing, but for a fraction of that, you can purchase her 9 DVD series, Living on the Edge, which actually contains the entire curriculum. Sure, it misses out on the important experiential component, but it is a great alternative in the meantime.

Suddenly, something that seemed out of reach financially for certain prospects is offered in a different and more cost effective way.

This works positively in two ways; firstly the risk of investing the lower ticket price is less than the original ticket price, so the conversion will be higher (and with the use of leverage, the cost of goods is negligible).

Secondly, once the prospect has experienced the power of a program like this, then they are going to be far more sold on the value of the original offering, than when they were 'cold'. This is the

gold of this approach; think of one of your higher value offerings, and how it can take something for an organization to commit (particularly if it requires buy in at a company level outside of the financial commitment). They will be way more comfortable being guided through a path of increments, rather than a massive leap of faith in the first instance.

B8. Membership sites and online programs

This is probably a subset of B7, but deserves special mention, because of its subscription-based nature. Essentially, rather than purchasing a one off program, you purchase access to resources on line, usually at a tiered level (e.g. bronze USD19.95 per month, silver USD29.95 per month and gold USD59.95 per month). There are a number of platforms that provide a great structure for these programs including Litmos, Kajabi and Customerhub. There is a kind of aspirational path here, the higher the level, the more value you receive. Most membership sites are displayed in the clever format, where the 'exclusive' material only accessible by higher-level memberships is tantalizingly visible but greyed out.

I have only recently been introduced to www.udemy.com which is a place where you can post your online program for purchase. Some people are doing very well out of selling their programs this way, but be warned, there are some very specific requirements around lighting, video, framing and audio quality. You need to submit a test video and they provide you with feedback.

B9. Your own free mobile applications

Is there some way that you can provide an app which provides an insight into your value? Maybe it is a diagnostic tool, maybe it's simply a directory of resources, or it could even be some kind of a journal or service that people subscribe to (eg sending motivational quotes daily, or tracking how many times you find yourself

swearing!). These are relatively easy to create, but the perception is still that they require significant investment; hence there is some kind of admiration for those companies/individuals who create them. It doesn't need to be too clever. Check out www.mobileroadie.com for more information.

B10. Collaborative e-books

There is power in group, and one way to do this, is to create an online book with contributions from multiple parties. Not only does it mean less effort on your part, but you suddenly have a bunch of co-authors who are all equally committed to distributing the book, so suddenly, your content is being presented to a larger audience. Obviously there needs to be some congruency across the authors; like a common theme!

B11. Online communities

If your market is corporate, it may serve you well to provide an offering of an online community to support your workshops/events, because even though they know that they should be embracing social media, many haven't yet done anything about it. By offering them a social platform with your other services, you are in some cases ticking that off their checklist! Check out www.ning.com or www.jivesoftware.com for examples of a kind of private Facebook. The power of these communities is the interactions taking place between community members, some private, some shared, and some evolving into beautifully grouped threads based on content or theme.

Online communities can be supportive, sometimes even addictive. When my youngest son underwent significant head surgery at less than a year old, I found incredible solace in an online community I discovered, which was totally dedicated to parents of children with his condition across the world. I engaged frequently in

various online discussions, and created some valuable (if not short-term!) friendships along the way.

If you host your own community based on your expertise, then this is all about slowly strengthening your brand and positioning your thought leadership over time.

B12.YouTube channel

Seth Godin, in his brilliant book, 'The Icarus Deception' refers to The Connection Economy, which is where we exist today. No longer do we have to rely on the record label, the speakers bureau or the network channel to 'pick us', we pick ourselves!

This is certainly true in the case of experts, so why not simply host your own YouTube channel? Get over your resistance to the world seeing your entire seven views on each video; that is totally normal, and the views do increase over time. But one day, you are going to post 'that' clip, the one which just resonates, gets shared and positions you powerfully.

And with distribution vehicles like Traffic Geyser, you can spread yourself around the globe very simply.

B13. Mobile magazines/video print

I have saved my personal favorite from a 'bright shiny object' perspective until last. Seriously, I don't know what it is about mobile magazines, but I find them really exciting. Not from a publishing perspective (I don't know the first thing about publishing), but from a positioning stand point. How impactful would it be for you to have your brand represented via a beautiful quality magazine? With technologies like www.3dissue.com and www.issuu.com, you can create a magazine from various templates. Think of it like a newsletter on speed; instead of sending something standard once a week, send a highly informative and relevant magazine once a

quarter.

The power comes from the way you engage with the reader. Imagine turning a page, and before reading the article on 'how to create the perfect complimentary workshop', a video started playing, with attendees from a recent event sharing their experiences. On the same page as an article on automatic marketing, there is an opt-in form where you can request the free e-book or video series. There might even be a chat bubble pop up, asking the reader if they would like to know more, right now! This media provides great visibility; you can use technology to analyze how often people stayed on a page, or watched a video. Imagine the segmentation you could apply knowing these kinds of things!

Mobile magazines can spread your brand like wildfire, especially if you do it sooner rather than later.

Here's another clever trick. It can take something to generate the content for an entire magazine, so engaging your community to contribute is a great idea. Not only do you provide them with exposure, but also you position yourself as well connected in your area of expertise, committed to providing value over and above your contribution. You can ask partners (I have never liked the word supplier), clients, fellow industry specialists and subject matter experts. Once you have compiled the magazine, it is easy to create multiple versions. Imagine putting the cover photo of one of your contributors and sending that version to them! Repeat with all other contributors! Do you think they are going to be more inclined to circulate the magazine to their list when they are on the front cover?!

TYPICAL OFF-LINE STRATEGIES

C1. Paid Speaking

What is there not to like about paid speaking? With getting paid between $3000 and $10,000 per keynote, it is a lucrative offering in its own right. But actually, the true gold, is not only how it positions you as a thought leader in your particular field, but how you are introducing who you are to a potentially large audience. One of my very good friends is a leading entrepreneur in Australia, who regularly speaks around the world. In a heart to heart recently, I asked her why she does it (her schedule is insane) and she was very clear in her reply; 'if I didn't have a business to promote with my keynote, then I wouldn't be doing it anywhere near so often'. It really is a key lead generation strategy.

Most of us know that the second biggest fear for humans is public speaking (I always thought that the biggest fear was death, but apparently it is actually flying; of course it all depends on which survey you look at; some recent surveys have identity theft as a top fear).

I was engaged a couple of years ago to present at a very good friend's company's lunch n learn, on selling. I hadn't spoken in front of a group much, but I knew it was a key part of the thought leader's journey that I was at the time preparing to embark on. My first mistake was in basing the content around someone else's intellectual property. I love their IP, but because it wasn't mine, it felt more like a sermon; I wasn't speaking from my own truth. Secondly, I didn't practice enough. I recently saw John Yeo, curator of TedX Melbourne speak about what it takes to be a successful TedX speaker. He suggested you run through your speech 50 times! Thirdly and finally, I was far too reliant on my notes, and referred to them far too often, which wasn't smart, because I kept on losing my place.

The whole thing was, shall we say, a bit underwhelming. I do remember feeling so relieved, when I saw some lovely generous soul in the otherwise glum audience nodding her head enthusiastically and looking friendly.

Fast-forward a couple of years, I have now been presenting more consistently, and the results are a lot prettier. But more importantly, it has been a great way to grow my list. By using an SMS capture device like Mobit (www.mobit.com), you can invite the participants to opt in to receive something of value and effortlessly capture their details. If you don't invest in the technology, you can still capture leads simply by collecting business cards or leaving a form to be completed on everyone's chair.

Many of my clients are extraordinarily accomplished speakers who are never more comfortable than when they are in front of a large audience. If that isn't you, then at least consider this lead generation strategy, and get some support to up skill yourself in this brilliant craft.

C2. Unpaid speaking at events

How do you take some of the pressure off around speaking? Speak unpaid! There are countless numbers of business associations, networking events, charities and in-house events where people are welcome to contribute their thought leadership. It is also perfectly acceptable to give your business a good plug in the meantime. But if you do speak for free, don't give too much away and make sure that you include a nice obvious call to action at the end of your talk. Some speakers are generous to a fault with how much they give away. Remember, you haven't been paid, and even if you have a tendency to want to please, it pays to hold your best content back for those who are willing to pay for it.

Some thought leaders I know actually pop keynote packs together onto their websites for their freebie speaking options.

C3. Write the book!

How many of us have a book inside us? How many of us have gotten over the insecurities and gone ahead and actually done it? I am privileged to be working with a handful of published authors, and have now written this book myself. It was certainly a project that I had to be committed to, but I did manage to finish this within four months and outside of normal business hours. A number of people have said to me that they could never do it, and when I question them on why they think that, it so often comes down to a) not feeling that they have anything worthwhile to share or b) not feeling they have enough to share. That saddens me, because there will always be people who value what you do, and you are denying them an opportunity to learn from you, if you don't write a book.

Matt Church refers to writing a book as a brilliant positioning structure. Yes, you want to make sure that the book is of publishing quality, but when we are referring to lead generation, it is actually that fact that you have even written a book that counts. One of my first and very talented 12-week lead generation clients had written a book on a very narrow topic within people development. We agreed to activate a campaign, where we simply rang learning and development professionals, and offered to send them a copy of her book. The results were astounding! Traditional books work.

I have no doubt that being engaged by a publishing house has major advantages. Admittedly it also has disadvantages too (some of my author friends roll their eyes about how they had absolutely no say in the cover of their book). You have a greater chance of seeing your book in a bookshop, and you will have some powerful marketing and distribution lift, but, if publishing offers are in short supply, why not think about publishing yourself? And don't go for a local printer who will invariably charge you a minimum run of 1,000 copies (aside from the significant financial layout, who wants the remainder of that many books sitting in boxes in your spare room?).

There are countless self-publishing options in US online, where you simply upload the manuscript and the cover graphics, provide some specifications around stock paper, size and binding type, and there is your book, ready to be published; on demand and with no set up fee! And if you have a decent e-commerce or marketing automation system, it can be completely hands off for you. Someone orders your book on your website. Your marketing automation system (eg Infusionsoft) pushes out a fulfillment order to your publishing house, who automatically process the order, ship, and debits your account accordingly.

I have spent some time researching the various options, and one recommendation is www.vervante.com. Go and download their publications catalogue, it's amazing! You can even order DVD sets, complete with workbook and card sets (think Tarot cards). But what really impressed me with this company was their customer service; when I was communicating with them about some audio products on behalf of a client, they were very responsive.

When I first published this book, it still had grammar and spelling mistakes through it. I ordered 10 copies in my first print run (through lulu.com), and warned anyone who I gave it away to that it was still in final draft stage. I then went through the book again, refined the content, and published another few copies. The beauty of this approach to publishing, is that you don't get paralyzed by your need for it to be perfect. The feedback I got from those who read the first version has been really positive, and it keeps getting better!

If you haven't published a book, what is stopping you? It is an amazing feeling, holding your own book in your hand, and it truly gives you a brilliant lift in your positioning.

C4. One off/infrequent networking events

This is tried and true, isn't it? You never know who you are going

to meet at a one off event. The challenge is trying to appear unattached and in demand, whilst everyone else is awkwardly sharing their elevator pitch with anyone who will listen. Events where you meet like-minded people can be very powerful for lead generation but I think the focus is to be on quality rather than quantity.

Personally, I think a challenge with networking is the protocol around when to introduce yourself to a pair or group of people who are already engaged in what looks like deep discussion. I mean seriously, who knows if they might be talking about their recent divorce, or the manager who had serious mental health issues? Yes, I do get that there is an unwritten rule that everyone should be made to feel welcome to join networking conversations, but it is something I still struggle a bit with. I think the best way to overcome this is to simply ask if it is ok to join the group. As is so often the case, a direct request is the most powerful.

My biggest success in networking comes from being the asker rather than the teller. As soon as I meet someone, it's all about them. Adopting a host mentality is a great way to meet people at events and often people are relieved to have a break from doing all the work themselves.

Some IT user groups or industry associations are more full of consultants trying to sell into that group, than the individuals who work within that area. I pity the poor soul who turns up, with nothing to sell, who is suddenly circled by well-meaning professionals, eager to 'solve their pain'. Choose your events wisely.

C5.Regular/frequent networking events

In my opinion, an association or networking event where you catch up regularly, e.g. once a week, or once a month (or even two months!) wins hands down. Why? Because it can be difficult to forge

a relationship at a one off event, or even gain agreement to see someone one on one. See the same faces week after week, or month after month however, and the whole energy shifts significantly.

I am a board member for the Grey Lynn Business Association (www.glba.co.nz). For those of you who don't know Auckland, Grey Lynn is a diverse inner city suburb, with more than its fair share of artists and celebrities. I have met some wonderful people at the networking events. It is interesting how for some of the attendees, you don't get a chance to meet them until the third or fourth time that you have both been at an event. Remember, we are tribal, we like to connect, and then maintain those connections, so enjoy it! I do suggest the same rule of thumb, find out about other people, take the initiative, and only when asked, give your story.

One more comment on frequent networking events; I think that BNI (Business Networking International) is a powerful structure. I have heard mutterings over the years about its fussy structure and rules; I am no expert, but I understand members meet up with each other for 'dances', seeing how they may be able to serve each other and the commitment criteria is such that if you miss too many meetings you are challenged on it.

Personally, I think it is a powerful model, which has been proven time and time again by people I have met. One coach I know gets all her business from her BNI group. Having said that, I do suggest that (1) it does depend on your chapter, so scout around until you find one full of committed and like-minded individuals, and (2) I personally think that it is better suited to business-to-consumer (B2C) businesses rather than business-to-business (B2B). When I was running my first company, ITmaniacs, where we recruited very specific IT professionals, I attended a number of BNI groups (at that stage more to find good IT candidates rather than potential clients). Of course everyone there was a business owner, none of them were looking for a role in IT, or working as a CIO in a large organization. Sure, over time, I could have attracted business through referrals,

e.g. friends and family who fitted the bill, but it wasn't a strong enough proposition for me to continue my time.

There are now some other regular networking options like Business over Breakfast (BOB) Club, and Fit4Business. I particularly like Fit4Business, because people not only support each other with their business goals, but also their wellness goals; very clever!

C6. Media/publicity (paid)

I don't have much experience with paid publicity, but I understand that there are good operators available who can attract some valuable publicity and media for you. I also know of stories where there have been appalling let downs, essentially the client has paid significantly to get known, and have received absolutely nothing. If this is a strategy that you choose, make sure that you are clear on the typical results, if there is such a thing and understand if there is anything your PR agent will commit to providing for you.

C7. Media/publicity (free)

As an entrepreneur, I have learnt to find clever ways to get myself in the media over the years. When I owned ITmaniacs, my co-founder and I created a little press release, with no greater story than a couple of girls enjoying a relatively successful business; I suppose there was a slight angle re us buying a café, working above it, and interviewing our candidates in the café.

We took a nice photo, and included that and the press release in an envelope; we then attached to a fresh coconut with wee wobbly eyes glued on it, and threw on some feathers and pipe cleaners for 'hair' in our signature colors, lime green and navy. I went into a magazine shop one day, and wrote down all the names of the editors for the major publications.

We then hand delivered the coconuts to the editors, with personalized tags that read 'you must be nuts Cathy, you haven't written about us yet'!

Within 30 minutes, we had the editor of the Woman's Weekly saying it was the best press release she had ever seen (not that we ever got any coverage from her!) and we managed to get significant coverage in both the National Business Review and the New Zealand Herald.

Being a good lead generation girl, of course I followed up with those who didn't respond, and one interesting response we got was from one of the weekly women's mags; 'no sorry, we only focus on stories of people's downfalls not successes'. Admittedly that was some time ago.

C8. Tradeshows, conference stands

These should be so successful, so why do they disappoint time and time again? Of course you are relying on your event host to publicize the event properly and get the right audience along. If they have done their job, then I think this lead generation strategy falls down in two key areas;

<u>There isn't enough enticement</u>

Predicting the number of jellybeans in a jar for a business card draw just doesn't cut it. This is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your thought leadership or uniqueness, but you have to be elegant about it. How often have you seen some appealing invite on a stand at a trade show 'e.g. bring us your PC for a 15 minute free diagnosis' but have not taken action, simply because the two hosts are deep in conversation with each other, and not looking particularly approachable? One strategy that I have seen work, has

been the offering of 15-minute blocks of time, with an outcome, e.g. 3 hints to increase your lead quality. Have a schedule with blocks available, just like the old fashioned hair dressing appointment books, and have it prominently displayed at the perimeter of your stand, so that people can quietly come in and pop their name in there. Fill out two or three appointments later in the day (in pencil) to start, just so your dance card doesn't look empty. You can always rub them out later on, once legitimate customers start coming. Of course it pays to have two of you on the stand, one to engage in the 15-minute consultations, and the other to chat with passers-by, who are curious as to what the attraction is.

There is NO follow up!

Whenever I go to trade shows, I deliberately give out my business cards to a number of stands, just to analyze the follow up. What follow up? Most of the time I get nothing, quite often I get subscribed to their newsletter (I never gave permission for that, although I do at times subscribe to the forgiveness versus permission philosophy) and about twice, I have actually been phoned. Why do people waste their money? If you are going to spend all that money, then at least have a strategy for what to do with those whose details you do capture. Technology is pretty advanced in the event industry; you can often simply scan their admission pass to capture their details.

I wish that I had more positive things to say about stands at conferences, but again, the feedback I generally get from exhibitors is that it does not produce the results they are seeking. If you do choose this medium, make sure that you are well positioned in foot traffic. One major sponsor of a conference I went to was horrified to discover that his prime booth, right outside the main auditorium, which seated 3000 delegates, was almost ignored. The organizers had decided for some reason to traffic the delegates using a few doors only, and it was a very long way away from this high paying

sponsor!

C9. One hour 'free' consultation

This approach is alive and kicking in the coaching community; come and spend an hour with me and let's see if we are a fit for going forward. I use this strategy myself. The challenge is in finding a reason for someone to connect over and above the 'one hour free consultation'. It does sound a little jaded, doesn't it? People value their time, so you want to make sure that it is perceived to be valuable for them. I find it is good to focus on something that they can use immediately; for example, we will work out three specific actions that you can take right now to amplify your pipeline. Think about something nice and concise, even something where you can leave a one pager, even hand drawn with them (and refer to the next section for a clever way of adding value to the one hour consultation).

But what do you do if your offering is confronting?

My coach Sally Anderson (www.sally-anderson.com) is amazing and profoundly life changing. I have seen her transform lives again and again. It is truly astonishing, and before I spend pages and pages going on about how extraordinary she is, I will simply state that apart from her high level of intuition, she is also vulnerable, and doesn't do 'looking good'.

Her ability to get people present to the cost of how disconnected they are is exceptional. I have coached some of her certified coaches in lead generation, and they are also learning how to powerfully use this approach. But it can be confronting leading someone into a conversation about personal coaching. What does it say about that person; does it mean that they need fixing?

Thankfully the personal development industry has grown from

strength to strength, and it is no longer considered unusual to seek coaching. However if your services are confronting in nature, consider offering a 'Trojan horse', for example offering a session on something like goal setting or productivity to reduce the chance of scaring someone off at the first step.

NEXT GENERATION OFF-LINE STRATEGIES

D1. Your own regular off-line catch ups, i.e. create your own communities

In the previous section, I mentioned the power of regular networking events, in that relationships are formed gently over time.

There is immense power in creating your *own* community; you create the event, the venue and the format of the catch up, and invite likeminded people to attend. The power comes in the value exchange and in the intimacy of the events. The people you invite will be both prospects and influencers. It is imperative that you do not overtly sell at these events, rather position yourself as a thought leader in this community and serve them.

One very successful friend of mine, Jasmine Platt, used to hold weekly 'creating miracles' evenings, where a limited number of people would catch up for an intense and invaluable session. Not only did the participants gain enormous value from attending (seriously, she has numerous examples of people coming off long term medication, and previously infertile couples getting pregnant!), but for a while it became her primary lead generation source. Friends brought along their friends, they talked about it, and Jasmine simply worked her magic.

D2. One hour visit, with follow up audit/analysis/report

As I mentioned earlier, this is the pimped up version of the one-hour consultation. Think of something that you can provide your prospect, preferably some kind of tangible report. We love analyzing ourselves, so something where they can compare themselves against their peers can prove effective.

I generally email a follow up with a couple of key thoughts on lead generation strategies. I used to write up pages and pages of suggestions, until I realized that I was 'giving away the farm'. Make sure that you are not doing the same. Also make sure that there is perceived value in the one hour exchange, and if you are sending a report, do invest the time in making it look professional.

D3. 3-D mail – used to be known as direct mail

I love the retro movement back to direct mail. So seldom do we get something in the mail, if we get something personally addressed to us, and it looks good, then it is quite exciting! Again, Vervante (www.vervante.com) can give you some inspiration with offline collateral. Just make it stand out, and something that people like to share, or at least keep on their desk.

If you want to really impress, and are prepared to fork out around $UD30 a unit, then how about sending a greeting card, with your own little video message inside it? These are certainly novelty factor right now! It is a bit fiddly to do the conversion, but sites like www.soundexpressiongreetings.com or www.spreengs.com are great sources of unique and customized products.

If you are not so excited about the novelty factor, then a simple CD/DVD in great packaging (not for much longer though, most new laptops don't even have CD drives now), or a beautifully presented report/magazine will suffice. Of course you can always send a USB stick, but it is so little and unimpressive. Some people I know choose to invest in a little iPod to store information and send to prospects (and these can now be personalized with your logo). I quite like the thought of a readily accessible audio system, which is easy to pop on when you are next on a walk, and there is a nice sense of generosity with it too.

D4. Your own speaking events

Rather than relying on speaking at other people's events, either paid or unpaid, consider hosting your own. Personally I like to make them intimate, say no more than 10 or 20, and you may wish to charge for them, you may not.

As a caveat, people are very protective of their time, so it pays to make the format pretty inviting. Some of my clients experiment with time of day to see which gets the best response, e.g. evenings, morning teas, breakfasts or cocktail evenings. You also need to be clear on what value they will receive from attending.

I will let you in on a little secret though. My main reason for hosting these events is to have an excuse to connect with my prospect community! In fact, not that long ago, I cancelled a lead generation workshop, because no one had booked! It didn't worry me though, because I had a number of one on one catch-ups scheduled, as a result of me reaching out and inviting people. One of those people I connected with is sitting near me right now on my book-writing weekend, because she caught up with me not long after the scheduled meeting, and then became a private client!

If you are hosting such an event, and do go ahead with it, then it is a good idea to have a take away that you hand out at the end, something elegant looking, which summarizes the leanings you have imparted.

D5. Collaborative speaking events

These are chargeable events that you host with one to four other industry experts. The whole purpose of them is lead generation, but you work collaboratively, to cross-pollinate your lists, and to provide a higher value event. Often the charge is minimal, simply to cover costs; e.g. $20 to $50.

Not unlike the principles of the mobile magazine, discussed earlier, this approach means that you get profiled in other people's social media communities, and they in turn get profiled in yours. You may get a lead from someone who didn't even attend the event, but saw your profile in the marketing material distributed about the event.

Each speaker is limited to around 20 or 30 minutes, which means that the evening is varied, and comprehensive. It is also a great way to practise speaking if you haven't got much experience to date; filling in 20 minutes is a lot easier than an hour!

D6. Collaborative books

A similar approach is to co-author a book. Again, you would want to write with a select number of likeminded subject matter experts, and again, you would be leveraging their communities, and supporting them with yours.

Do get clear expectations and guidelines set up front, the last thing you want is squabbles on the cover design, title or author sequence!

D7. Sponsoring a global thought leader to visit

Here is one of those kind of cheeky 'what have you got to lose' approaches! Have a think about someone who you respect in your industry, and invite them to come and visit you. It is amazing how far you can get just by asking. A few of my fellow thought leaders have managed to get endorsements for their book by world class experts in their field, simply by asking. Better still, find a networking body, with a good list, who might be willing to support you with the initiative! If the expert was open to it, and you could find an available date, then why wouldn't you just start publicizing it via your communities, who would then share it with theirs?

The gold in this, provided you manage to pull it off, is the positioning of your brand associated with that person's name. And imagine the fun you could have, and the people you would meet!

D8. The 'Collectors' book

The trend towards e-reading continues; in fact in most categories, e-reading has surpassed book reading. The only two categories where this is not the case is instruction manuals and children's books. I don't understand the instruction manuals lag (I mean surely if anything instruction manuals would benefit from the video approach outlined earlier?), but I am assuming that most parents, even the youngest ones, were brought up having physical books read to them, so nostalgia plays a part.

Reading is migrating to a digital platform, and statistics show that e-reading is more efficient; an e-reader manages to get through 26 books a year on average, whereas your traditional book reader only manages 19.

So what is the role of traditional books? How about collector's edition books? These are limited edition, and works of art in their own right. They are made of highest quality, include wonderful images, and maybe some additional material (kind of like the director's cut in movies).

How does this fit into lead generation? If you are a published author, consider generating your own very limited run of collector's book for your influencers. They will appreciate receiving this very special gift, and will ensure that other people get to see it. It is quite a novelty factor, and also appeals to our emotions and love of beauty. This isn't a cheap lead generation strategy, but it is a beautifully positioned one.

SUMMARY

Have a look at the strategies in this section where you rated them 3. Now you have a plan to create your first lead generation machine! Make sure you keep a note of them, because remember, testing and measuring is what successful lead generation is all about. Who knows whether the industry you deal with typically responds better to being invited to a complimentary cocktail evening or to receiving a beautiful package in the post, with a value packed IPod. Try something for 90 days, measure it, then try something else, if that doesn't work. And take a risk, have some fun, who knows what might come out of it?

COURT THEM, ENGAGE THEM, AND LOVE THEM.

So now you have a bunch of prospects, people who have indicated some kind of an interest in your product or service, but maybe are not ready to buy just yet. I love the work of Jay Baer, author of Utility, and his phrase WIFLI, which stands for "when I feel like it." Just because someone isn't willing to buy off you now doesn't mean they're never going to be. This is why keeping in touch in a non-threatening way is just so critical. We call it nurture.

Courting them is the way I refer to it in the Lead Generation Machine.

So how often do you keep in touch? I don't think you want to really do it any more frequently than every six weeks. Sometimes it might even be every six months.

You just want to communicate something to let them know that you're still around. What's the reason for connecting? Usually it's to give them something of value. Matt Church suggests to us that when we first meet someone we rock their world by sending them something of value three days, three weeks, and then three months after we've met them. It might be your white paper or it might be someone else’s.

When I started up ITmaniacs I was introduced to an IT Director of a very successful finance company. It almost became a joke that every six weeks I'd just ring him and say "Hi, how are you going? Just thinking of you. Let us know if you need any project staff." I must confess, at that stage I wasn't even adding value; I was just keeping in touch. This probably went on for a year, and then one stage he completely surprised me by saying "Actually Laurel, yes. We've just launched a new project. Would love you to come down and talk about it"

That client ended up becoming our biggest single client. Not only that, but they also used to pay on the 11th of the month for our contractors, which was a lifesaver for us. Equally, the first large IT company (where we were rewarded their supplier contract for recruitment) told us that the express reason that they selected us was because we didn't bully them; we just quietly kept in touch with them without being demanding. I know some people, (including my husband!) who think that I can be a bit of a bull at a gate in sales, and I must confess that particularly when I'm dealing with individuals and thought leaders, sometimes I need to be a little bit inappropriate and challenge them to commit to investing in themselves; it’s all about getting themselves out of the way!

But of course I'm not holding them to it. I like to just keep in touch and be a little unattached; really it's up to them if and when they choose to buy from me. The Audrey process in Chapter 12 goes into way more detail about this.

When you're courting them, just work out how you're going to do it. Is it going to be another piece of direct mail? Will it just simply be your newsletter? Will it be sending them a white paper or even your book? Will it be doing something that serves them like introducing them to someone that you know that they'd find valuable? Really it does matter. It's just your way of saying "Hi, I'm here," but making sure that you're not wasting their time at the same time.

Once you engage them, make sure that it's clean and that all terms of trade are understood. I think it's a real risk to the sales process when things are unclear. Commit to what you're going to deliver and get it signed. Ensure you have a feedback mechanism once you’re starting to deliver to ensure that they're still happy with what you're delivering.

Obviously the most important part of this whole Lead Generation Machine: is once they become clients. *Love them!* Love them like your business depends on it, because it does. Because I am so passionate about lead generation, sometimes I get a bit carried away about focusing on this part of my business, so I remind myself constantly that my clients are always my priority. They are the bread and butter of my business, and without them I would not be here.

It's incredible how unloved some customers feel, and I think particularly with some of the utilities and telecommunications company, we've all witnessed examples of how not to treat your customers. How often have they given far better deals to those who aren't their customers rather than those who are? Remember to incorporate a process which gives them the opportunity to answer in detail the questions "Hey, how are we going? What’s going well? What could we be doing better? Anything else?” Formal feedback mechanisms work! Of course the other key part of loving them is that (without expectation) there is a good possibility that they will go and recommend you to people they know. We all know that's one of the best ways to secure new business. Refer also to chapter 25 - Referrals and Testimonials. Make sure that you're asking for these but asking for them in the right way.

Chapter 7 – The ABCs of Online Tools

We have already provided some insight into the various tools available in the lead generation machine section. Obviously technology is a great way to support your business, and get known. Some of these technologies primarily relate to specific lead generation campaigns, but others are clearly very important to your business as a whole. An example of this is a good professional website. I didn't even have a website when I first started up my most recent company, GenLead, and quite often, my thought leader clients don't have one either. But these days there is no excuse. Setting up a website is ridiculously easy. There are other platforms like client relationship management systems and newsletter systems which may seem a little scary, but with only a bit of up skilling, they can serve you in your business.

So what online tools are available to you? Remember the distraction challenge that I referred to early on in this book? Well, there can be no greater distraction than particular technologies, some which really do distract us like bright shiny objects.

We just love to think that things can be simpler and that technology can enable us to produce better results. Obviously there are many instances where that's actually the case. Where the danger lies is when there is too much reliance.

The reason that I am calling this chapter the ABCs of online tools is because I want to take you through some tools and let you know what I believe at an absolute minimum is needed.

Don't distract yourself by spending too much time or money on stuff that really isn't going to make much of a difference commercially to you. Again, I want to introduce that good old caveat of saying, by the time you actually read this, some of this technology

may in fact even be out of date. Indeed there are probably way more exciting and interesting technologies that are not mentioned here. Remember this book is a book about framework and basics, so if you find yourself rolling your eyes at a technology that I have mentioned, that is simply outdated, then make sure you go and do the research yourself and find the one that suits you.

WEBSITE BASICS

Lets look at first things first. Do you need a website, and if yes, what kind of website do you need?

I remember when my business partner and I first started up our company ITmaniacs in 2001, we spent $10,000.00 on a website. It was as complex as a standard brochure with about four static pages on it. Haven't things come a long way since then? Content management systems which enable you to create a fabulous and editable website for very little cost are particularly useful.

So, do you need a website?

I have a number of clients who do not have a website, but they do have a very good LinkedIn profile. One thing that they do is to constantly amend their LinkedIn profile. This means those people who are following them get to see that they've updated their profile (and will hopefully actually go and have a look to find out what's changed).

LinkedIn profiles are a great way to demonstrate credibility to prospects and show the people that you know in common and the places that you've worked. In fact, it's a very useful tool.

As mentioned in the introduction, all you really need, initially, is a LinkedIn profile and a telephone number for people to connect with you, or at least an email. Now that LinkedIn is offering publishing services, that's an even better way to position yourself online. The other alternative is a Facebook page or one of the other multimedia listings. Again, remember that you're only going to ever be seen by those people who follow you, and not even by all of those, unless you pay. I have certainly noticed that quite a few individuals and companies I have been introduced to recently, guide

me to their Facebook page rather than a website.

I also get that it's actually pretty cool to have a website. Here are two reasons why.

1. There are actually some people out there who believe that a website is important.

   If they see that you haven't actually bothered to invest in a website, they wonder about your credibility. In thought leadership we talk about working with people you love. I do wonder whether you want to work with someone who would dismiss you based on such a criteria. However, we don't want to throw any baby out with bathwater, so it's probably worth considering their preferences.

2. I think there's something energetic that happens when you declare to the world that you have a website.

   This is particularly the case when you have launched yourname.com. I know for me that when I created a website, it really shifted my business in more ways than one.

If you choose to have a website, what should you do?

Well, the first thing I would implore you *not* to do, is create one from scratch yourself. That is unless you have an eye for design and a talent around visuals.

In the next section, ABCs of offline tools, I'm going to talk about the importance of design. I never used to get too fussed about it, but now I realize that pleasing aesthetics are extraordinarily valuable. Read Seth Godin's book called "The Icarus Deception" for more of an understanding of how design, in its greater context, actually is so important in business today.

Please don't do what I did and create one yourself with no design expertise. In fact you can probably still have a look at www.genlead.co.nz which was my attempt at my first website. It was created in a free platform called Weebly, and quite frankly, it's awful!

However, don't go to the other extreme, which is paying someone else a huge amount of money to create something extraordinarily complicated. Even worse, something where you need to get them to change anything, including removing an event you were hosting that is now past.

Some people I know still spend over $10,000 on their website. While there are some instances when there's a highly interactive and functioning websites, more often than not, you just need something simple.

Let's talk about how you create your website.

Firstly, decide which platform would like to build it in.

What you're looking for is something that is proven, not something bespoke or obscure that no one has heard of!

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, you want something responsive. By that, I mean something that looks good regardless of which device you use. More and more people are looking at your details via an iPhone or a tablet, rather than by a PC or Mac. Ensuring that something that actually intuitively responds to the device that the website is being viewed on is preferable.

Choose a platform which has a monthly payment option and has no written-in contracts. You also want a template format, and one where you can easily add and remove webpages as you need to. It is preferable to have some kind of tracking mechanism for your web traffic, although Google Analytics will most likely provide you with

everything you need.

At time of writing SquareSpace, Strikingly and WordPress are, I believe, absolute standouts. WordPress has far more add-ons and customization possibilities than the other two. However, SquareSpace is what I use simply because of it's ease of use.

Secondly, create a good looking template, then populate it yourself with content

Do you have a logo? As a thought leader, we simply ask you to create the name 'yourname.com' and put some nice fonts and colors around it. It might sound a little bit tacky, but that is what works for many of us. If you are a design freak, then sure, go out and spend a little bit of money getting a logo that you love. Even as a business, if you don't have a logo, you could choose to adopt this approach. It's the look and feel of the website that really makes the difference. If you have a look at my old website, www.genlead.co.nz and my new website www.laurelmclay.com, you'll (hopefully!) see a vast difference. The interesting thing I find about design is you don't even really know what the difference is. It's just such a preferable aesthetic experience.

I know providers who will create a thought leader based website that is very similar to the one that I have for $500 plus GST. What I mean by that is, they will create the template, the way the site is laid out, the text, headings, images and videos. You are the one who then populates the content. Make sure you know how to have opt-in forms if you are using something like MailChimp or Infusionsoft and that there's an ability to upload video.

A blog is a key piece of marketing material, whether you are an expert or even own a business. Both WordPress and SquareSpace have a blog section, where you can regularly post your own thought leadership.

I am not going to cover online shopping carts in this book, but again, just choose something simple. Many people are simply choosing to transact via PayPal and the shopping cart provided by something like SquareSpace.

Again, give up that need for perfectionism.

I can't believe how many people I know who have been literally about to publish their website for the last three years. Choose the platform, get a wonderful template designed by a designer, fill the content, and publish. If you want to know what to publish as a thought leader, look at my site and copy that.

As is so often the case, it's a lot simpler than you think.

MAILCHIMP AND OTHER NEWSLETTER PLATFORMS

Essentially, what you're looking for here is a way of communicating with your audience that doesn't have any barriers to you actually publishing. I used to publish ad hoc newsletters in Infusionsoft, and it just took me too much time. I was considering moving my newsletters from Infusionsoft to MailChimp., but have since chosen to pre-program my newsletters in an Infusionsoft campaign, and they are now automatically sent out weekly.

If you do choose MailChimp, or equivalent, you can use clever technology like RSS feeds and publish your blogs on your website via something like SquareSpace or Wordpress. Then it will automatically be distributed to your mailing list using MailChimp. Be aware that control over email distribution is getting tighter and tighter. Now it's pretty much impossible to get someone on your list without a double opt-in. Having said that, it is still a good way to enhance your positioning, even with the requirement for double opt in.

SMS MARKETING

This information will become out-dated so quickly, but at the time of writing, a new way of communicating with your market is via SMS, or text. Consider this, most people now have a smartphone. Rather than messaging them via email, why don't you message them simply via SMS? A long time friend of mine, and outstanding sales guru Sean McDonald, has launched an extraordinary platform called Mobit. With this technology you pay a simply monthly fee, and can choose all sorts of designs to interact engagingly with your audience by SMS. Sean is certainly well ahead of the curve here and I know that SMS is definitely a future platform of choice. One great area is video to text. Imagine engaging your audience by sending out a video where they can play and just get to see a little personal message from you.

VIDEO

At time of writing, video was still poorly underused as a lead generation mechanism. Personally, I like to get professional videos done for the majority of my online videos. Really, it doesn't matter too much. Just make sure people can hear you, and that the quality of the image is good. YouTube is one of the most popular search engines, so it’s no coincidence that Google bought them. I know a number of people who have generated massive amount of leads through YouTube, but there's an awful amount of luck involved with becoming an instant viral success.

However, there are many reasons that video is a must on your website

1. Google.

   Google loves video, and so it's going to bring you further up your search results if you use video.

2. Differentiate yourself.

   There are still a number of people who don't use video. If you're in, for example, real estate or beauty and you use video, you're clearly differentiating yourself against the competition who don't.

3. It certainly gives people a sense of who you are.

   There's nothing more engaging than seeing people on video. I have met people who I've been following on their videos, and when we meet, I feel like I already know them. That’s because I've already experienced their quirkiness and their authenticity when they speak to camera.

4. It can save you time.

Catching up with people one on one to share with them the value of what you do is a perfect way to generate leads. However, if you haven't been able to share concisely the value of what you do, you run the risk of spending that hour with someone who may never have any intention of or perceived need to become a client. If you have introductory videos on your website, that provide for example an overview of your offerings, then you can direct people to watch the videos as a first step. If it is something that really doesn't resonate with them, then you can be pretty certain that they won't waste your (or their!) time catching up.

Video blogging hasn't really taken off yet. Again, this may not be the case by the time you read this, but it certainly is a great way to show you in all your rawness. In this instance I totally agree that professional video isn't required. However, there are some simple techniques you can use to make sure that the experience of watching you is enjoyable and there are many how to sites on the internet that will guide you through the dos and don'ts.

You also want to make sure that you feel comfortable in front of the camera. I attended an amazing course on presenting by Paulus Romijn, encourage you to find someone similar or in fact Paulus if you live in Auckland. There is nothing more alluring than being comfortable in front of the camera. Believe me, it can take a while. When I first use to start being filmed, it looked like my jaw was totally seized up. Recently I have been lucky enough to be interviewed regularly as a commentator on the breakfast TV/radio/internet show, The Paul Henry Show. Thankfully my time with Paulus meant I didn't come across with my frozen jaw expression on the first interview, and I got invited back!

CLIENT RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (CRMS)

It amazes me how many people don't even know what a CRM is. Essentially it's just a way of managing your client information. Strangely enough, that's why it's called a client relationship system! There can be a tendency to get too carried away with trying to implement an extraordinarily sophisticated machine.

All you really need is a way of tracking your connections and how often you interact with them. It's also great to have information on those clients.

When I was running ITmaniacs and I was responsible for keeping in touch with multiple clients and contacts, I used to enter a whole lot of information into our CRM system; the names of their kids, their husband, anything else about them. You have no idea how powerful it was to ring them up after you hadn't spoken to them for three months and say, "How's Josh and Jamie getting on with their science project" or "Has Jane returned from her overseas business trip yet"? Simple, simple, simple, but this stuff works.

We can't possibly be expected to know everything about them when we haven’t connected with them for three months! Thankfully with the age of LinkedIn, we now can also view an image of them online so we don't forget what they look like, which can be a little embarrassing if you agree to catch up with them somewhere in public a few months down the track!

Here's what you want to make sure if you choose a CRM.

Firstly, make sure it is simple. All you need is a straightforward record capture mechanism for client details, contact details, notes, and activities.

It's also preferable that it interacts with your email system, which in many cases is likely to be Gmail or Outlook. What that means, is that every time you send or receive an email from a contact, it get's recorded in their record on the system.

If you want to be a little bit clever, you may want to use ‘tags’ which segments particular clients according to their preferences or attributes about them. For example, I recently held a very successful webinar with Peter Cook, which was targeted at New Zealand based thought leaders. When they registered online, they were automatically tagged as webinar registrants (see next section about marketing automation). I have been following up with those who registered, and it has been easy just to run a search on my CRM for those tagged accordingly.

You may also wish to have some kind of opportunity management or pipeline management facility within your CRM. This essentially means that you can look at all your outstanding opportunities you have from new, through to open, pending, and won or lost. But seriously, in most cases I simply don't think this is necessary, because you can track your opportunities far better visually with a funnel on your wall (we talk about that in the next chapter).

If you don't have a CRM, I recommend a simple Excel spreadsheet. One that has the following fields is more than sufficient.

- First name
- Last name
- Title
- Company
- Phone number
- Email address
- Priority (optional)
- Notes

- Action taken

This has served me time and time again, and when it is coupled with the funnel on your wall, it is a real success.

Outlook and Gmail both have simple contact management options, which are certainly sufficient.

If you are on the market for a CRM, then the following options all come recommended, and are all available on a per month subscription, no term basis;

1. Solve360
2. Capsule
3. Contactually

Have a look through their website, particularly their videos, and make sure you Google reviews for each of them. Far better to have an understanding of their limitations before you spend all that time and energy implementing them into your business.

INTRODUCTION TO MARKETING AUTOMATION

I have definitely been far too attracted to bright shiny objects at various times in my life. The marketing automation system, Infusionsoft is certainly an example of a bright shiny object that has held me captivated and needlessly taken my attention away from the more fundamental tasks of running a successful practice.

Now don't get me wrong, I think it is one of the most powerful applications available. I also attended the conference in Arizona last year and learnt some extraordinary information about how to be commercially successful.

The challenge is, it's a beast! I know the lovely folk at Infusionsoft would disagree, but really it is quite a complex piece of software. I decided it was a great idea to introduce Infusionsoft to a few of my lead generation clients, and quite a number of them invested in it.

Sadly, most of them have given up on it now, and generally, they weren't prepared or able to spend the money or time that it *actually* takes to try to make it work.

I am probably a bit like the mechanic with their car, and it is only now that I am really starting to see the benefit myself.

So, how does it work? I am going to go into a bit of detail telling you, simply because many people seem to get seduced into the whole idea, like I did. The online videos and resources are great, but I am going to touch on the basics and simply to try to spell it out to you without the hype. If you have no interest in Infusionsoft (or equivalent systems), I suggest you skip this section.

Essentially, Infusionsoft is a marketing automation tool. That means it is a client relationship management (CRM), email

marketing, and shopping cart all in one. The CRM is pretty limited, but it certainly serves a purpose for what I need. There are also easier shopping cart solutions around. It's the email marketing component that is very clever.

You create campaigns which automatically trigger emails to be sent according to a particular action (eg a form is filled out, a tag is applied) and sequences of emails are then sent, at predefined times. Here is the basic structure of a campaign.

Firstly, there is generally an opt-in form or landing page on your website. If you don't have a website, you can design a landing page which is hosted by Infusionsoft.

You choose certain fields that you want the prospects to complete. These would be, at a minimum, first name and email address. But you can capture so much more than that; you can request their telephone number, their address, and their gender. You can design a comment field. You can also set up radio buttons and drop down options so that the prospects can select from a variety of options.

For example, if you were hosting a bunch of retreats, you could set up the July, August, and September dates as options for them to choose before they submit. The cleverness of the system is all around the tailored auto-response. For example, if they had selected one of those retreat dates, the system would only send back the email that specified details relevant to that particular event.

It might also automatically tag someone according to his or her responses or preferences, meaning that you can then choose to send something specific just to that group of people, either manually or automatically.

The rest of the campaign is basically focused on messaging the participants, primarily by email, but also via SMS or even voicemail!

There are some really cool logic rules that you can set up, so that the messaging is targeted, for example, those who are in the July retreat AND have identified themselves as vegans might receive an email that no one else gets which gives them a break down of the recipes of the food served. Essentially the messaging is grouped into sequences of emails (or alternative), and they are delivered according to either a time delay trigger (eg send this email 3 days after the previous email, at 8am) or date time stamped (send this email on 14 February 2015 at 3pm).

What is really nifty about Infusionsoft, is that there is a wonderful sense of set and forget about it. You know that people are getting messaged, according to their specific circumstances, without you having to do it manually. It therefore takes away that 'spamminess' of mass emails; it's far nicer to send something tailored.

But the use of logic is not only limited to within the campaigns. Maybe you decide to send everyone who is a newsletter recipient a new video that you have created. However, some newsletter subscribers have already been sent the video, and you don't want to send it to them again. All you do is set up the logic so that it sends the videos (via email) to those contacts who *do* have a newsletter tag and who *don't* have a 'video sent' tag, which the system will have already applied when it sent the video.

You can also set up rules so that if someone *doesn't* take a piece of suggested action, say watch a video or open a white paper, the system will automatically send them a reminder, at a predetermined later date. Now obviously you are not going to say 'you *haven't* opened the whitepaper, so here it is again' because that is just a bit creepy. But what you can do is send a nicely timed email, saying 'here is our whitepaper, just in case you missed it last time'.

There are some other nifty features, like creating some pretty cool lead scoring rules which highlight who is a more likely prospect

than others. It can even alert you to a prospect who has actually watched all your videos in your series (and watched them the whole way through if you purchase some add on software), and might be worth a phone call. Other features of add on software include automatically adding or updating their details in Infusionsoft from an Outlook message or a Gotowebinar registration.

If you want to know more, then do check them out online. Just be warned that it can take a while to get your head around, and if logic and processes doesn't naturally interest you, you are probably going to have to invest an additional $10,000 over and above the purchase price to get it working properly for you.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

I think if I were going to spend any money on the more traditional elements of online marketing, this would be where I'd spend it. For example, if you are a thought leader mentor like me, you want to make sure that if someone types in say "thought leader New Zealand" that your name comes up. The same may go for a speaker on innovation. There are people who are absolutely experts at this. It's ridiculously reasonable for the return that you can get.

The reason that this is such a great option for getting known, is that it positions your online presence to be visible to someone who has simply popped in certain words on their online search. These are called natural, free or organic search results, and are generally considered more credible than an obviously paid position on the top or right of the page.

The search engines are pretty smart, in trawling through the Internet to find results based on the words entered in the search bar, but they do need a little help. It all comes down to how indexable your content is, how you use keywords, the structure of your site, the links you have on your site, how you have incorporated and tagged your videos, and a whole other bunch of technical stuff. Like I mentioned in the previous section about Infusionsoft, unless this kind of logic really gets you excited (and even if it does, wouldn’t your time be better spent somewhere else?) hire an expert!

PAY-PER-CLICK

I have had success using LinkedIn advertising. You can set up an advert and the only time you pay is when someone actually clicks through to your website. The title and the text are limited to only a few words, so you need to get very clear on writing something compelling in a very short sentence. The great thing is, as long as you make sure that your name is featured on the advert, along with what you actually do for people, there is good resulting brand awareness. You can be seen by 10s of 1000s of people and not pay a cent.

Facebook, of course, also has its own version of pay-per-click. Facebook changes its setup so often that I'm not even going to try and give you an overview of that, needless to say I have also found it works well for me (and presently the cost of each click through is quite a bit cheaper than via LinkedIn).

A great advantage of pay-per-click is that you can use the split testing approach. For example, put different words and images on two different versions, or more, of the same ad to see where you receive the greatest response. I know people who gain most, or almost all, of their work through pay-per-click advertising, and it's great for internet marketers. Do remember that most people now are searching via the smartphone or tablet devices. Make sure you check out how your advert looks on these platforms; the most important thing here is to ensure that your image isn’t too detailed, and can still be seen clearly on the smaller screen.

SOCIAL MEDIA

This is another area where things change so quickly, and new players are coming on the block constantly. At time of writing, Instagram and Pinterest were still being recommended as growing social media platforms. I think social media is a great way to keep in touch with your audience.

However, ask yourself have you ever purchased a product or service based solely on something out of social media? I have done, but very rarely. But then again, I am not a social media expert, so I am going to keep this section relatively brief *and* limited to my own experience of it. In fact, right now, I am completing a final edit on this book, having written this section a few months back. Even in those few months, I think more people are spending on products and services as a result of social media than previously.

Personally, I think some people invest too much money and time into creating social media campaigns, which are nice to have, but don't always relate to commercial success. Having said that, I believe they are brilliant for on going customer loyalty, and nurturing a bunch of leads that you have obtained through other means. As mentioned earlier, you are only going to reach all of your likers, or followers, if you pay Facebook for the privilege.

LinkedIn is a brilliant social media tool. I have acquired a number of customers by using the powerful InMail function within LinkedIn.

How to set up a LinkedIn InMail campaign

Again, this may have changed since time of writing. You can either set yourself up as a premium member of LinkedIn or pay per InMail. If you are a premium member, you do get to enjoy a refined search function. An InMail is a mail that you send to the recipient's inbox in LinkedIn. They also get a notification in their standard mail

and a reminder to respond a few days later, if they haven't done anything about it. The other way you can reach out to someone who knows one of your connections is to request an introduction, but I think this is a nice direct way to do it and not bother anyone else (one of my protestant belief systems sneaking through there- let's not dare put anyone out!).

What you can do is find people who you want to connect with and create a search on them using keywords and identifying particular fields. eg. coaches, speakers, and authors in Melbourne. Personally, I find that keywords are really the best way to refine this audience. Beware, if you put multiple keywords in, it only returns the results where profiles contain *all* of those keywords.

Once you have done this, you can actually reach out to them using the InMail feature. LinkedIn used to only charge you for the InMails when you received a response, that is, if the recipient didn't respond, you would get an InMail credit. However, only this week the rules have been changed! Now you only get a credit if someone *does* respond to you, either by replying or flagging the InMail as 'not interested'. I can see the logic to this change; previously they were essentially rewarding spammy behavior, whereas now they reward behavior that is thought out enough to get a response (either negative or positive).

My darling husband, Geoff and I work on these campaigns together. He goes through the search results and works out who looks interesting in my second connections (ie the people who know the people I know – you can target these in the advanced search function). You can choose people who are members of the same groups as you as well, if you like, but do make sure the overall purpose of the group is aligned to your product or service.

He then inserts the names in a simple spreadsheet (I am sure that there is an easier way to manage the list by the saved search function within LinkedIn, but this approach works for us) and I go

through them to have a quick look at the profile, and obviously make sure I don't know any of them. A few months ago I received a InMail from one of my closest friends just commenting on my profile and saying she'd love to connect with me to discuss what she could do for me. When I quizzed her about it, she laughed and said that it was her VA who had sent it!

The next thing you need to do is create a template of the InMail to send to each of these contacts. Essentially, the key thing is to

a. acknowledge the common connection
b. write something personal based on their profile or a Google search.
c. Offer them something of value rather than straight out saying 'let's catch up' (refer to the various options in the 'Entice and Wow section of Chapter 6).

Note that I generally only accept invitations to connect in LinkedIn from people I know and who know me, but I appreciate that there are other strategies for LinkedIn. That means I can genuinely refer to the common connection, whereas if you accept invitations from strangers, then you don't have that advantage. Of course, you will also have more second connections to choose from, so it is certainly not a case of one size fits all.

Not only have I secured a number of clients this way, but also the process has been relatively quick.

A final word of warning about LinkedIn. There are many experts who need to target human resources and leadership and development individuals within large organizations. Obviously, these people are often the ones who control the learning and development budget.

I don't recommend reaching out to this audience via LinkedIn, simply because they are constantly being hit on by hopeful suppliers,

so the response rate is not very high. Of course remember that everything in lead generation is based on test and measure, so feel free to give it a go, measure its effectiveness, and if you get great results, let me know!

If you are dealing with people who hold these titles, then I suggest one of two things.

1. find another way to reach out for them, maybe via someone you know in their organization.
2. send something in the post. This is discussed in the next chapter and is surprisingly effective. A book is a perfect example of this.
3. find an individual within the organization who may be more willing to have a conversation with you. For example, if you are a change management expert, find someone in the organisation with a title that indicates they deal with change management. Again, they're probably being courted by a number of competitive suppliers, but if you provide them with something of value, you have a better chance.

I also don't recommend reaching out to an owner of a company or a CEO. In fact, CEOs are so busy keeping up with people they do know, that any form of cold approach is probably going to be unsuccessful. Having said that, again you have nothing to lose. Only this week, one of my wonderful business school colleagues decided to send her whitepaper to a CEO of a large organization, and he promptly replied, and agreed to catch up with her! If you need to talk to owners of companies, this is, again, where a little bit of sleuth and daring may come in!

Chapter 8 - The ABCs of Offline Tools

As I have mentioned already, there's an elegance when you combine the online, or the newer way of thinking, with the offline, or the older way of thinking. In an environment where we are absolutely consumed by information coming to us online, it's really nice to be able to receive something offline. Now that goes for any kind of lead generation campaign; or any time you want to actually send something physical and stand out.

I am also going to talk about the power of offline tools that serve you from a productivity perspective. But let's look at offline tools for lead generation first. It's been covered in Chapter Six - Lead Generation Machine, but what I want to talk about in this chapter is the importance of design. Whenever we receive something physical, it makes a real difference when it looks good. Actually, that goes the same for when we are looking at something online too, it’s just that with the offline material, it is more permanent, so I think it is more important.

Why is design so important?

I use to be a little bit of a design slob. I really didn't care too much what things looked like. However, I have been inspired by the company I keep, and some of those who I know are what I would call extraordinarily ‘design friendly’. I realize that the little extra care taken in creating say a beautiful cover for your white paper, or even a simple PDF one pager can make all the difference.

There has been a fair bit of discussion recently about the perceived lack of support for local designers, when you use an international online directory like fiverr.com. Some people feel that by using these sites, it is taking away work from locals. For those of you who don’t know, Fiverr is a site where you pay $US5 for ‘gigs’

which are delivered by freelancers based all over the world. You can get simple graphics jobs completed, like business card designs, email signatures or postcards, and you can order covers for your book or e-book (depending on which version of this book you are reading; this cover might have even been done by Fiverr!) But the fun doesn't stop there. You can order an extraordinary array of services, which have nothing to do with graphics! For example, a kid could sing happy birthday for you, a message of your choice will be displayed on a sign held by a sky diver or deep sea diver, and someone will even insult your boss by telephone or email.

Think about what impact you could have by creating something quirky and unexpected and delivering it to a prospect. There are actually physical items you can order, and of course now the promotional products market is so interesting that you could order something more mainstream to pop in your 'snail mail' package.

A few of us use Fiverr and we have learnt that there is a certain craft to it. Sometimes you can go through the most interesting journey whilst communicating with your fiverr provider. For example, my husband recently arranged a sausage tasting evening with our wonderful neighbours. I decided to support him by getting a sausage tasting brochure designed via Fiverr, with an illustration on the front. I sent photos of the participants and asked for each of the heads to be superimposed on to a sausage. This particular Fiverr supplier was based in India, and I am not sure his English was really up to it, because the work that I got back was not sausages with heads superimposed on them! Unlimited revisions are often included in the gig, which concerns me a little, because I imagine that some people may take advantage of this, and demand more time than they should. In this instance, as usual, I had left it too late, so the weird floating heads were included in the final product, and created some interesting discussion on the evening.

If you use Fiverr, do remember that you get what you pay for. I have been intrigued with a couple of conversations I have had with

Fiverr users, who are so indignant about the quality of the service. Have some fun with it! If you don't like what you get, just order another gig from a different supplier!

I certainly advocate the likes of fiverr.com for basic business design jobs. However, if you are creating something that is going to serve as a key piece of your intellectual property, then I strongly suggest you find a fabulous designer, and often local is best.

I have recently formed a design partnership with a wonderful local designer called Chris Washer. He took the time to find out about who I am and what makes me tick, and he has created the most beautiful book cover for me, and other collaterals like postcards and white papers. If you look at these pieces of work, they just look great, and have a professional and slick feel about them. That makes me feel professional and slick!

I have also positioned myself so much more powerfully since Jaxzyn (www.jaxzyn.com) created the lead generation machine for me, which is illustrated in Chapter 6.

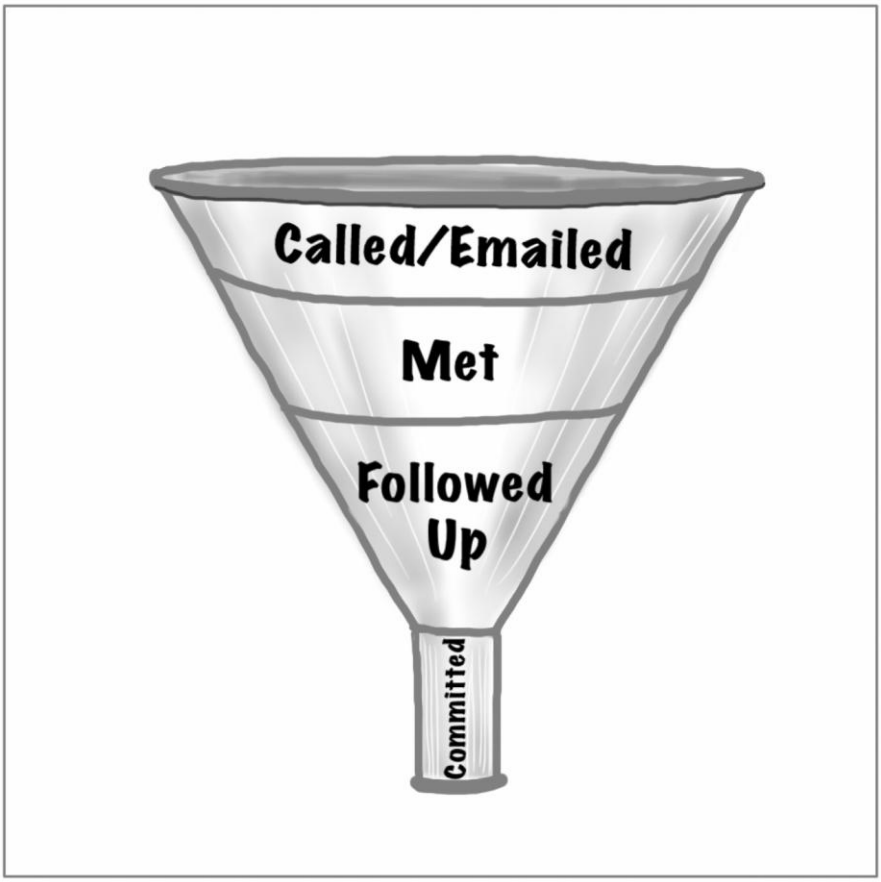
I think I could blame my aforementioned 'design slobbery' on my form three art teacher who mocked my sculpture depicting taps in front of the entire class. But the reality is that I do really appreciate beauty, as I think most people do.

A kind of magic occurs when you engage a design partner. Firstly you feel really confident, and proud to be associated with your work, over and above the actual content. Secondly it is simply a nicer experience for your readers to be going through! Finally, it really does add beautiful positioning to your brand, and that, we know is key. I have mentioned resources like www.fiverr.com in this document, but for key pieces of work, particularly around lead generation, I definitely recommend a design partner.

Offline tools for productivity

Let's talk about the other important part of offline; tools to help your productivity. At Thought Leaders Business School we are all encouraged to use a large funnel, on either a flip chart or a whiteboard, and track where our prospects are visually, by displaying their names on the dashboard, depending on where they are at according to your sales cycle.

Have a look at the figure below to see what that funnel might look like. Don’t worry too much about the different layers, just label them in a way that works for you. All you want to do is be able to have something which is visually represented where you pop your prospects in the top and then as you progress further through the sales cycle you pop them lower down the funnel.



My handwriting is atrocious, and personally I find post it notes are a big pain, because they keep falling off. I actually use little magnetic strips. It is very satisfying when you pop them through the funnel. There's something about having a visual cue to just keep you totally on track with who those people are.

Now I do regularly update my clients details and the related activity via my Infusionsoft CRM, but if you aren't dealing with a massive amount of contacts, say maybe not even a hundred, then personally a funnel may be all that you need. You probably need the spreadsheet mentioned in the CRM section of this chapter to update yourself on notes and where you're at with each of those contacts of

course.

Another great productivity visual tool is one that clocks the number of approaches you have made. Every time you make an appointment, or have an appointment, you can see the visible progress and be more inspired to complete your targets. Activity is everything, and the more you do, the better your sales results. It could simply be a tally system, that is one where you pop a strike on a whiteboard or flip chart each time you complete an approach, or you could create your own counter, like a typical old digital clock. Simply spiral bind two sets up numbers (0 to 9) beside each other, and each time you approach someone, you move the counter forward. Again, there is something powerful in the visuals, and being constantly reminded of your progress is a great way to keep you accountable to your actions.

PART THREE
- SUCCESSFUL SELLING -

In the final section of my book, I am sharing lots of tools and tricks that I've learned along the way in my sales journey.

To date, the book has been quite process based.

However, in this section, I am broadening the scope to include other ways to ensure success in in selling and lead generation, and a key part of that is the mindset section.

One key part of this section final part of the book is Chapter 19 – Triage. Remember if things are really tight for you, and you're staring down the barrel of true adversity, go straight to the triage chapter. Applying what you read in this chapter will seriously shift your situation, I promise.

Chapter 9 - Your Mindset

How many books do we need to read before we understand that mindset is the absolute key to success? Having stumbled accidently and perfectly onto the thought leaders journey I know this is a big part of my life journey.

However I wouldn't be as successful if I hadn't been working so closely with my incredible coach, Sally Anderson and applied her powerful Freefall curriculum to my life. Becoming certified as a Freefall coach has been an extraordinary journey, and has encouraged me to truly live my life based on my choices and values, and it rocks!

So what's Freefall coaching all about?

The curriculum is based on the principles of Ontology, which is the study of what it is to be human; check it out if you haven't already, basically it's a mix of anthropology, sociology, psychology and philosophy!

This book isn't going to delve too much into ontology or belief stuff, but I do think that this is probably one of the most important chapters in the book, and this is why.

Creating your own lead generation machine is a great thing to do. You could have the most elegant machine with all the beautiful cogs and wheels (that is you could be all across knowing your prospects, where to find them how to entice and wow them, and so on). However we all know that fuel is what powers a machine. If you don't have the fuel, a beautiful machine is worthless.

The fuel for your lead generation machine is your mindset. If you don't have a powerful mindset, then your own lead generation

activities will not be successful. It is incredible how much our beliefs can hold us back. I have already talked in Chapter two about how as humans, distraction, sabotage, avoidance and perfection all hold us back from achieving commercial success. These are always driven by our mindset.

So here are some key messages which are really important to address, in order to ensure you enjoy the financial and purpose driven success you deserve.

1. COMMITMENT

How committed are you really? Many of us go around saying that we are committed to something, but the reality is, if the results aren't showing up in our life, then we aren't! Boy, even as I write that, I find myself feeling a little triggered by it, but I think at some level, we *all* know that is true. If you commit to something fully, you will get it done. Case in point, this book. I am doing everything I can to get this published by the deadline I have *committed* to myself. If I applied this level of commitment to other parts of my life, then things that aren't necessarily happening would happen.

When you absolutely choose to do something, providence kicks in. The challenge with this concept is I think it's a little bit like when people say they think they are in love and they know they are in love.

People *think* they're committed, but it's not until they really *know* they're committed that the results start showing up. I attended a rather popular personal development program 13 years ago. I realized that while I *thought* I was committed to having an extraordinary relationship and finding the man of my dreams, I wasn't really being that committed at all. One of the key things I wasn't prepared to explore was *why* I wasn't dating men, and that primarily came down to who I was being. I get that I risk sounding a bit esoteric here, but truly, once I got present to what was holding me back, and committed to shifting my beliefs and behavior around that, things shifted immediately. Suddenly I was dating like a maniac, and truly enjoyed a fun couple of years being single, before meeting and marrying my lovely husband.

Another interesting concept I learnt on this course, was that slightly icky one of being unreasonable. What does it mean to be unreasonable? Well there are two components; one is being unreasonable with others, and what that means, is being a demand and asking for support without attachment. In some cases this might

really be ‘putting someone else out’, for example, you ask them to spend the weekend helping you move house. It’s all about getting yourself out the way, and enrolling others in creating anything you want out of your life.

At the time of writing, I have been spending quite a few weekends away from my family. As a thought leaders mentor, I spend one weekend a quarter in Australia. This weekend I am away with a couple of wonderful clients, and we are all working on our books together. Last weekend I attended an incredible weekend with a bunch of women called ‘The Gift’. I am spending another weekend out of town soon where all the Freefall coaches get together for some planning and development.

Usually, I do get to spend most of my weekends at home, but for this short period of around two months, it seems I am hardly ever at home. At some level, I am being unreasonable with Geoff, and making a request of him to be solo dad more often than not. I am also asking Lucas and Cameron, my gorgeous boys, to support me in some way, by managing without me. It may sound like I am being very self obsessed, but I also know, that if I am going to create the life for my family that we wish, I need to invest in this time. Geoff is also enrolled in this possibility and backs me 100%, and of course I am very grateful for that. Additionally, I do make sure that when I am at home, both during the week, and for the weekends that I am here, that I am really present with my family.

Personally I find being unreasonable with others is pretty challenging, and that all comes back to me wanting to be a nice girl (see chapter 20). And let’s face it, most of us really don’t want to be considered to be demanding. But for something you really want, take a risk, and think about asking for support from others and enrolling them in the possibility of what you want. THAT is commitment!

The other part of the unreasonable equation, is being unreasonable with yourself!

So what does that mean?

One of my clients wasn't getting his ‘pink sheets’ done. Pink sheets are a key part of the thought leaders journey, and are basically intellectual property snapshots that you use to unpack all the amazing thoughts in your head. In order to be successful as a thought leader, you need to constantly be creating pink sheets every week.

My client, like many people, simply didn’t have capacity in his daily life to focus on this task. Something had to give. So what did he do? He became unreasonable with himself and got up at 4:30 every morning just to complete the pink sheets. By taking that course of action, it demonstrated that he was truly committed.

Another way to test your commitment and help support you in it is by finding an accountability partner which we're going to be talking about in Chapter 17. By bringing someone else in to help you carry out the actions you commit to, you have a far greater chance of achieving your intentions.

2. WHAT IS YOUR MONEY PERSONALITY?

There are countless books out there on money personality and in fact, on this weekend of book writing, I am spending it with a money mentalist called Lynda Moore. By the way, before I continue with the money personality conversation, Lynda is a brilliant example of someone who is committed. She was up early this morning, doing her exercise routine, which she completes six times a week. She also sticks to an impressive productivity schedule, invests significant money and time into up skilling herself and still manages to find the time to bake and cook wonderful goodies!

Lynda talks about the different types of money personalities, including amasser, hoarder, avoider, binger, spender and money worrier. Do any of these titles sound like you?!

When we think about money personality, I think that the question you need to ask is, is money something that seems to create a lot of drama in your life?

I have an identical twin called Josie. She and I are on quite different paths. My wonderful and clever twin is just in the process of moving from San Francisco to Sydney, and is taking up yet another impressive leadership role in technology. She is enjoying a brilliant career, and is well paid. I don't believe there has been any time in her life where she has truly financially struggled. On the other hand, I seem to have gone through countless episodes during my lifetime where I have hardly had enough money to buy food to eat.

In the true spirit of Freefall education, I'm not going to make that mean anything! But certainly I believe that money is a lesson I need to learn in this lifetime, which is why it is so appropriate for me to be writing this book. If you want to be successful in sales, you have to have your money beliefs sorted out.

Josie on the other hand doesn't have a money lesson to learn. I sometimes marvel at how she might go to buy a dress in a mall and come back with three pairs of shoes. That is something that I wouldn’t have even been able to contemplate, until quite recently.

Money mentality essentially comes down having a scarcity mindset or an abundance mindset.

With my first company, ITmaniacs, I just didn't want to know about money, and I let my business partner take care of all the financial transactions. She was very good at it.

However, I wasn't being very responsible, and could have ended up in a sticky situation, had she chosen to take advantage of that. I am sure you know of stories, both personally and in the media of people being fleeced by a business partner or advisor, simply because they didn’t take responsibility for understanding the financials.

Make sure you understand your money personality, and take responsibility for how you're showing up in the world of money. If you have any scarcity beliefs, get them resolved. Don't let your scarcity money beliefs hold you back. Get support. Read a book. Find someone like Lynda to mentor you, and change your world!

One other really positive way that shifting your money beliefs will affect your life, is in your financial security. Being commercially successful is only part of the equation. If you are going to spend more than you earn, and neglect to have a long term savings plan, then the future could be looking bleak. Remember how I mentioned that being unreasonable with others can be a challenge? Think about how awful it would be, if in your later years, you had to be unreasonable with your children, and ask them to support you financially, simply because you didn’t plan for your future.

3. BOUNDARIES

How many people do you know who just love to bleat on about how busy they are and how life is pretty tough for them? Thankfully, I think, in both the corporate and the entrepreneurial world, it's no longer something to be proud of to be working 18 hour days. However, I think that there are still some people who have their boundaries out.

Life boundaries are the first boundaries I will address here. How is your self-care? Do you get enough sleep? Do you drink too much? Do you eat properly? Do you meditate? Do you have down-time? Do you exercise? Do you make time to hang out with your friends, family and do you make time for creative or hobby pursuits. These are all life boundaries. Again, we need to make sure these are properly in place in order to be able to perform our roles beautifully. There's no point driving the car when the tank is empty and managing your life boundaries is all about fueling the tank. Sometimes we can play the martyr game, and constantly put other people's needs ahead of our own, but you absolutely need YOU time.

You also need to ensure that you set up structures to support your self-care. One little $8 purchase that has truly changed my life is a little pill dispenser. My four year old Cameron loves to take responsibility for dishing out my fish oils and various multi-vitamins into the dispenser (I bought it around Christmas time, and he and Lucas refer to it as 'mummy's advent calendar). Instead of me doing that every morning (and more often than not just not getting around to it) I simply open the appropriate 'advent calendar' compartment, and down the pills with my NutriBullet smoothie. Another brilliant structure is to engage a nutritionalist. I go into more detail about this in Chapter 17 –Support; essentially engaging an expert to support you with transitioning to a more manageable lifestyle makes a lot of sense.

The second area of boundaries in our life is the boundaries in how we allow people to treat us. If you have an abusive or a domineering partner, work colleague, business partner, or even child, then you need to take responsibility for the part you've played. You have essentially trained them to interact with you that way. Now I know that that sounds absolutely horrendous, but think about it. Gently and firmly pointing out to someone that the way that they are corresponding with you is unacceptable could make a huge difference (although I also know that there are some pretty revolting people out there who will break boundaries, regardless of what you say).

One of my first holiday jobs was working in a photography shop in Queenstown. I was around about 19, and I loved working with a bunch of my friends in such a beautiful location. However there was a young girl who worked with me. She was probably only 15, and she used to literally bully me. She had a go at me every single time we saw each other, and she used to just constantly say pretty horrible things to me, and I was too spineless to do anything about it. One older woman who worked with me said to me one day, "I don't know why you put up with it, " to which I replied "but, I don't know what to do." She said, "Go up to her. Say firmly “ Janet (not her real name!), the way that you treat me is unacceptable. Please stop doing it." With my heart in my mouth, the next time I saw her, I went up and did exactly as instructed. She said, "Oh, okay," and I never was hassled by her again.

I agree there are situations where additional action is required, but the fact is you need to train people around you to behave with you in the right way.

By the way, that also goes for clients. You need to stand in your power and make sure that you're not allowing yourself to be manipulated by those who pay you. Certainly in the negotiation

process boundaries are pretty important; there is real elegance to being unattached and just firmly stating where your boundaries around financial agreements lie.

4. FAITH

What is your relationship with faith? Of course that is a completely personal question, with lots of different possible answers. Do you believe, essentially, that there is something greater than yourself, even just a higher version of yourself which guides you and supports you?

For me personally, I find that there is a correlation between faith and success, and faith and health. What I mean by that is that many highly successful individuals I know have some kind of belief system around gasp, the meaning of life. Certainly in the health arena, there are studies to show that those who pray or meditate have a higher or quicker rate of recovery.

But it is quite tricky to find good solid data around these correlations. Maybe it is still too much of a minefield to be focusing on, because people can be so infuriatingly dogmatic about faith. It is this dogma and 'need to be right' that causes so many deaths in wars based on religion.

I shall choose to stop harping on about it now, before I invariably offend someone. Ok, I can't help myself, here is my view; believe what you want, seriously, if it serves you, and helps you to lead a more peaceful and fulfilling life. But please don't push your views needlessly on to others; religion or faith is *such* a personal thing, and there is no one way that should be followed more so than any others. Spread the word, share your thoughts, sure, but when someone is not interested, then let it go.

Sometimes when there is absolute crap happening in our life, we can wonder whether something really does exist out there at a higher level and for the greater good. Paradoxically, it is often at these times when we connect more deeply to our faith. That was certainly the case for me; we were going through a really tough time

in our life; my business break up, a nasty leaky building and struggling to conceive. This is the time that I really did start to explore my faith, and felt a massive sense of knowing and calm as a result. Again, this is not a book on faith, but I implore you to look at your relationship with faith if it is something that is not present in your life right now.

5. VISUALISATION AND MANIFESTATION

Remember a few years ago, there was a whole lot of noise around manifestation. It was spearheaded by the movie, The Secret. I believe that there is value in visualization and manifestation, but I also think that some people avoid responsibility and expect the universe to do all the work for them (not that I think the brilliant individuals in the movie were advocating that).

Recently I've come up with something that served me well. I call it dancing with the universe. I do my bit, the universe does its bit. We communicate regularly, and the outcome is a beautiful dance, which is my life. Sometimes, believe me, I fall over, but I also understand the perfection of it. In fact, at every moment of our life (and particularly those when you do feel like you have fallen down), a really smart question to ask yourself is, "what can I learn from this?" There is no right or wrong.

Funny because as I reviewing this, I am nursing a broken wrist and finger from having fallen down the stairs a few days ago. What have I learnt? Firstly how much incredible support in my life with so many offers of help. Secondly, I am finally using Siri to dictate texts and emails, which I will continue to use, even when I have use of my arm back. Of course I have renewed gratitude for my left arm (my writing arm!) and will not take it for granted. I have also asked my kids to help out more getting themselves ready to go to school in the morning, and they are surprisingly capable! But mostly I acknowledge that I have been working at too hectic a pace, and need to slow down. My accident has actually been quite some gift, and I take responsibility for having played a part in manifesting it.

Visualization is actually a tool that is welcomed and embraced even by mainstream sales experts. Before you walk into the sales meeting, there's nothing better than actually visualizing that person signing your contract or accepting what you ask them. If you have a

number of clients that you want to sign up in say a given time like four weeks, then just imagine yourself at the end of that time having completed that. Refer to the triage section for more information on this. How many times do we need to hear that our thoughts create our reality? Start becoming vigilant with what you think. Again, it comes back to a scarcity or an abundance mentality.

6. PLAYFULNESS

As I mentioned in Chapter 5, it also helps to lighten up a bit about it. This sales lark is a bit of game. No one's going to die, and sometimes we just create too much seriousness, drama and significance in our life.

Do you know what it comes down to, really? How present you are. How many times do we need to hear that children can teach us something about being in the moment, being present, and surrendered to 'what is'?

Sometimes I wonder if anyone would think that if they saw my household; my gorgeous little children are quite the little victims when they want to be, and are at times certainly living from the past or into their future rather than being present!

But generally they are present *and* playful. They have fun immersing themselves in play. Making things gameful is a really powerful thing to do, as Dr Jason Fox discusses in his best selling book 'Game Changer'.

He tells us that 500 million people spend more than 7 Billion hours each week playing online games and being totally hooked. That level of engagement is something we just don't see in the work environment! What Jason and others in his field do is take the best bits of this, and apply it to real world projects.

Refer to Jason's book for some brilliant thought leadership on motivational design, which is what this is about. Also, in Chapter 19 I give you a specific example of being playful around sales.

But in the meantime, just try on having a more playful attitude to how things might turn out, rather than tying yourself up in knots, and expecting the worst!

7. HEALING

Nobody goes through childhood unscathed. We make decisions at a very early age as to who we are, and these ‘sentences’ rule our lives. Generally, these sentences are something along the line of ‘I'm bad, ‘I'm angry’, ‘I ‘m petrified’ or ‘I'm sad’. What happens, is that once we have made that decision, we tend to attract circumstances that keep that sentence in place. For example, if you have (subconsciously) chosen ‘ I’m bad’, then you will keep on playing that record of letting people down, and not honoring your commitments or obligation. And you will probably hate yourself for it! The other thing you will do is adopt some compensating behaviors throughout your life. For example (and this is the case with me), if you have ‘I’m bad’ running the show, then you will adopt the compensating behavior of either (a) constantly letting people and yourself down or (b) playing nice to the extreme (which is what I do).

That last paragraph may have not made sense at all to you. But if something calls you to that, then look at the Freefall Education website, www.freefalleducation.com, and sign up for a retreat, buy the CD series (brilliant) or Sally Anderson’s book, ‘Freefall’.

Another option is to research the field of ontology and choose an author or provider that resonates with you.

IF you are reading this, and thinking ‘oh that doesn’t apply to me, I had a perfectly happy childhood’, or ‘ I dealt with my domineering mother years ago’, there are two questions to ask yourself, which can give you a pretty quick idea of whether this is actually the case or not.

1.Do you still feel a ‘charge’ when you think about events that happened in your childhood. For example, you are still annoyed at your mum for not letting you go away to year six camp?

2. Do you find that there are times when you just get really angry, sad, scared, or just feel like total crap emotionally, even when everything is supposedly going fine? In her book Freefall, Sally Anderson describes how she actually doesn't believe depression exists! Believe me, I am not going to get into that discussion in this book, but needless to say, she raises some interesting (and controversial!) points.

If you answered yes to either of those questions, then I urge you to explore your own healing path, and pay extra attention to the final part of this chapter.

Personally, I believe this chapter on mindset is probably the most important chapter of the whole book? I also think that THIS section on healing is the most important part of this chapter.

So at the risk of sounding like a total cliché, I am going to suggest to you, that if you want to pay attention ANYTHING specifically from this book, then pay attention to these final few paragraphs! I also am taking a risk here, there will most likely be readers who completely write me off after reading this section; and I am ok with that; all I am doing here is expressing MY truth, how you choose to react to it is up to you.

There are two things that need to happen, in order to ensure that what happened in your childhood or past doesn't affect you negatively in your life today.

The head part

The first part is what I call the head part. Get clear on the events, ands what you have been making them mean. Process this at an intellectual level. Realize that as humans, we are meaning making machines, and that whatever actually occurred for you is just what it was. Just on a side note, I *do* find that saying, 'oh well, it is what it is',

pretty annoying, but only when individuals choose to say it again and again. Maybe that's triggering something in me, and I need to go work on it!.

Then what you need to do come up with strategies and tools to resolve that. Find a provider or author like Sally Anderson who deals with belief and behavior and get yourself immersed in that often maligned field of personal development. When you shine the light on what you suffer through and realize it is simply a projection as a result of a decision you made as a kid, it is pretty liberating! I share one of my own examples in Chapter 20, Nice Girls don't get Sales.

However that's only part of the equation. The second part is critical, and that's the heart part, or the soul part;

The heart and soul part

We all need to heal.

OK, I'm going to sound slightly woo woo here, but there's something pretty crazy about energy, and the fact that we're all made up of cells and energy. As such, we can have negative energy in our cellular memory that can hold us back. The incredible doctor Deepak Chopra is the person from whom I first heard about this concept. There is a good chance you have heard about it, too. Again there's many ways that you can research this yourself, and one really interesting area is quantum physics.

My take on healing, is that not only do you shift at a heart, spirit or soul level, but there is an immense shift at an energetic level. The eastern philosophies refer to this as chi, which is essentially the energy that flows in every living thing, and in nature. This is often what we refer to as 'being in the flow'. You want to ensure that at an energetic level, you are constantly connecting with your 'higher self' whatever that looks like for you.

A little bit like spirituality, there are many options available; what you need to do is find something that works for you. It might be Reiki, NLP, spiritual healing, Jin shin jyutsu, emotional freedom techniques or Qigong .

Find something that resonates and find someone who can support you through that cellular journey and healing from the heart, and who can support you in healing those childhood wounds. I have been seeing Lucille Henry, based in Auckland for the last 10 years, and the way that she has supported my life is indescribable.

Of course there will be those of you who will have read this last bit, and decide that I am a total nutbag! Certainly if you research the internet, you will find much 'evidence' to prove that this kind of stuff is just nonsense. Who knows if *anything* I write in this book is *the* truth, but I know for sure it is *my* truth, and certainly this healing journey has been one of my most profound. I remember that awful feeling I used to have in the pit of my tummy when I woke up first thing in the morning, and felt dread for the day ahead. I simply do not feel that way any more, even when there is tough stuff going on in my life. Just keep an open mind!

By the way meditation is also paramount when healing. Give yourself time to reflect and connect. I have been regularly meditating Transcendental Meditation for over 20 years and it has been a key part of my growth and success.

CLEVER SALES TIPS TO MAKE YOU MORE COMMERCIALLY SUCCESSFUL

Phew, ok, I have got that pesky old mindset stuff out the way. Now, let's get back to some of that more practical stuff. In the following chapters, I have described a bunch of different little golden nuggets that have made my life completely different to what it might have been. I do welcome anyone to challenge me on any of these because I believe that there are always exceptions. I would also love to hear from you about any other tips you have that make sales rock.

Chapter 10 - The Importance of Face-to-Face Conversations

You've all heard it before. We love to work with people we like. One of the easiest ways to work out that you like that person is with a face-to-face, or what I call a belly-to-belly conversation.

Would you prefer to meet up with a good friend over the phone, or in person? I find I can literally feel the energy that someone else is exuding when I am seeing him or her in person, and that's not something I often feel over a telephone (although it does happen). Call it a vibe or a connection, the reality is, we are a social species, and like to congregate with others, particularly those who we like.

Of course, like me, you may work with people offshore. In that instance, yes, obviously you need to talk via the telephone. Even better would be a program like Skype or Gotowebinar where at least you can literally eyeball each other! When I have met clients in Australia, and we have completed a three-month partnership using Skype, I feel like I already know them well.

Video meeting might also be a good alternative if you are tight for time, as remote meetings save on travel and parking time. Since I moved into an office, I have found that I have saved myself some time, when people are happy to come visit me.

However, if you are working with people locally then you have a far higher chance of converting that lead if you meet up with them face to face. I love how much more personal it is, more relaxed and I do believe you can be more present with the other person when they are right next to you. Another thing to consider is that it will be acknowledged that you have actually made the effort. It does take something to get into your car, drive and park to meet them, and maybe even fork out for a coffee or lunch.

Chapter 11 - The Value of Silence

One of the major principles behind the Thought Leadership curriculum, is that of ‘think once and deliver often’. With that in mind, I have converted some of these tips into video tips. The response to this particular tip has been way higher than any other. I think one of the reasons for this, is that my wonderful videographer, Tanya has plastered the words ‘Shut Up’ in large font right across the video. This has ended up as the thumbnail for the video, so people may in fact simply be curious to find out what it’s about!

When you are meeting up with people or even if you're having a sales conversation on the phone, there's nothing more powerful than silence. I have been a people pleaser all my life, with an obsessive need to be liked. One thing I couldn't stand in the past was uncomfortable silence. I mean seriously, it made me really squirm. The worst thing was that because of my need to fill in the space, I used to not only talk too fast but would often talk over my prospects or clients. Do you know what I am referring to? That unproductive cross firing of talk, where both parties feel frustrated and like they are not being heard.

There is power in presence and in being comfortable in the space of someone else, and it is often understated. Silence is particularly powerful when you've just extended an invite. I will talk about this in the next section in what I call the ‘Audrey’ process. Sometimes I have such a physical need to speak that I actually have to literally imagine myself biting my finger and saying "Shut up, Laurel! Shut up, Laurel!" over and over in my head. However, once you become comfortable with the silence, it becomes a bit of a game. In fact often I like to see if I can truly out silence someone! Give it a go.

Chapter 12 – The Audrey Process

Many of us have a fascination with the absolute elegance that was possessed by Audrey Hepburn. She started off as a ballet dancer, and when she hit Broadway, she invested in hours of private coaching, to make sure that she could perform at her absolute peak. Roman Holiday director William Wyler was so impressed by Hepburn's screen test that he cast her in the lead and said "She had everything I was looking for; charm, innocence, and talent. She also was very funny. She was absolutely enchanting".

She has been named as one of the three greatest female stars of all time *and* the most beautiful woman of all time. This last accolade is interesting, given that Audrey actually preferred casual and comfortable clothes contrary to her image. This was a beautiful woman who was certainly comfortable in her own skin.

In our sales meeting, we can often come across as anything but comfortable in our own skin! There is a certain eagerness and maybe even desparation that people can probably smell, particularly when we are people pleasers.

Matt Church, Peter Cook, Michael Henderson have written a brilliant book called 'Black Belt Sales', and it's all about the power of conviction. In this book, they refer to respectful commercial conversations and it all comes down to

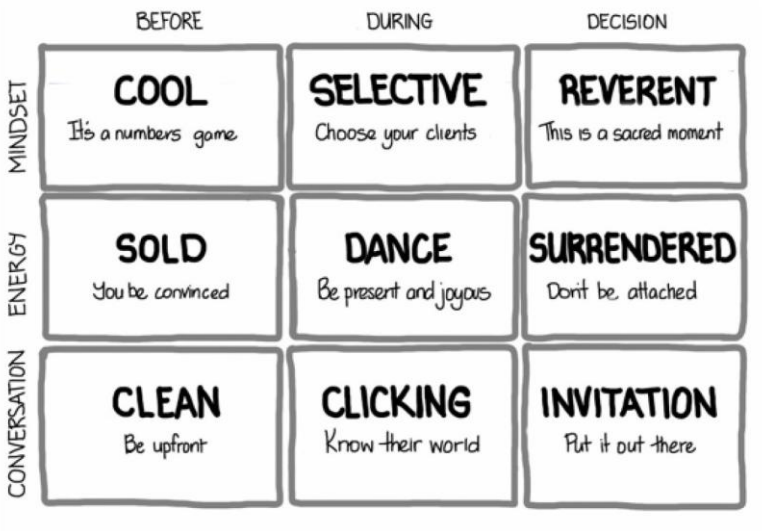
1.developing the right thinking (mind set)

2. knowing what you need to say (conversation)

3. having the right tone (energy)

I like to think about this model as somehow giving us a little bit

of 'Audrey'. Follow these steps and you will leave a meeting feeling way less clumsy than usual! *and* of course, you will most likely have progressed to the next stage, or hopefully even closed the sale!



Cool

Before you go into your sales meeting, you want to practise some detachment. As long as you have a number of sales meetings planned regularly (see Chapter 15, activity targets) then there is not a lot riding on this particular meeting.

I have my funnel (see Chapter 8, ABCS of offline tools) clearly visible in my office. There are a bunch of magnetic strips posted on each of my funnels (one for each offering), each with the first name of a prospect.

When I am having a sales meeting at my office, I sometimes say to my prospect, if they are umming and aahing a bit

'Look, I am not attached to whether you engage with me or

not. I am talking with plenty of people [point out funnel, and sometimes show them their name on it!], and I only have limited people I can mentor/workshops I can take. What I *do* find myself being attached to is you finding the right support, so that you can be commercially successful, so as long as I have clearly articulated the value I can give, then I can be happy that you know this option exists'.

And it is actually the case! Make sales appointments a normal part of your week, and you can certainly be a bit more 'cool' with them.

Sold

We have covered this in Chapter 9, mindset. How many times do we need to hear, 'the first sale is to ourselves'? If you are not sold, if you don't genuinely think that engaging you would be the *best* thing that has ever happened to them, then why would they be sold?

Clean

I lament at the amount of times in my past, that I have invited people to 'catch up for coffee', when actually, I wanted to sell them something. Past work colleagues and clients were the most susceptible to this. The fact that it was a selling conversation was not apparent to them. This really did create some cringy situations, and I am so glad I have been well trained through the thought leaders community to *stop it*! If you want to connect with someone to invite them to your workshop or offer them to find out more about your mentoring program, then *tell* them!! At least you can both save each other time and embarassment if they aren't interested. Being upfront and clean is certainly something that Audrey would do.

Selective

A way that the thought leader's curriculum is sometimes described to people is showing people how to be commercially successful, doing what you love, with people you like, the way you like.

If you want to work with people you like , then it pays to be selective with who you work with. Why would you choose to spend your time during your working week, with people that you really didn't want to spend time with?!

Additionally, if you are feeling like you should just 'take on anyone who wants to work with you', then that doesn't bode well for your sales conversion either. That sense of desperation when you are too eager for the sale is easy to pick, and one way to lose that, is to be clear on the kind of people with whom you want to work.

I remember when I was working for a large IT consulting firm, and one of my first ever mentors gave me some sage advice, when I was thinking about moving onto a new role, and was being interviewed for the first time in years. He pointed out to me that it is not only them evaluating you, but you are evaluating them also, after all, who wants to end up working for an employer who is less than ideal? The time you spend with them beforehand is so short, compared with after the offer has been accepted, so do take the time to find out as much as you can, and be selective about your employer.

Back in chapter 9, I mentioned that a significant shift in 'who I was being' changed my frequency of dating massively. All that I did, was to *stop* asking myself, 'will he like me? Am I good enough for him, and to *start* asking myself, 'is he good enough for me?!' Now I do cringe a bit at throwing dating analogies into sales conversations but in this instance, there is some value in doing so.

Remember you are also practising the mindset of being 'cool' before the sales conversation, and if you are having multiple sales

conversations, then you can be a bit more selective as well.

Dance

When I completed my most recent values assessment (through the remarkable Michael Henderson), presence and being came up trumps as my key value. I do know that when I am fully present in a sales conversation, then that completely shifts the energy of the engagement. This is probably not something new to you, but it's something we really do need to hear again and again.

I think another thing we want to remember about 'dancing' in sales conversations, is to lighten up! When did we get so incredibly serious about it all? It's *just* a conversation, and there is some real attraction to being playful, and clearly demonstrating that you are enjoying yourself. Chapter five goes into this in more detail.

Clicking

A key factor of sales success is demonstrating compassion, and showing that we 'know their world'. Basically, it is about getting them present to the problems that they have.

Clicking refers to the act of them clicking with you, because you clearly understand their problems. It is a powerful process and has turned my results around significantly. In the next chapter, I go into the structure of clicking in more detail.

Do your research, understand what keeps them awake at night, and give them the space to have a conversation with them around that.

Reverent

Again, I detail this in chapter 13, but this is when you basically have no attachment to whether they engage with you or not. Now, I know that if you are staring down the barrel of a terrifyingly lean month it can seem a little bit of a long shot to be unattached. But when it comes time for your prospect to make the decision as to whether they will work with you or not, then there is NOTHING else you can do. Hand it over to them, and observe and wonder with curiousity what they are going to choose!

Surrendered

Personally, I think that being reverent and surrendered are kind of the same. It's all about giving up attachment, knowing that it is now their choice, not yours. Whatever 'faith' means to you, I think there is a part of all of us, that knows that some things are 'meant to be' and some things aren't.

Invitation

Last year, I went through a bit of a rough patch around my sales conversion which I go into more detail about in the next chapter, but basically, I just wasn't signing up customers! It took some soul searching and some brilliant support from my two fabulous mentors, Sally Anderson and Christina Guidotti, to realise that I wasn't actually asking for the sale. Most of the prospects were actually really keen, and responded with 'let me go away and think about it'. I do believe that at that stage, a number of them were genuinely interested, but what most likely happened, was that they left the meeting, started thinking about how much money it cost, or how confronting it was and talked themselves out of it.

The positive thing that came out of this dry patch ,was that I created the commitment uptake model, which I now take prospects through, when they say 'let me go away and think about it'(see chapter 14).

With the help of Christina and Sally, I also bedded down a great framework on which to base my sales conversations. Something that I had never said beforehand, and which I think was a key factor in the shift in my success was saying the following sentence after I had outlined the details of my program in full.

'And it would be an absolute privilege to work with you'.

As soon as I said that, I would shut up (see chapter 11), and sit comfortably in the silence, wondering with curiousity what would happen next.

Do you think you could come up with something similar, that you could ask at the end of a sales meeting? I recommend it, and it certainly beats earlier iterations of mine like 'So, how about I send you a proposal, which will go into all of this in more detail, and then you can let me know if you are keen?'

I know that might sound reasonable and wonderfully courteous, but it is rubbish!

Personally, I have never felt that elegant is a word that would be used to describe me, but I am happy to say that after refining and practising my sales approach, according to this powerful nine step model, I do feel like I am channelling my inner Audrey.

Chapter 13 – Script Guidelines

Are you the kind of person who is prepared, or who wings it? What about in a sales conversation? I am a wing it girl from way back, but I have learnt to create some structure around my sales process, and it has paid off.

Remember how I mentioned that my mentors Sally and Christina had both helped me with a structure that shifted my results in sales conversions? I will take you through that structure now. This is not some kind of call center or 'to the letter' script. It's simply some key bullet points which gently guide the listener through getting present to how much value you are able to provide.

This structure is one that I have adopted from two key sources. The first one is the powerful clicking conversation, which is a primary part of the thought leaders curriculum. What clicking refers to is how much someone 'clicks' with you when you are talking with them. The second source is the enrollment/registration process based on Ontological principles.

Before I do take you through this, I want to talk a bit about the good old carrot vs. stick notion. You will see from the structure, that there is a large focus on problems. Now the Pollyanna in me wants to have sales conversations where we are talking about the positive impact that we can make in our life. Sadly, as humans we are more motivated by fear than love. What that means, is that we will do better in sales, if we get people present to the risks of not doing something, rather than the benefits of doing something.

It is well worth taking the time to invest in creating some guidelines of your own. Once you have done so, get masterful at delivering them, which basically requires…. going out and having lots of conversations! (see chapter 14).

STRUCTURE OF SCRIPT

Step 1. Get them talking

I know this can seem a bit like a competition; someone says ‘ so tell me about what you do’, and you reply ‘*no*, how about you tell me about what *you* do!”. Just like an Americas Cup race, your starting position is a major factor on your chances of winning. Actually, it really isn’t that difficult to get them talking, because as humans, we all like to be heard. Providing someone with the privilege of listening to them builds relatedness, and it builds it quickly.

Before you have a meeting with someone, it really pays to do some research, even just a quick glance of their LinkedIn profile (although I do recommend a Google search; invariably something turns up). You can always refer to this when you are inviting them to share their story with you.

As an aside, one of the reasons that ITmaniacs was so successful was our focus on candidate care. Whereas most recruiters sent out an automated response to candidates who submitted CVs, we hired someone to respond personally to each candidate. In this response, they would make some kind of comment on their CV. It could be the simplest thing, but what it did was (a) demonstrated that we had actually read the CV and (b) showed them that they were being heard. Taking the time to do a small piece of research before you connect with someone is well worth it.

So start off with something simple like ‘how are you finding juggling running your company with your commitments relating to the various boards you are on?’. Don’t make it contrived, just create some kind of invitation to speak, and then shut up. I also find it is better to keep your interjections to a minimum, give them a real opportunity to share.

By the way, don't do what I used to do, and take notes! I used to be an incessant note taker, but really, the best thing you can do is to be present, listen to what they are saying, and take some mental notes for your own reference.

Step 2. Move them gently to what's not working

In the clicking conversation, we have a structure for demonstrating compassion for their world, which essentially involves stating the problems that they know they have, and are happy to talk about (known spoken problems). The gold is in mentioning the problems that they know they have, but they don't speak about (known unspoken problems). It may sound like I am advocating sweeping assumptions, but this approach has been proven time and time again. The spoken problems are those that a group of people like your prospect (eg business owners) would talk about if 100 of them were in a room together. The unspoken problems are those that your prospect would be sharing with you, at midnight in the hotel bar after a conference, with a bottle of Scotch in front of you. Invariably, this unspoken problem calls into question their self-esteem or self worth.

For example, if you are talking with a sales manager, a spoken problem (one that they would happily state themselves), might be that it is hard to keep your sales team motivated, and that targets and KPIs are invariably ignored or unmet. Another one might be that sales conversations can often come across as transactional. An unspoken one might be 'actually it can be soul destroying leading a sales team, and you sometimes wonder if you are really cut out for it'.

I sometimes refer to this part of the script as the nodding heads part. It is incredible how powerful this simple approach actually is. By the way, it is important to frame these problems in such a way that you don't come across as presumptuous or too personal. The way that you do that is by saying ' I don't know about you, but what I

often find is going on with people who manage sales teams is….'.

3. Share something vulnerable and relevant about yourself.

Vulnerability is a very powerful tool. At some level, it demonstrates that you are not a threat to them, and being ok with not looking good goes a long way to making sure you don't come across as a tosser! If you have some experience, and it may not even be directly relating to what you are talking about, then share it! For example, I might share about my first time in some kind of team leader role, which was working for an IT help desk. Because I had originally been part of the team, most of my colleagues were also mates. As soon as I became team leader, things changed significantly with the 'vibe' I felt from them. I felt that I had no power, was ineffective in getting them to do anything, and considered myself a complete failure in the so called 'leadership' role.

4. Get them present to where they are now, and where they want to be.

In the thought leader's curriculum, we create a value model at this stage. I am not going to go into a value model in too much detail, but essentially it is a ladder, with the worst situation at the bottom of the ladder, and the best situation at the top. There is some kind of 'currency' that is important to your prospect. The currencies that we refer to are money, time, fulfillment or status. The ladder is aspirational, in that the top rung is essentially where they want to be relating to the currency.

The reason that these value models are so effective is because they can get present to seeing where exactly they are located right now.

How Much Reach Does Your Story Have?		
R.O.I. Generation Ratio	Reach	FOCUS
500%	Effortless (UFB)	Flow
250%	Performing (WIFI)	Evolution
150%	Effective (4G)	Process Review
75%	Fumbling (3G)	Practice
10%	Woeful (Dial up)	The Basics

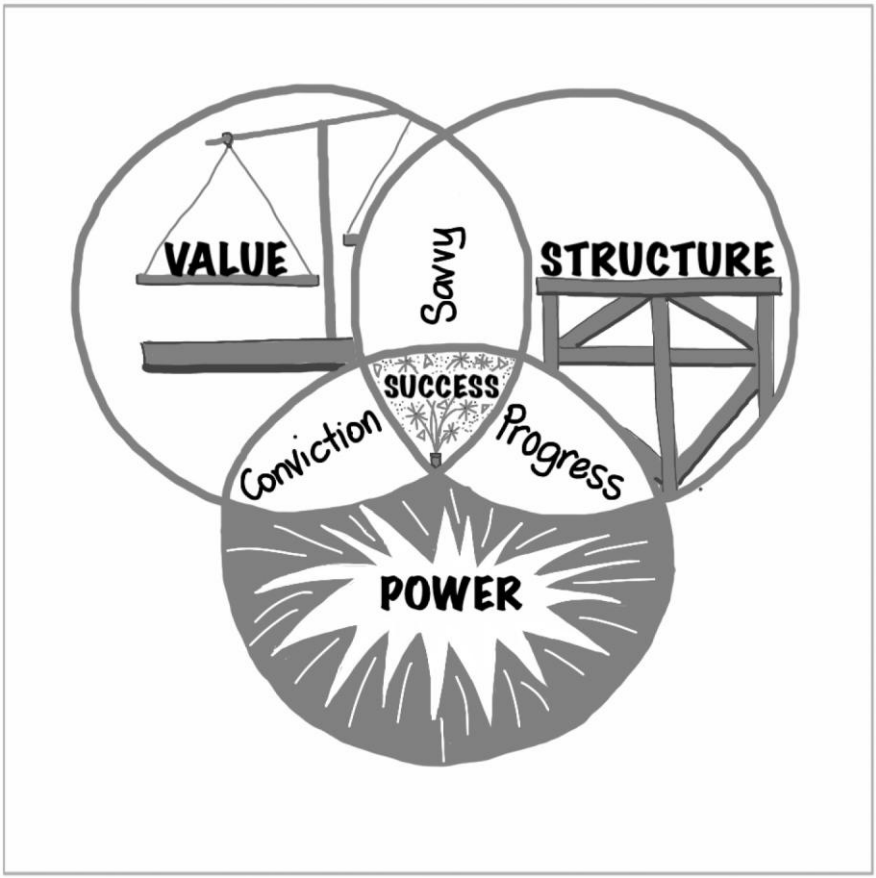
In the above model, the currency we refer to is money. On the left hand side, I have listed the return on investment that they get from their sales individuals. On the right hand side, I have listed what they need to focus on at each level, to essentially climb up the ladder. No one wants to have his or her sales team at the bottom, with a woeful performance. You will also see a metaphor included here, which likens the performance of a team to the performance of an Internet connection. This helps particularly when they are recounting their conversation to someone else, after your sales meeting, because we tend to remember metaphors easier than details.

5. Let them know that you can help them climb the ladder.

The easiest way to do this, is to simply state, after you have walked through each stage, and ended up at the top, state, ‘and that’s what I show people how to do’. That’s it! Nothing else needed to be said, and that also means… shutting up – just for a moment!

6. Detail your offer

What we have done up to this point in the conversation is getting them present to *why* they need you. This is really where the focus of the sales meeting should sit. Once you have done this, it is time for you to spend a bit of time in *how* you are going to help them solve these problems. The way to do this is to simply provide an overview of your services. It helps to reflect this in a model or two (models are a key component of the Thought Leaders approach).



In this example, I simply show the three key areas that are focused on when lifting the performance of a sales team.

Spring Clean Your Sales Team!			
	Identify	SHIFT	Sustain
Value	CAPTURE	REFINE	EMBED
STRUCTURE	REVIEW	ENHANCE	RESPECT
POWER	ASSESS	CLEAN UP	MAINTAIN

This details each part of your delivery offering in a modular like format; the great thing about this, is that not only does it give your prospect more clarity around your value, but it also provides you with a nice guideline to keep you on track! At this stage, you also want to go through the specifics in detail, for example the timing, the cost and the venue. Remember this is all about the facts; you are simply sharing the necessary information, so don't get all funny about mentioning the price (I used to do it almost apologetically!) and just get on with it.

And remember that sentence that I mentioned in the last chapter? When I first heard it, I thought it was pretty odd and might come across as such. I promise you, it is a wonderful thing to share, and I now love saying it (as long as it *is* actually the case!).

It would be an absolute pleasure to work with you!

I think that we all hang out spending too much time being appropriate, and worrying about looking good. Why on earth *wouldn't* we want to share that we would love to work with this person?! It is actually quite powerful and since I have been using it, I

have been getting great responses to it. Give it a go!

These six steps are a proven structure, and I strongly recommend that you take the time to create your own script guidelines to incorporate them into your sales conversations. Follow them correctly and at the end of the meeting you should have a sale, right? Well the reality is, that sometimes people just can't make a decision there and then. In fact, I have meet people who actually have a policy of not deciding something on the spot, which at some level I admire. But so often, 'let me go away and think about it' kills the opportunity of you both working together. Thank goodness for the 'commitment uptake' model, which has probably been the single most important factor to my significantly increased financial success in the last year!

Chapter 14 – Getting them Committed to Moving Forward

As I mentioned in the last chapter, not that long ago I was having difficulty signing up clients. I was being extraordinarily vigilant with my sales activity and had scheduled 16 sales conversations within a two week period. I passionately believed in what I was selling. I know that the clients or the prospects I was reaching out to were of the right quality but I just couldn't seem to encourage any of them to agree to commit. In fact, out of the 16 people who I connected with over that two-week period, not one person signed up with me. This is not a great look for someone who professes to be a lead generation expert! After some powerful coaching by both Sally Anderson and Christina Guidotti, I got very clear that I was letting them off the hook. How so? Because every single one of those people said "Let me go away and think about it." And they left the office, and either got busy, distracted, talked out of it by a well meaning loved one or sabotaged the possibility.

Other versions of "Let me go away and think about it" are "You've given me an awful lot to think about, "I need to process this", "I'm a very analytical person" or "I never make decisions on the fly. I need to go away and think about this." Do any of these sound familiar to you?!

Now, I realize that people need to talk to their husbands, wives, check their bank account and the like. But when you just let them off the hook without any further commitment to proceed, you are seriously reducing your chances of engaging with them. In fact, I would go so far as to say that you are ripping them off by not giving them a structure with which to commit. You KNOW that your product or service is valuable for them.

Here is my commitment uptake model;

COMMITMENT UPTAKE MODEL		
% Uptake	Response	What's really going on?
95%	YES!	Lightbulb moment!
70%	YES BUT just let me a, b & c	ALIGNMENT / intention
10%	...Just let me go away & think	Sabotage / distraction
5%	? Not sure	Doubt? / mistrust
0%	NO!!!	Certainty / denial

Leading right on from the previous chapter, this model is to be shared, *if* necessary straight after you have said that you would love to work with them. As soon as you have made the offer, you keep yourself nice and quiet and let them make their decision (being surrendered and reverent as mentioned in chapter 12).

Sometimes people are ready to commit there and then. In fact, when I returned from attending the Thought Leaders Million Dollar Expert program (the legacy program prior to Thought Leader's Business School), I decided to start following the clicking process to the letter. Back then I was offering a lead generation coaching service. I had two sales meetings scheduled for the Monday and the Tuesday and decided to give my new found clicking script (that I had put together on the plane home) a whirl. Both prospects said 'let's do it!', right there and then! Honestly, I almost replied with 'are you kidding me?' Make sure you give them the opportunity to agree right there on the spot before you proceed with the commitment uptake model.

However, if they say *anything* but 'yes', then it's time to take them through this, and have a bit of fun with it. When you get to the

answer that they gave, then reiterate that this was their response.

1. ***Set the context***

Usually, I share with them outright that I used to get frustrated about how many people I would speak with, who were dead keen, but then would go away and think about it, and then come back with a no. I explain how I created this model and that I want to take them through it. Share a personal story relays your experience of losing prospects (or even an opportunity you didn't follow through with!) if they don't commit on the spot.

2. ***Take them through the model***

Basically, I start at the bottom and work my way up. It goes something like this;

'When someone says 'no', then I know that there are one of two things going on. Firstly, they may have certainty, and be 100% sure that this is not for them, and I agree, it is not for everyone. They may also be in denial, and simply not allowing themselves to consider the possibility, because of some hidden belief that is running the show. Either way, the chance of them committing is pretty much zero.

'If they reply 'I am not sure', then I think that they are operating from doubt or mistrust, and that usually signals that I haven't explained the value effectively. The chances of them going ahead are around 5%. If they have answered this, I ask them what concerns they have, and delve deeper into the conversation (*if* their eyes aren't glazing over!) to see if I can further alleviate those concerns.

'Let me go away and think about it', (or variations thereof mentioned earlier) is the most likely response. I usually add that people in that moment are genuinely interested, and it shows. But, I then add that the percentage of people who actually commit after responding like this is 10%. Why? Because life gets in the way! They

either go away, and get distracted by all the other things going on in their life, or they simply sabotage the opportunity. Those who fall into the latter category might often make a habit of sabotaging themselves, whether it's relationships, jobs or other opportunities. At some level, they don't believe that they deserve the opportunity that is presented to them and will come up with some kind of excuse not to commit. Refer to chapter 2 for more information on sabotage.

This next level is where it makes all the difference. If someone responds, ' Yes, just let me a, b and c', then there is a 70% chance of commitment. Basically they just declare *what* needs to happen in order for them to make a decision. For example 'let me read your terms of trade, talk to my wife and check my finances, and once I have sorted all of that out, then we should be fine to go!'

The key to this is to schedule two dates in the diary;

1. The follow up phone call or meeting where they are going to let you know if they are going to proceed or not and

2. The 'all things being equal' start date (or purchase date if it is a product).

I make sure that I say that I am by no means holding them to anything, *but* there is real power in intention, and if they intend to sign up, and clarify the steps needed to do so, then there is actually a 70% chance of them following through. This is because alignment transpires, when you set intentions, and you will subconsciously set yourself up to commit!

Finally, if they answer 'Yes', then I state there is a 95% chance of following through. Why not 100%? Simply because sometimes people get very caught up in the possibility, and actually are *not* in a position to commit, for some reason or another. But in most instances, this is when they have a 'light bulb moment' and have a lot of conviction around this being the right move for them.

3. Invite them to share with you their intention to proceed

Remember not to come across as overbearing or pushy, and simply ask them if at this moment, they would be interested in progressing. *If* they feel that it does resonate for them, then 1. schedule the follow up call/meeting; agree to pop a date in your diaries for say a couple of days to a week away (don't leave it more than that) 2. Define exactly what they need to do to get things sorted from their end and 3. Pencil in a start date. Again, stipulate that you are not holding them to anything; it is simply a framework that will stop them from sabotaging or becoming distracted.

It has astounded me how following this approach has shifted my conversion rates significantly. People respond well to it, particularly if you apply some humor.

It might all sound like quite a laborious process, when you take into consideration both the sales script and the commitment uptake model, but it really is worth taking the time to design an approach like this for yourself. Like anything, it can come across as a little clunky at first (it can still be effective, as I discovered as soon as I started using it) but do persevere.

What I find helpful is running the whole thing past some friends or existing clients and asking them for feedback (just be wary of well meaning bad advice!). Get used to hearing yourself going through it. Even recording yourself on your phone is helpful.

Chapter 15 - Activity Targets

Tanya McQueen is a wonderful client of mine who used to work in insurance many years ago. She now creates the most amazing films called Soul Pod movies through her business Global Spirit Films. She shared a simple story about when she was selling insurance which completely blew me away in its simplicity. Essentially, you work out how much money in real terms and in all the years of lead generation, I never quite thought about things like this. Basically she took me through the following questioning process;

1. How much is a typical sale is worth to you? *Let's say it's worth $5,000.*
2. How many meetings do you normally need to have in order to make a sale? *Tanya and I agreed that in her case it would be three meetings.*
3. How many phone calls and invites do you need to make to get three meetings? *Here we answered about 10 conversations.*
4. If 10 conversations generally result in one sale worth $5,000, then how much is each conversation worth to you? *$500!*

Basically she would see every phone conversation as worth $500 to her. You may also wish to apply the same principle to reaching out to someone, for example via LinkedIn or emailing, but just be mindful of the number you need to send to result in a sale.

I can't stress enough how activity and intensity truly makes a difference in successful lead generation. Ensure that you can match to some activity every week and have a target. It might be five people a day. It might be 10 people a week to connect with and you want to be able to track it somehow. You also want to track how many people you are following up with. One of the easiest ways to do this is by having your visual funnel on the wall (refer to chapter 8

ABCS of offline tools). A simple spreadsheet or table on your whiteboard or flip chart paper is often enough. Alternatively, you can use your Client Relationship Management system.

Activity targets are gold.

Chapter 16 - The Power of Vulnerability

As mentioned earlier, Brene Brown's work has been life changing for so many people through her open and frank thought leadership around vulnerability and shame. So many of us walk around with this pretense of looking good, when we are actually wearing a mask. If you are telling everyone that everything is fine, then that's often an indication of you being disconnected from what is really going on.

Have you ever taken a risk, and not looked good in a sales meeting? Have you shared something vulnerable, something personal about yourself where you might have really stuffed up?

Now, I'm not expecting you bore them with your latest divorce details but people feel closer to you when you're vulnerable. They feel a little bit safer, because you are clearly not a threat to them.

Does this make you feel a little bit uncomfortable? If yes, then I think it is worth exploring that further! When I published my video blog on vulnerability, a number of people gave me feedback that even seeing the title made them feel uncomfortable.

By the way, being vulnerable also works extraordinarily well in other aspects of our lives particularly our relationships.

Chapter 17 - Support

Many of us humans consciously or even subconsciously choose to go through life without any support, even when we don't have to. Some inner voice is speaking in the recesses of our mind, which says something like "I don't deserve it" or simply " I am a loner".

How many people do you know who are constantly helping others, and getting people through their stuff, but then do everything in their life on their own. They wouldn't dream of putting anyone else out.

Maybe you are one of these people yourself?

What is interesting is that people think that they are being very generous when they don't ask for support, when actually the opposite is true. As human beings we do instinctively like to help others, and so by not asking for support, you're ripping off the other person to allow them to contribute.

There are clients I know who are in the most incredible situations, for example, solo moms, who are hugely restricted financially and who have no family around them. They are the first to help their neighbors or friends but they never ask for support themselves.

If you're committed to be commercially successful, you need to learn how to do this.

Ask yourself if you are someone who tends to do things yourself, rather than ask other people. If the answer is yes, then also ask yourself how often you are the first one to put your hand up to help others.

This can actually be a form of sabotage. We spend all that time feeling good about helping others and don't get to do the stuff that will ultimately serve others in the long run. What I am referring to here is actually living out our legacy, whatever that might be.

I think that volunteer work can be a hugely rewarding vocation. I also think that some people spend proportionally too much time working on committees, boards or interest groups when that time might be spent better by progressing their own financial situation. By all means volunteer when you can earn enough to comfortably live on, whilst not working all hours of the day and night. But if you are housesitting, because you don't earn enough to pay rent, then it is time to take a good look at your situation and evaluate how much smarter it might be to get yourself financially secure first.

What about paid support? Maybe it is time for you to consider a more formal arrangement, if you haven't done so already. I am often surprised when I see how often my clients answer that they have never been coached before, when they complete pre-questionnaire.

Coaching rocks!

Seriously, I love hiring someone where the focus is all about *me*! I have been accused of over spending on support and personal development in general, but I also know that it is the best investment I have ever made. There is almost no part of my life where I haven't engaged a coach or consultant. Why should I fumble around trying to work out how to eat better, exercise more effectively, speak more powerfully or cope with a new born baby, when I could save myself a whole lot of time (and money) learning from an expert.

Is there anyone saying 'it's alright for you, you have money'? The amount of times that I have had almost nothing to show for myself financially, but still engaged experts are too numerous to mention. Somehow I have come up with the money, and it has always worked

out in the long run.

When my first born Lucas and I had just arrived home from the hospital, we had an arrangement with a wonderful and qualified professional called Anna, who would come and help me for one day a week. She was my lifesaver. I was exhausted, confused and clueless about how to look after a baby. I remember the first day she arrived (Lucas was exactly a week old), and she whisked Lucas away from me, then whipped me up a large sandwich and a large glass of water, and ordered me to sit down and relax before his next feed. She knew absolutely everything about newborn babies, and I could also ring or text her any time if I had a question or concern. How many of you mums remember how terrifying it was to cut the nails of your newborn? Anna took care of that, and it wasn't until Lucas was around 8 weeks old that I had to do it myself (under her guidance of course). I look back at those first few weeks of being a mum with fondness and gratitude, rather than the common situation of exasperation, exhaustion and overwhelm. What kind of price can you place on that?

Anna only worked with us for a few months. She then insisted that I was ok to go it alone (I know also that her passion is looking after new born babies rather than the older ones, who bring with them a whole new range of challenges). Personally, I think that this is the mark of a true mentor; one who sees themselves as adding value for as long as it takes until their mentee has learned enough to let them go. I know coaches and mentors who have been working with the same clients for years and years. This obviously works well for some people, but my preference is to cut my clients loose after three to six months, and see how they swim! At that stage it might be more fruitful for them to search another mentor or coach to work on another proficiency.

It is the mentors in my life who have been instrumental in partnering me to live out a life that is truly a privilege. I cannot stress enough the value of hiring a professional mentor or coach. If you're

in business, and live in New Zealand, you can even engage a mentor for free through the Business Mentors New Zealand scheme!

When I was running ITmaniacs, we engaged Glenn Ricketts as a nonexecutive director, and I know his guidance was a key reason that the company was so successful. A sounding board, someone knowledgeable, someone who has been there before, and someone who has your interest at heart particularly around accountability is absolutely valuable. Often it's those decisions made in a moment that really add value. When I think about where we might have ended up without his counsel, it does make me shudder. We all know stories about people we know and from the media about failed businesses, where the right level of governance would have resulted in a completely different story.

Another big plus with engaging a professional coach or mentor is the accountability mechanism that comes with them. This is often the difference between a mediocre business or practice and a truly successful one.

There is profound magic in having to check is with someone every week. I know when I make commitments with my coaches; boy does it make me sure that I get what I said I would get done completed.

At Thought Leaders Business School, we each have to commit to not only filling out a dashboard every week, but also completing the three above-the-line actions that we've declared we will undertake that week. If we don't submit a dashboard or get the three above-the-line actions completed, the lovely Cristina, who manages the dashboards, has our credit card details and will debit $AU100 Australian to the Philippines' Typhoon Relief Fund. I must confess I have never been more accountable in my entire life!

If you're not in a position to hire someone professionally in a one on one capacity, then consider these following two options.

Firstly, join a Mastermind group, either one where you pay for or one which is informal. Meet up once every fortnight, week or month and share with each other and support each other with what's going on regarding your shared journey. Make use of an online community, even a closed Facebook group to enable ongoing updates on progress.

The other option is to find an accountability buddy, someone who you know and respect where you catch up once a week and share each other's goals and commitments and of course hold each other accountable.

My wonderful friend Suzanne Kendrick and I managed this for quite a while until I hired someone professionally. The way that it kept me on my game and moving forward was surprising. I must confess I did have to ask a few people before I found someone who was willing to partner me. Make sure you get the right person, someone who is committed as you are. Here is a suggested outline on how you can make this happen; just find something that works for you.

1. Think about what you want out of the partnership?

Is it just accountability, or are you actually looking for some complementary skills? It pays to jot down a few criteria to get you clear on why you are doing this.

2. Identify two or three people you know who might fit the bill

I strongly suggest here that you find someone local. It makes it so much easier if you can pop down the road to see them rather than haul yourself off to the other side of town. Will you feel comfortable sharing the not so good stuff with this person? Are there any conflicts of interest with your business? (Personally, I think people get too paranoid in general about conflicts, and should trust a bit more, but it really comes down to personal preferences). Are they

generally reliable? Do they inspire you? Will they be a stand for you, that is, see you in your greatness and encourage you to think big rather than play small?

3. Approach your first choice

Like I said, I was quite surprised when I approached some people I knew the first time around. A couple of them just weren't interested in a coaching buddy arrangement. I do wonder if sometimes I come across as a bit intense! The key to approaching potential buddies is to be light and upbeat about it. Don't ask them on the phone. Invite them for lunch or coffee, then share with them where you are at, and that you are looking for focus and accountability to get to the next step. Make the invitation, and let them know what it is about them that inspires you. Get them present to the possibility of both of you supporting each other. AND be unattached to their response. If they are not interested, then simply approach the next person on the list.

4. Agree the framework and get on with it

How often are you going to meet? Weekly or fortnightly? Personally, I think monthly is too infrequent to gain any real traction. What time? Suzanne and I used to meet up on a Wednesday morning at 7am, after a gym class. It would be an hour long, and we would each have a turn at updating the other buddy on what had been going on that week. We each agreed actions we were going to complete that next week, and would provide an update on how we had gone with our actions the previous week. That is it! But again, having that accountability mechanism really helped to spur me into action when I might have otherwise floundered.

5. Review how it is going for both of you

It is important to agree a period of time upfront that you are going to trial this. Suzanne and I did this for about six months, and then we both agreed it was time to wrap it up. I became involved in a more formal arrangement with Sally Anderson, and Freefall Education and received coaching as a part of that. Both of us agree that it was a great chapter in our friendship.

PAID SUPPORT (OTHER THAN COACHING)

Whether you are an expert who essentially 'sells your thoughts', a business owner or someone who sells (or manages a sales team) within an organization, you could ultimately do with paid support to make your life easier. There are two areas of your life, where this applies;

1. At home, whether it's gardening, lawn mowing, other property maintenance activities, house keeping or ironing!
2. At work, in the form of an administration/personal assistant or virtual assistant (who by the way can also help you with home based duties as well).

To touch on number 1 first, it might sound strange to be suggesting you get help around the house in a lead generation book. However, this goes back to the boundaries section in chapter nine, mindset; if you don't get enough downtime in your life, then your impact during your working hours is going to be reduced. Why spend precious weekend and after work hours under pressure getting chores done? The exception to this of course, is if you get some kind of Zen like pleasure from mowing your lawn or water blasting the fence; if that's the case, then knock yourself out!

How much work related stuff do you do, regardless of whether you are a thought leader, business owner or sales employee, that you would dearly love someone else to do for you? If you are replying 'sales' then go and read chapter 23, which outlines why there is no one better to sell your products or services than you! If you are in a paid sales role yourself, and answered sales, then it is probably time for a career move. One exception could be appointment setting; that is where you engage a telemarketer to set up appointments for you. I have seen this work for some sales professionals, but the reality is that it is quite an inefficient way of getting appointments; most people either say no or don't answer the

phone, and if they did want to know more about the product/service, then the telemarketer usually doesn't have the depth of knowledge to answer effectively.

It's generally the administration stuff that you could outsource to someone else, for example, researching for prospects, sending InMails via LinkedIN (you create the templates), general industry research, social media management (including advertising), setting up new clients, general email management and database/CRM maintaining.

You basically have two options; 1. Hire someone locally or 2. Hire someone virtually (and usually offshore).

There are advantages and disadvantages to both, so do your research before choosing which way you go. One key reason for virtual assistants not working out in our thought leaders community has been that the thought leader themself hasn't set up a structure to make it easier for the assistant to support them. If you are going to hire someone offshore, then Chris Ducker's book Virtual Freedom is a brilliant resource for working out how much good work *you* need to do to set your VA up for success. For example, rather than saying 'go find a client relationship system (CRM) for me', do the research yourself, implement the system, and then create instructional videos to show your VA how to manage it ongoingly.

Peter Cook and Matt Church provided this simple checklist to Business School students recently;

1. What are you good at? Do more of that!
2. What are you not good at? Get some help with that!
3. What do you love doing? Do more of that!
4. What does someone else love doing more than you? Find them and let them do it!

If you are in the position to hire someone professionally, even for a few hours a week, make it happen, even if it stretches you financially for a bit. They are more likely than not better than you at those tasks *and* the extra productivity that you gain will more than make up for the investment.

Chapter 18 - How do you Manage your Diary?

I loved a quote I saw recently by Robin Sharma;

'Show me your schedule and I'll show you your values'.

We all have heard about how time is our most precious asset, and how we all have the same hours in the day, it's what we do with them that counts.

I think this really does come down to two basic principles; 1. Being clever with your time and 2. Diary management.

1.BEING CLEVER WITH YOUR TIME

Neen James, a thought leader partner based in the US has a wonderful concept called “Folding Time”. How can you literally ‘fold’ time so that you get twice as much done in the same amount of time. One example of how I do this, is that when I am walking to or from my office, I am either on the phone connecting with the people I need to, or listening to webinars or online programs (I am essentially an auditory learner, and don’t need to see the pictures to get a handle on what’s being discussed).

I think we also can bloat time. Recently I was trying to pop a Facebook advert up to promote a webinar I was hosting, and before I knew it, over an hour had passed, and I was really no closer to having the advert published. This again demonstrates the value of hiring someone else to do things you don’t particularly like.

2. DIARY MANAGEMENT

Christina Guidotti, my wonderful mentor, is an absolute powerhouse in productivity. I must confess I used to think that strict diary management and particularly color-coded diary management was a little bit anal but keeping a really, really clear idea on how I am spending my time has been fundamental to my success.

Christina has helped me see that, and to use my diary, powerfully, so that I am spending focused time getting more done, and managing my days effectively,

One example of this is that I now have two delivery days for my one on one clients, Wednesdays and Thursdays. On these days, I have back-to-back meetings with my wonderful clients. (with around a 30 minute buffer between each appointment, depending on how well I stick to the agreed hour). At the end of these days, I feel so energized, as those of you who also coach will know. I do make sure that my first appointment isn't until 10am, so I can spend beforehand setting up my day, which I will discuss shortly.

On the other days, I am focused purely on selling, or working on my practice, rather than delivery. It wasn't always this way; I used to have my coaching appointments scattered throughout the week, but it meant that I found myself not having decent carved out timeframes to really get other stuff done.

Every morning, I schedule time to set up my day powerfully. The temptation is to get right into answering emails as soon as you get to your workspace, but I believe there are some other things that take priority;

1. Prepare, 2. Acknowledge, 3. Support, 4, Post, 5. Respond

1. Prepare

You want to prepare yourself for the day, and that means planning what you actually need to get done. David Allen, author of 'Get Things Done' is big on to do lists. I think to some extent, we all like crossing things off a list, but it's more than that. David goes as far as to say that our productivity is directly proportional to our ability to relax. Knowing what we need to get done means we have a better chance of doing it, and I think there is something energetic that goes on too, when we define it. You may even wish to create your to do list the night before. I know when I do this, and then check it in the morning, there is a nice sense of control.

There are different types of to do lists, from simple handwritten lists to complex to do software apps. I have recently adopted Dermot Crowley's proactive and forward scheduling task management approach (you can listen to the podcast called 'The battle of the Task list' on his website which explains it beautifully). For me Todoist is a great application to proactively manage my tasks and you can structure it in a smart project focused way. So first thing in the morning (or more often these days, the night before) I refer to what I have planned or due for that day, and make any amendments necessary.

2. Acknowledge

Have a look at your previous day. Follow up with anyone you have met, that is worth acknowledging, even just to say thanks for their time. It is always preferable to provide value rather than simply connect, so make it your job to have a bunch of resources that you can follow up with, that are *not* your own. I have a folder full of interesting whitepapers, and like to send something of value alongside the acknowledgement.

Who else can you acknowledge? Is there someone having a birthday? Someone you know has just received come kind of

endorsement, or achieved something special? Before I incorporated this into my morning ritual, I always meant to 'get around' to acknowledging people, but it just didn't quite happen.

3. Support

Has anyone you know got a big event coming up? How about someone who is going through a rough time? The next thing I do is reach out to people who might appreciate some kind of support. If there is any way you can support them other than simply letting them know you are thinking of them, then if it takes time, add it to your list for later in the day. Generally, in this instance, just a simple 'good luck' or 'I am thinking of you' suffices.

4. Post

What is your view on social media? Maybe you have your posts pre-loaded using something like Hootsuite. When you want to be successful in sales, positioning is a key element. Posting content regularly on your social media of choice is a great way to position, and keep in the forefront of people's minds. Keep it short and keep it valuable. For me personally, it is almost like I get it out the way first thing in the day, and can then forget about it.

5. Respond

Only once I have completed these activities, do I take a look at my inbox, and respond to mails that have come in overnight or from the previous day. There are countless productivity experts who even recommend you don't do it till later in the day, but for me personally, this works, and particularly if I have spent the previous day in back to back meetings.

Find your own routine for first thing in the morning, and if you can manage it, last thing in the day. For me personally, I have had to go through a number of iterations of my approach until I have found

one that works. You will know when you have found the right approach for you.

SHORT TERM SCHEDULE SHUFFLING

Sometimes you have a deadline looming or you are faced with having to lock in triage (see chapter 19), and you need to be particularly careful with how you use your time. In this instance, I think short term schedule shuffling is a brilliant tool. Essentially, you look at your schedule from when you wake up, to when you go to bed, and make it work for you to get through this more intense chapter in your life.

Writing this book is a prime example. I set myself an aggressive timeframe to complete it. Initially, when the deadline was looming, I shuffled things around, so that instead of getting up at 5:10am to go to the gym, I went to my computer instead, and bashed out 90 minutes of writing before anyone else in the household woke. For those of you who have young kids like me, you will appreciate the luxury of being in your own house when *everyone* else is sleeping; it's wonderfully silent!

When I had exactly one week to get it finished, I upped the ante even more. I was getting up at 4:10am. That meant 2 ½ hours of writing, over and above my daily work. Instead of going to the gym, I power walked up to the top of my street before I had a shower; ten minutes of intense activity is enough (in the short term) to reap the psychological benefits. This also means I have to get to bed way earlier than normal during this time, so 9pm is usually when I turn in. Are you a morning or an evening person? Work to your strengths; personally for me, I find it so hard to get my mind functioning after 7:30pm. Getting the family fed and kids to bed takes out a fair chunk of time in the evening, so it does feel better for me to have a nice amount of down time before going to bed.

When I am practising triage, I schedule shuffle so that the only appointments I schedule, apart from paid work, are sales meetings. This is discussed in the next section, Chapter 19.

Have some fun with your schedule shuffling! Don't spend too long out of routine, but see the benefits of the intensity, and make sure you reward yourself when you get through the other side.

This is not a book on productivity but becoming competent in this craft makes a big positive impact on your sales performance. Go and find a book that works for you; I highly recommend Christina Guidotti's book 'How to have it all' or Dermot Crowley's 'Reboot your productivity'.

Chapter 19 - Triage; Stop the Bleeding!

Far too many of us know this feeling. That absolutely sinking sensation in your stomach, when you realize that you have basically run out of money, and your cash flow is looking dire. I know that it shouldn't sneak up on us like it does, but the cycle of business keeps on spinning, and clients invariably come and go.

If you think about triage in a hospital, it is essentially about assessment. Who needs to be seen to first and who needs to be sent where? In another context it refers to how something that is scarce (for examples food in countries where there is a high need for aid) is distributed.

In this instance, there is one key reason that I refer to this emergency approach as triage; to stop the bleeding, and to get the vitals stable!

The challenge when you find yourself in a miserable situation in business is that often, you are almost too paralyzed to do anything. Isn't that cruel, because if there is *any* time where you should be taking action, then isn't this the time?

I have used this approach a number of times, and I promise it has pulled me out of dodge, in fact it has done more than that, it has totally turned my business around.

It can sound quite confronting, and certainly not much fun, but the reality is, we can sustain anything for short periods of time. The satisfaction of knowing that you no longer have to worry about people following you up on unpaid bills definitely outweighs the short-term pain.

One particular time of the year that I recommend you factor this

in, is October and November, when the inevitable December and January down turn can suddenly bite you in the bottom! It is actually quite smart to diarize two to three weeks of what I call 'pre-triage' over this time. Should you find yourself in a situation where you are fine cash flow wise, then by all means, replace the scheduled time with other activity. But seriously, if you ignore the reality of the December/January slump, then wake up to it in early December, it really will be too late.

Nothing in this section is new; you will have most likely heard it all before. Essentially, what this does is provide the framework and structure to make sure you follow through.

Are you ready?

STEP ONE – GET YOUR HEAD IN THE RIGHT SPACE

Get present to the situation you are in and understand the cost of not shifting. Remember the section on sabotage and distraction? It is at times like this that you really need to understand the power of these two evils. Make a commitment to yourself that you are going to design your triage intervention and see it through. Imagine how much of a relief it is going to feel once you are through the other side.

The last thing you need is to beat yourself up about getting to this situation in the first place. This will not serve you. Don't make it mean anything!

Look, I understand that this can seem impossible. I think about a great Larsen cartoon, with a giant and threatening looking squid in an office, with the owner and a visitor at the door. The squid's owner says to the visitor at the door, 'oh no, he's quite harmless…just don't show any fear… squids can sense fear'. It's like, 'come on Laurel, how can I just not make it mean anything; I am about to get evicted/wife is about to leave me/Inland Revenue are about to prosecute me'. In that instance, you need to do anything you can to shift your state because paralysis simply won't serve you.

One of the many brilliant things I have learnt from Anthony Robbins is the power of physiology. So if this is already confronting you, then I suggest you do something first with your body that shifts your state. For example, take a brisk walk, have a bath, put on some boppy music and dance. You *do* have the ability to get out of the stranglehold. Please don't beat yourself up!

It would also be great for you to set up a reward for yourself for once you come out the other side. It doesn't need to cost money, but something that you can look forward to (for example having a special family dinner) will keep you on track, particularly for those days

where you might be risking sabotaging yourself and throwing it all in. Keep visualizing how it is going to feel once you have secured the new business.

STEP TWO – DEFINE THE SCOPE AND FOCUS

Decide how long you are going to enforce triage. For me it typically takes two or three weeks, but for other industries, it might be longer. I wouldn't recommend more than six weeks, simply because if we set ourselves up to experience this kind of intensity for too long, you risk just giving up, because it really does all seem too hard. It is better to assign a shorter time frame, with a view to reviewing whether you need to continue or not at the end.

Decide which service or offering you are going to focus on selling. The preferable option, of course, is something that is your bread and butter and that typically has a short sales cycle. Now is not the time to go out and sell something unproven (although by all means throw in one or two appointments for an out of the box approach, if you are confident enough that you can deliver it; sometime adversity helps you break through into new frontiers).

For me personally, my bread and butter is my one on one coaching. It is primarily up to the individual whether they say yes or no, which means you get a decision from then quicker than from an organization where a sign off process might be required.

STEP THREE – UNDERSTAND THE METRICS

How much money do you need to have a shift in your financial dynamic? Be realistic and take into account any billing cycles. For example, if I need another $7,000 a month to get myself back on track, and I generally bill at $1,750 a month for four months, then I want to find another four clients.

Remember you have to consider your capacity as well. I find that my sweet spot is ten one on one clients at any given time. When I am practising triage, I have to look at my schedule coming up and make sure I have the time to actually deliver the business that I plan to procure. A few weeks of a more intense schedule than usual, I can cope with, but we all have to be mindful of boundaries.

Once you have worked out your target number of sales, then think about how many sales appointments you would typically need to have in order to convert that amount. I like to conservatively rely on a 25% conversion, in other words for the four new clients I might be looking for, I will set up 16 appointments. Refer to Chapter 15, Activity Targets for more of an overview around the calculations for this.

Remember that slightly overused quote, “aim for the moon, if you miss, you might hit a star”? It pays for you to err on the side of high when determining your target. It is better to play full out for a figure that will completely shift your financial dynamic, and then, if for whatever reason you don’t make it, you will hopefully still have got yourself out of the drastic situation.

STEP FOUR – SET UP YOUR DIARY

The key to a successful outcome from triage is whether you follow *this* step to the letter. You need to put your diary into lock down mode, and cancel *all* non-essential appointments. What I mean by non-essential appointments are any that are not related to delivering to your existing clients or connecting with prospects. If you are running a business, then I get that there are other essential tasks that a business owners needs to do in order to keep the fires stoked, but again, get really ruthless with your prioritization. Can it wait?

I think one exception is anything health related; don't cancel any check ups or health maintenance appointments you have. It is important to send a subconscious message to yourself that your health is a priority even during triage!

Make an agreement with yourself that you will not diarize any new appointments that are not related to sales or delivery over this period. If someone rings asking you for a coffee or lunch catch up, you need to be brutal in assessing if they are actually someone who might convert to a client. If not, then by all means schedule the appointment, but not until after your triage period.

Actually, one way that I have found that I can make triage more successful is by taking a more gameful approach with it. I often share with people what I am doing, for example, 'hey, I would love to catch up with you, but the next two weeks for me are pretty tight. I have gone into lock down mode and am only focusing on sales and delivery, because I am committed to achieving my sales targets so I can relax over Christmas. How about we schedule a catch up for three weeks away, and then I can take you out for lunch (because you are assuming you will be able to afford to by then!) and we can spend some more leisurely time together?'

I find that people love to support you in something like this, they might even know of someone you can approach, or it could be the time that they admit that they themselves are interested in your services!

Family and friends can also hold you accountable. As Peter Cook mentions in 'The New Rules of Management', public shame is a very powerful motivator, so by declaring to your loved ones that you are in triage, you are setting yourself up to follow through; your dear husband might just question that girlie lunch you schedule in the middle of it!

Diarize the sales meetings slots in your calendar. I usually pop the first one in at 10am, which gives you time in the morning to tend to some standard admin stuff, for example responding to emails, following up by sending proposals and paying bills (these shouldn't be delayed!).

The way to label the appointments upfront is simply to input them as 'sales meeting # 1', 'sales meeting # 2', etc. I generally schedule them for 90 minutes apart. So a typical day might be appointments at 10am, 11:30am, 1pm, 2:30pm and 4pm. If you don't have the luxury of an office, and people coming to you, you may wish to schedule 30 minutes for a lunch break, but I find that the 30-minute breaks in between usually give you enough time for a breather. By all means do a quick email check in between, but again, I think the priority is on sales related activities.

During triage, it pays to have a fairly free calendar in the evenings, so you can catch up on the essential non-sales activity then. Alternatively, you may wish to get up at 4:30am or 5am and play catch up then. Refer to the 'short term schedule shuffling' section in chapter 18 to see how you can forego something like the gym first thing in the morning (but have a quick walk before you go to work) and spend focused time on the catch up work then.

Am I triggering you yet? Remember, this is your opportunity to make a significant shift in your financials; we can sustain *anything* for short periods of time! How committed are you to having a turn around in your business? And know that this is not the way you normally have to operate.

You also need to diarize some time to connect with prospects and arrange the appointments. Personally, what I find works best for me is a few concentrated hours up front. That means I actually give it a couple of days before my first scheduled sales appointment, so I have time to make the approaches. Find out what works for you. Instead of setting up 16 appointments in two days (that can require a lot of phone calls!) you may wish to schedule fewer appointments every day, and spend the first or last hour or two of every day setting up the future appointments.

Dr Jason Fox, motivation and strategy design expert refers to the power of visible progress, so set yourself up some kind of system where you can see how well you are progressing. This might be a simple table on a white board, with 'sales meeting #1', 'sales meeting # 2', 'sales meeting # 3' down the left hand side column, and blank spaces on the right hand column, where you can fill in the names of people once you have set them up. I promise you, it is really motivating watching those blank spaces get populated!

It may also pay to set yourself up reminders to keep you on track. This might be a screen saver, something on the cover of your diary (for those of us who still can't quite break the paper system) or even a wee note on your steering wheel. For me personally, wearing a ring that I don't normally wear reminds me that I am in triage, and that I am committing to intense activity for a limited time to save and grow my business. Any kind of visual cues, or even rituals (like a little mantra you say each morning), increases the chance of you following through, simply because you are more mindful.

Finally, schedule yourself some breathing space! Most likely this will be the weekends. It is important for you to keep the tank full, and have a break from activity. Do some wonderful mindless stuff, completely unrelated to your business.

STEP FIVE – FIND THE PEOPLE

Getting a list of prospects together is where you can start to really work out how your qualification process normally stacks up. In order to create a successful triage, then you want a list of around three to five times as many as the appointments you are looking to secure. This is based on a fairly conservative conversion rate; most people will do better than only obtaining one appointment out of every five people you approach, but you don't want to set yourself up to fail! Obviously, if you secure your target number of appointments before you get through your list, you still have a bunch of people to connect with once you are through triage.

In my example, where I need 16 appointments to secure four new clients, I will create a list of 64 people. 'Are you serious?' I hear some of you asking! When you put your mind to it, you can come up with that many prospects. If you have a funnel set up (refer to chapter 8, the ABCs of offline tools), then that is obviously the best place to start, as is your CRM or list. Do be ruthless about qualifying those who are in a position to engage with you; if you know that they are absolutely skint, then it's probably better to give them a miss this time around.

How many business cards do you have lying around? What about your LinkedIn first connections? What about people who you haven't connected with for around two years? Even five years? And do you know where we so often neglect to go when we are looking for new clients? To the people who are working with us or have worked with us before! For a people pleaser like me, and one who doesn't want to 'put anyone out', I used to find this confronting, but remember, making it like a game works! Share what you are up to 'hey, it's Christmas coming up, and I have set up the next three weeks to focus on new business so that I can actually enjoy my break, and not suffer the inevitable

slump. Is there anyone you know who might be interested in having a conversation about what I do?'

People are so often happy to help; we simply don't give them the opportunity to do so. Learning how to make an unattached request is one of the most powerful skills you can acquire. And if this is sending your head into a spin, then I suggest you reread Chapter 9, mindset.

At Thought Leaders Business School, we often say 'there is more business within five kilometers of where you live, than you can possibly imagine'. Just start being aware of those around you.

If you really don't have enough people that you know already, then you are going to have to up the ante a bit. That means reaching out to people you don't know, and I think the best way to do that is via LinkedIn. It kind of goes against the grain, because personally, I think reaching out to people you don't know, when there are 'deadlines' attached, is tricky. The best way to connect with 'coldies' is to send something of value to them, for example a chapter of your book, or a white paper and then follow up with them a few weeks later. You *could* bypass this by offering to spend time with them doing something you would normally charge for, for example taking them through some kind of diagnostic.

I mentioned that this chapter is not pretty, and approaching people you don't know during triage certainly isn't. Your chances of getting appointments is lower, so you will need to adopt a more 'mud at the wall' approach and connect with more people. But again, have some fun with it. Reaching out to second connections via LinkedIn is a key strategy for me, and I have secured some great business through it. I often hear clients say to me ' it was so timely for your InMail to turn up, I was just thinking about changing my career/ finding a coach etc.'

The same also goes for networking events. Triage can take it out of you, so I don't recommend spending your evenings out at events where there is no guarantee you will find someone who needs your services 'right now'. Networking has a place in long term nurture and if you are feeling attached to getting some kind of appointment on the night, you most likely won't be successful; do yourself a favor and stay at home.

STEP SIX – HIT THE PLAY BUTTON

I know that the previous five steps might sound quite time consuming, but they shouldn't be. If you allow up to three days upfront, that is enough to get the foundations laid, and be ready to go. Take a big breath, and start connecting with your list!

Personally, I do find the 'fill up the appointments up front' approach works for me. Taking the example of 64 people for me, connecting with 21 people each day for three days is manageable, providing you have contact details. I spent many years cold calling, and the numbers were pretty consistent; you would generally connect with between seven and twelve people in a given hour. So two to three hours for three days is not too much of an ordeal (honestly!).

If you choose to space it out a bit, then (a) make sure you start with a bang, and get some appointments scheduled on your first day, even two or three, and (b) schedule in time ongoing for connecting with your list. You need to hold yourself accountable, if you don't get the lion's share of the reaching out done up front, there is every chance you will simply not get around to it.

When you are at your sales appointments, increase the chances of your success by applying what you know works. Refer to Chapter 13, Script Guidelines and Chapter 14, Getting them Committed to Moving Forward chapters.

Drop offs will inevitably happen so be prepared for that. I am referring not only to drop offs of people committing, then changing their mind, but also to keeping the appointment in the first place. Now hopefully, because you are working off quite a conservative conversion ratio, you will still get your target number of new clients, but just to be sure, it would be wise to either reschedule the missed appointment, or find a new one to replace it.

Follow up is paramount, both after the call and after the appointment itself. If you don't get to talk with someone you reach out to when appointment setting, I think it is perfectly ok to leave a message, then follow up with email or text (there are some who disagree with me, but personally, I find the time it takes to keep on ringing the same person is prohibitive, and if they have caller ID, you might come across as a bit of a stalker!). After your appointment, follow up with sending terms of trade or even just a thank you with some valuable information (of course if you are following the powerful commitment uptake approach, you will have scheduled another time to speak or preferably a start date!).

Do have some fun with this. I actually love sales appointments, and to have so many in a week is a great way to become more masterful! Adopt a curiosity mindset, 'I wonder how this appointment is going to go', or 'let me observe the difference/similarities between this appointment and my last one'! Remember, these are just conversations, we just need to lighten up!

This is quite a lot to take in isn't it? Just in closing on this, I urge you to follow this to the letter. It really does work, and triage is not a time to do your own version of this. Also, think about managing your stress levels (feeling like your business is out of control isn't pleasant). Factor in time for a brisk walk, minimize your caffeine and alcohol intake and eat foods that fuel you. The sense of satisfaction in turning your financials around is way worth it, and like me, once you pull this off, you can feel confident that should you find yourself in this position in the future, you will know what to do!

Chapter 20 - Nice Girls don't get Sales

I love Ontology, which is the study of what it is to be human. A key principle of ontology is that we each suffer three primary events in our childhood, which impact our behavior throughout our lives. These traumatic events occur typically during the ages of 3-5, 5-12 and 12-21. Nobody goes through childhood unscathed, and there is no competition regarding how tragic an event is.

When these events occur, we subconsciously make a decision about ourselves, which is a bit like a life sentence. For example, if we remember our mum getting all caught up in our brand new little sister or brother, when they got home from the hospital, and we feel like we are being ignored, then we might decide ' I am alone' or even 'I am invisible'. What invariably happens is that we almost pre-program ourselves to experience events throughout our life to keep that in place, which is why we call it a sentence. For example, if we subconsciously think that we are alone, then we will have a tendency to sabotage relationships and continue to feel that aloneness throughout our lives. We also adopt compensating behaviors. Again in the 'I am alone' example, we might come across as off handish and cold to people, because at some level, we don't feel we deserve to get close to others. Alternatively, we might go to the extreme the other way, and smother likeable people we meet , because we are so afraid of being alone.

Because I am a Freefall certified coach, I am licensed to take my clients through an exercise called 'Context Mastery', which supports them in revealing these 'I am' statements. It is a profound and powerful experience, because people get present to how much they are being held back in their life, simply because of a decision they made when they were a child.

One of my "I am" segments based on my childhood is "I am

bad" and I overly compensate by trying to be the 'good girl'.

The incident that this relates to happened when I was about nine years old and we used to spend wonderful holidays and weekends at a simple but wonderful little holiday house in Waitati, just out of Dunedin. Mum and dad used to go floundering, and we would watch them take the floundering nets out and eagerly wait for the next haul. We used to have fun picking the seaweed and the crabs off the nets, and it was always a treat to eat delicious flounder for dinner. Sometimes little baby flounders would get caught up, and mum or dad would release them back into the bay.

Once I found a little flounder, and asked mum and dad if I could put it back myself, to which they replied that I could. For some reason, unbeknownst to me, I picked the flounder up and I threw it as hard as I could like a baseball into the water. My mum obviously got a bit of a shock and said, "Oh my goodness, Laurel. You will have killed him!" In that moment I decided that I was bad. I was a murderer and an awful, awful person.

As I have already mentioned, we adopt compensating behaviors to either keep the sentence in place, or try to escape it. My compensating behavior throughout my life has been to always be the good girl; to practice 'niceness' to the extreme, and to constantly behave like everything is fine. I look back at earlier versions of myself and cringe about how eager I was to please; in fact I was quite simply desperate to be pleased. This would often result in me giving far too much away in my business.

I used to go above and beyond when meeting with new prospects and how it never did me any good. If I was meeting up with someone to discuss their lead gen strategy, I would listen intently to their present concerns, and contribute full out in the session, with suggestions from my years and years of business experience and research. But that wasn't enough for me; I would record the whole session on my iPhone, listen to it at a later date,

create a multi-paged recommendations document, including doing some research on their industry, and then send it to them (and no, this was not chargeable work). Can you imagine how much time I spent doing this?

The feedback I got was heartwarming and extraordinary, which of course the pleaser in me loved. But this habit of giving *too* much away impacted my commercial return. I gave away the farm! There was no longer a perceived need to engage me.

Quite simply I needed to savvy up. I needed to become a little bit more streetwise and stop being so nice, and stop pretending everything was just lovely. Obviously, being nice is a wonderful trait at some level, but it needs to come from being in your power, rather than from a desperate little girl who is obsessed with proving that she isn't bad.

Chapter 21 - Being Overly Enthusiastic; Your Inner Energizer® Bunny

Now, this chapter only applies to people with extraordinarily high energetic personalities like myself. Sometimes I get so carried away, speak so fast and I'm so loud that I simply put people off. When I speak loudly and quickly, I can become breathless and hardly make any sense. People find that it's a struggle to keep up, and you can imagine it isn't really a great way to be successful at sales.

This applies to both face-to-face conversations and to being on the phone. I remember once when ringing a prospect (I can't even remember which product or service I was selling at the time) and basically blurted out "Hi, My name is Laurel and I've called to talk to you about X and I was wondering if you ever feel Y and isn't it interesting about Z?"

There was silence at the other end of the phone and then a fit of laughter. He basically replied by mocking me and creating a sound that I can't write, but it sounded something like that sound you used to get when you accidently rang a fax line! It might sound cruel, but he actually did me a favor. People can find over enthusiasm, fast and loud talking exhausting. One thing that helps me use my energy and enthusiasm powerfully is breathing. I need to be simply more present. Suddenly that level of enthusiasm is way more powerful than the breathless excitable one.

Chapter 22 - The Nasties that No One Talks About - Drop Offs, Cash Flow and the Christmas Period

DROP OFFS

Sometimes becoming a really successful sales person and someone who can persuade and influence powerfully, can end up not serving. Something no one really talks about much is drop offs. You basically meet up with someone, you go through your powerful sales process and they commit. They say yes!

Now, you could get them to sign a contract here and there or get a deposit agreed, but in reality it isn't always going to happen at that precise time. People quite rightly need time to go and look through your terms, and to set up the payment to you. The commitment uptake approach discussed in chapter 14 will manage this in most cases, but there will still be drop offs.

Here's what happens; you agree a start date, you send them an invoice and the contract and then they go away and realize (usually based from fear) that they really aren't in a position to do their part and commit. Sometimes they don't even want to talk to you, because they are embarrassed that they made a commitment and are now not honoring it. More often than not, they send you an email saying, "I'm really sorry. I have decided not to proceed."

Now, of course you already celebrated the win! The money is in the bank as far as you're concerned and it can be quite a blow.

This used to be something that was a killer in the recruitment industry. As you're probably aware, recruitment is based on contingency. That means you only ever get paid if you manage to find a suitable candidate to fill that role. A number of times, we

would be so excited about a person starting their new role. The client would be waiting for that person to start, the invoice would have been sent and then we'd get an email from the candidate saying, "Sorry. I've decided to move to Australia with my wife and I'm not going to be taking that role." Not only had we just missed out on that money which we had already banked on but we had to let the client know that they were back to square one on the recruitment process.

Airlines make a habit of overbooking their flights. Basically, every empty seat is a missed opportunity for them, so they work off the premise that not everyone is going to show up. If they do, then they will ask volunteers to take a later flight. Often there is a cash incentive for this. If they can't solve the capacity challenge then they need to enforce what's known as 'involuntary denied bookings'. This is not ideal for two reasons; (1) they genuinely don't like inconveniencing their clients and (2) penalties will be incurred through the Department of Transportation or equivalent governing body.

Fewer people are being involuntarily bumped, because their systems are getting better at managing capacity and the penalties have been increased.

But in the main, the airlines still make money out of this practice. Take a leaf from their book, and aim to sell more of your services than you can realistically deliver.

Here's the deal. Drop offs are a simple fact of life. Again, don't rest on your laurels; keep up the sales activity, even when your so called committed funds are looking healthy.

CASHFLOW

Outside of Christmas (see next section), there are times during the year that you just don't generate the revenue you expected. You may have a super month, followed by a terrible month. You then look at your upcoming expenses, and realize that you simply don't have the dollars to pay for everything. This is an awful feeling! What's more, sometimes clients may pay up front for an agreed period, if you are a coach. How often have you spent that money and still had all the delivery ahead you? What if they chose to cancel their coaching arrangement, and you had to honor your terms of trade and refund a portion of their payment?

Again, I appreciate that sometimes you have no choice, but try to make it a priority to set up some kind of secondary account, where you can pop pre-paid funds into it, and only draw from it once you have actually delivered the work (you are actually required to do this by law!).

When you realize you have cash flow issues, it is another time to enforce triage as outlined in chapter 19; far better to generate some additional revenue, rather than go hit the bank up for another loan!

CHRISTMAS

How can I say that Christmas is a nasty? Well, I've been in business for a long time and it still can bite me in the bottom! It is an unusual characteristic of both New Zealand and Australia, where the entire country seems to shut down. Time and time again I've been caught out by having a reasonable October and November and then realizing that I have nothing coming up in December or January. What makes it worse, is that suddenly people don't want to commit this side of Christmas, and ask you to be in touch in February. Theoretically, February should be a boomer month, with all this banked up work suddenly being converted, but I have found that even February can be a little lean. Why? Because people are simply in holiday mode, enjoying the summer, and become incapable of making a decision to commit!

Now, I know that we should theoretically be putting money aside to compensate for the inevitable downturn over Christmas. If you are earning well and you can allocate some revenue for this, then that is fantastic, but I also appreciate that in the early days, this may simply not be possible. I am going to sound a bit financially irresponsible, but there have been times that I haven't even been able to put even my GST aside! This is where you need to get a bit savvy about how you can make sure you're going to survive over that time without getting an income. Personally I think the best way to do this is to practice triage in around about October or November so that you don't actually end up in this situation.

Another approach is to challenge everything I have just mentioned, and make the Christmas period a boomer month. Let's face it, no one else is going to be contacting people at this time, and if you are a coach or expert like me, it might be the perfect time to connect and support them in making the new year rock for them!

Chapter 23 - Someone Else Selling for You

How many of you would love someone else to sell on your behalf? If you are paid as a professional sales person, and have answered yes to that question, then you might want to think about a career shift!

If you run a practice of some kind or your own business, then it might make sense to you to employ someone else to generate leads for you, and to take on the sales responsibility full stop. I strongly recommend you *don't* do this!!! Why? Because no one is going to be more passionate than you about your product or service, and if you learn the right way to get your message and value across, then no one is going to be more successful either.

I think there are two reasons for this; the first reason being that having some skin in the game, that is, owning your company, makes you a whole lot more committed to getting a sale across the line. Someone who is paid by you to generate sales simply won't have that same drive. It doesn't matter how much you incentive or reward them. I often say that people who are great sales people should be working for themselves anyway, because it really is the key skill to a successful business.

The second reason is that people like dealing with the owner of a company or practice. There is a certain gravitas associated with working with you, rather than someone who is paid by you.

Additionally, if you can incorporate sales into your responsibility, then you minimize your risk going forward. Imagine how much easier you will sleep at night, knowing that you cant be held to ransom by an employee who knows how much you need him or her.

Of course I do get that in some instances there can be

arrangements that work for both the business or practice owner, and the employee or contract resource. I used to own a sales recruitment company, and made my living placing such roles. But in my opinion, you are going to make life easier for yourself in the long run by taking ownership for this function. By all means find someone who will help you get appointments, or help with sales administration; just don't expect to hand over full responsibility of your pipeline to someone else. In any case you will most likely struggle to find someone who provides you with the results you are looking for.

I also think that the more you focus on positioning, the less time you will have to spend on selling. This is discussed in more detail in chapters 26 and 27.

Chapter 24 - Celebrating Wins

This is a particularly important aspect of successful sales. So often, we just don't stop to celebrate the wins. Actually, we often don't stop to celebrate wins across all of our life. Often, the reason for that is because we're just a little bit disconnected to it. As New Zealanders and Australians, we often downplay the successes, and don't want to look like we're bragging too much.

Come on, when you're successful, even with a very small win, then why not lighten up and have some fun celebrating that? I was sharing with my wonderful coach Sally Anderson recently that I just enjoyed a record month. Basically, it was my best ever performing month, not just for this company but for any company I'd ever owned or worked in.

She immediately bailed me up, because I may as well been saying 'I think I'll go for a walk now' such was the celebration in my voice. It actually really struck me how sometimes, we're so focused on a future-based goal that when we achieve an important milestone towards that, we forget to acknowledge ourselves for that. This is simply because we are still too focused on the end goal.

I think that in western society, we simply do not use enough rituals in our lives. Here's some ideas for incorporating some rituals, which are all around celebrating the wins, no matter how small or large.

NUMBER ONE: KEEP A GRATITUDE JOURNAL

My sister and I both started recording our lives very, very early. In fact, I actually have most of my life recorded since the age of 18 in a diary. Tragically, a lot of it I can hardly read because my writing is so appalling, but it's quite fun to go back and see what I was doing at this time say exactly five years ago.

With the added pressure of being both a mum and running my business, some things slip, and my diary was one of the first things to go. There was a period of about 18 months where I actually didn't record in a diary of any form. This wasn't ideal for me because I think reflecting on your days or weeks is actually a very powerful thing to do. I simply didn't get around to carving out the time to sit down and reflect on the previous week (I used to update my diary weekly).

Around about six months ago, I decided to shift my approach, and actually start recording a gratitude journal rather than a normal diary. Before I started doing this rigorously, I actually went back through the previous few months that I had a missed and identified high-level wins for each month.

Now I make a habit of writing in my journal every single night, and simply jotting down three or four things that I'm very grateful for that have happened that day. I even put my diary in my bed, so that I don't forget, and more often than not stumble on it when going to bed. Sometimes, the wins are quite big and might be work-related. Sometimes, it might just be a lovely little thing that one of my sons might have said during that day. I thoroughly recommend you adopt this practice.

NUMBER TWO: CELEBRATE WINS THAT ARE NOT NECESSARILY MONEY-RELATED

For example, when I moved into my office, I just took myself out for lunch and got present to the new level that I had shifted to in my business. Other examples of non-money-related wins might be getting your website completed, getting a new offering out, and particularly writing a book. When I finished the first draft of this book, my husband and I went out to an eye wateringly expensive restaurant for dinner and celebrated. Don't downplay any of those little or big wins where they're moving you slowly but steadily in the right direction.

NUMBER THREE: CELEBRATE FINANCIAL WINS

We've all heard of sales companies where a bell is dinged when a sale is made, but so often we don't do that when it's our own company. Find something to do, even if it's taking yourself out to lunch to celebrate every new piece of business that you gain. If you're doing something quite transactional, it may not be practical, but even a $2,000 win should be celebrated. I think energetically, this works well too, because you're basically publically declaring, well to yourself anyway, that you're successful!

NUMBER FOUR: CELEBRATE GROUP WINS

If there's any community you're part of, and collectively you achieve something, make sure you celebrate that. Again, it's quite likely that no one else is going to suggest that simply because we like to downplay success, but it's so much more fun to celebrate something together.

Chapter 25 - Testimonials and Referrals

There is nothing more powerful than someone else sharing with your prospects how wonderful you are and how much you have changed their life. But it's something that so many of us don't get around to doing!

I have a client who has a bunch of testimonials but she hasn't even put them up on her website yet. I too have been as guilty as the next person. What generally happens is that I ask for testimonials, but don't follow up. You need to be rigorous with this. It's not that people don't want to give you a testimonial; they just simply have other more pressing priorities. One way that you can save them time is by offering some support, either by providing a framework of what you would like them to cover, or even offering to write their testimonial for them! Some people feel very uncomfortable about this, but it is common practice these days, so give it a go.

A simple framework for a testimonial might look like this;

1. explanation of what the service was that you provided
2. the results that they achieved (more specific the better)
3. what they like about working with you
4. why they recommend you over and above anyone else.

How many testimonials do you see on websites where there is no name, but simply something like 'Jane H, Project Leader'? When you ask for them, please ask them if it is ok to use their name. I know some corporates have policies about testimonials provided by their team , but don't assume, and ask just in case; named testimonials are way more powerful.

If you're coaching like me, then people should be happy to be named. I suppose the exception to this is if you've done undergone

some deep healing work with them and they might not like the world to know that they have been on some kind of transformational journey. I think this is a shame because, vulnerability (see Chapter 16) is powerful and if more people shared openly their flaws as well as their successes, I believe the world would be a lot less screwed up.

LinkedIn testimonials are now probably my preferred method of testimonials. Just ask the question. Please don't send an email asking someone to write a testimonial. Pick up the phone! Have a process for talking to people straight at the end of their engagement with you, while they are still basking in the resulting success.

Now, I know clients who have had every intention on giving me a testimonial but they just haven't managed to complete the task. When I see them, they apologize and say "I know I've got to write that testimonial for you, Laurel," but then nothing happens. This is why you just need to be rigorous in following up when you've asked for testimonials. Do bear in mind of course what else is going on in their lives, if they are going through a difficult patch, then it would be better to wait, and not hound.

Please find yourself a way to make sure that you not only collect but you also celebrate and publish your testimonials. A dedicated section of your website is ideal, with a couple of particularly glowing ones selected to be displayed on your home page.

Referrals and recommendations are another wonderful way to generate leads. How many people do you hear who say, "Word of mouth is my key area to retain, to win clients"? Again, we can put some rigor around this and create a system for managing referrals and recommendations. It might be as straightforward as simply asking your clients if they know of anyone who might be interested in connecting with you for a conversation.

Now, remember you have to be upfront and clean about why you are having that conversation. A way to make this easier is by

offering a valuable lead magnet like a diagnostic or some kind of analysis or value that they'll get from connecting with you.

The best way to handle recommendations if your clients know someone who they think you should talk with is to ask them to email both yourself and the prospect. Ideally they will include a little bit of an overview about why they're connecting you and recommending that you both catch up. This is extraordinarily more powerful than just giving someone a name although if they're not going to do that, a name is at least a start. Ensure that you acknowledge the act and when you connect with the new prospect, make sure that you absolutely attribute the common connection. Also let the person who recommended you know how you are getting on with their recommendation. Whether you end up doing business together or not, it's courteous to let them know how the interaction went, and to thank them again.

If you aren't comfortable with asking people for referrals or recommendations then I suggest you have a look at your self-worth. There is something around boldly claiming the value that you are giving your clients. If you aren't sure that you're giving that kind of value, then you need to do something about it. Receiving some personal coaching and/or healing is preferable, because the tricky thing about self worth issues, is that they have a way of hiding themselves and being difficult to shine the light on; that's why you need someone else to support you, and get you to see for yourself how much it's holding you back.

I will close with another way of finding out how much your clients value you. I have implemented a structure within my 10-week coaching program asking for feedback at the midpoint and the endpoint. Essentially what I'll do is ask,

1. What's been great?

2. What's been working well so far?

3, What could have been done differently?

4.Anything else?”

That’s it. I must confess that I sometimes brace myself before I read them; it’s totally irrational, but probably stems back to that need of mine (and most people’s) to be liked. None of us really likes hearing about any ‘areas for improvement’! I do suggest that having a conversation rather than emailing is a good move, but most do prefer to send an email (and we usually do talk about it afterwards).

This is the most brilliant version of quality control. Some of the ideas that I’ve received from my generous clients have really impacted the ongoing value of what I deliver. I also think that people are pretty considerate and they know that you’re always doing the best that you can and are happy to contribute. Some of the feedback that I receive truly surprises me, in that I had no idea that some of the deliverables of my program (and other inevitable outcomes) are so valued.

Chapter 26 – Sales Considerations for Thought Leaders

In this chapter, I am focusing on what special considerations there are when you are actually a thought leader as opposed to running your own business or being paid as a sales professional (these are covered in the following chapters).

SO WHAT IS A THOUGHT LEADER?

The best way to explore this is to buy the book, "Sell Your Thoughts" by Matt Church, Peter Cook and Scott Stein (go to www.sellyourthoughtsbook.com). In this book, the curriculum of thought leadership is covered in detail. Essentially what it refers to is;

> *helping creative people become commercially smart by cleverly unpacking what they know and monetizing it in six ways as an expert. These are speaking, authoring, training, mentoring, facilitating and coaching.*

The key goal of the curriculum is to earn half a million to one-and-a-half million dollars a year selling your thoughts, working 50 to 200 days a year with one to two support staff. Another way we like to say it is doing work you love with people you like the way you want. And even another way of describing it is to move someone from being an expert (who knows something) to an authority (someone who is knowing the knowing something).

HOW DO YOU BECOME A THOUGHT LEADER?

The way that you do this is via a three-year journey where you start by aiming for white belt, which is earning $10,000 a month and move through to black belt, which is earning $60,000 a month and beyond. At each stage, you maintain a specific focus for that belt level, in order to ensure you move to the next level.

If this curriculum interests you at all, then go to the sell your thoughts website for a wonderful introduction. Or check out www.tlbusinessschool.com for an overview of the signature program (and a life changing one I promise), which I have mentioned elsewhere in this book.

WHAT ABOUT SELLING YOURSELF AS A THOUGHT LEADER?

Well, there are a few things to think about. Firstly, get used to the idea that it is really better for you to sell yourself than hire someone else. This has been discussed in detail in Chapter 23. When someone is purchasing your expertise, they are essentially purchasing you, and who better to sell you than yourself?

Unfortunately, many people launch some kind of a consulting or coaching business without having clearly thought how they are going to sell. You probably won't like me when I say it has to be up to you.

So who do you sell to?

If you already have a bunch of great connections within, say, the corporate world and specifically telco and IT, because you have been working there, then it's best to start having clicking conversations with the people you know. In the first few months anyway, it may even be worthwhile to sell the kind of services that you are already known for. For example, if you have done facilitating in the past, set yourself up as a facilitator.

But what if you don't have a list? What if you are starting from scratch and have moved from an entirely unrelated business into the field of being an expert? Believe me, it's doable and I have been privileged to see people move successfully, even though the jump is a pretty big one. When you don't have a list, the advice is simple. Start offering yourself as a one-on-one coach.

BUT AREN'T THERE TOO MANY COACHES IN NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA?

I was enjoying coffee with a wonderful woman a while back, and she posed this question. It wasn't the first time I have been asked. Other versions of this question go something along the lines of 'doesn't it seem that every second person these days is setting up shop as a coach'?

The answer to this is…. NO! There are absolutely not too many coaches!

For every one person who is a coach, there are literally thousands of people who have decided not to be a coach. Of course, coaches also need coaches. It is one of the few professions where, unless you are coaching in a very niche market, there are many individuals and businesses who could be your potential client.

And when you consider that within any given week, each coach would generally be able to provide value to up to 20 clients maximum, there is a wonderful level of opportunity.

Now I am not suggesting that every person on the planet needs a 'life coach' (although, why do we find it so acceptable to engage an architect to help us design our house, but often can't digest doing the same for our life?). I am suggesting paying someone else, who has been through the life experiences and done the study in their chosen field, and can skillfully provide you with some knowledge to elevate you in that field, in less time!

Coaching typically falls into four categories;

1. Wellbeing, spirituality and faith

2. Finance and Abundance

3. Relationships and community

4. Career and purpose

The wonderful coaches I know provide such powerful services across all of these areas. I do have people in my life who claim that coaching isn't for everyone. I know that there are some individuals who have no interest in 'bettering their situation', but wouldn't you agree that most people would welcome strategies for more success in at least one of the above categories?

The return on investment on coaching is huge

That is of no doubt, as long as (a) your clients are prepared to be accountable and responsible and (b) they choose their coach wisely. Sadly there are some people who choose to coach others so that they can forget about their own issues by focusing on their clients' issues. A coach who hasn't dealt with their own stuff is not going to be as effective as a coach who has. By the way, the best way to filter out such coaches, is to ask them 'who coaches you?'

The challenge with working out ROI is that the quantifiable return can be difficult to measure, unless you are working with say a finance coach.

Here is an example. Jan Stein is a powerful wellness coach, who I have engaged, and highly recommend. Her sessions were extraordinary, and since I started seeing her around eight months ago, I have not been sick… once (touch wood)! Ok, there was a gastro incident that I would rather not talk about, but in terms of general unwellness, you know, the fluey, coldy, sickness, I have had none of it. That is a huge return for me, if you consider the days I would have normally lost to illness; but to quantify it to simply some extra billable time doesn't do what I have got out of our partnership justice.

I have engaged multiple other coaches who have played a huge role in me now living a life I love, the way I like, with people I love, and getting paid well for it. Without them, it simply wouldn't have happened. Again, how can I talk about that in traditional ROI terms?

The Connection Economy

Seth Godin's brilliant book, The Icarus Deception refers to the connection economy, where the artist creates ideas that spread and connects the disconnected. Art is new, real and important and it's about building bridges between people that generate value. This was a life-changing book for me; I recommend it highly, and I believe, that for us all to embrace our own art (which can be difficult, risky and frightening), we need support. One of the most effective support mechanisms available is that of a coach.

Back to how to sell as a thought leader. The script guidelines discussed in Chapter 13 are perfect for a thought leader as a way to sell, as is the Audrey Process (Chapter 12) and getting people committed to moving forward (Chapter 14). In fact the methodologies that sit behind these chapters were specifically created with thought leaders in mind.

There are just a couple of other things that I would like to mention specifically for thought leaders.

Firstly, don't get lured into the excitement of speaking, authoring and mentoring too soon, if you haven't done this to date. We certainly advocate writing a book, but don't think that you are going to make a lot of money out of writing a book. You will use the book for positioning and upselling your other services. Likewise, speaking is a great way to grow your list and get yourself positioned. But to actually think about generating $10,000 a month from either speaking, authoring or mentoring when you don't have a name for it in already is likely to set you up for failure.

Training, facilitating and coaching are great ways to grow your name and your list.

The other thing is not to focus on creating information products too early. You know the ones I am talking about. Those products raved about by online marketing gurus. There are some brilliant people who are making some great revenue primarily from selling online products. Brendon Burchard is probably the best example I know of someone doing this. But Brendon assumes one thing, as do many other people who are primarily focused on the distribution element of you getting your message out there for commercial success. They assume that your content is of a high standard. At thought leaders, we are obsessively focused on your message and creating relevant, through elegant and unique content based on what you know, so following the thought leadership journey, if you are interested in selling information products is a wise one.

However, in the white belt to black belt journey, we don't encourage that people even look at leverage (selling on a one to many basis without doing additional work) as an option until they are earning around $50,000 a month.

Admittedly it is actually getting easier and cheaper to set up an online product than ever before. But if you are really keen on this, I encourage you to think more about setting up your products alongside face-to-face or at least one-on-one offerings.

Again once you have built a list and you have a good name for yourself (1500 good qualified prospects is a decent sized list), then you may be able to generate some strong revenue in this platform on its own. But I know stories and I'm sure you do too of people who have spent far too much money chasing the dream of making money in your sleep, for little or no return.

And yes, there are some successful people doing this. But I think that is a lot about luck. Think about Lorde. Sure, she is a great singer

but I bet there are other girls singing in pubs across New Zealand and Australia just as good as her. Even Lorde herself admits that it takes a tricky balance of luck and skill to become a success.

Just in closing, I would like to bring up the challenge that some people have on selling themselves. They get very distracted coming up with very cute names for their coaching practice or their training curriculum when actually the best thing you can do to get yourself out there and to get known is simply to go and buy your own URL, www.yourname.com. Get over the ickiness, everyone else is doing it, and it really does make for a successful practice. No, you can't sell your practice at the end of the time when you have had enough, but we think earning 60k a month is a pretty good result, and in order to create your wealth, and you can look at other ways of doing so, with the healthy level of discretionary income you will have.

Chapter 27 – Sales Considerations for Small Business Owners

I've been there and I know it's tough. There are some key challenges to running your own business. Firstly, you just do not have additional time. There's just too much to do and often it all rests solely on your shoulders. The only person who can do a number of these tasks is you.

Secondly, there are conflicting priorities on where to invest your revenue back into the business. That particularly goes for marketing. Because in most instances you're not trained as a marketer, there can be some real confusion around where to spend your marketing dollar. Should you spend it in search engine optimization? Should you spend it on networking? Should you invest heavily in social media? There are a few snake oil charmers who would gladly take your money from you. In top of that, there are many other places in your business where you need to invest.

In the thought leader community we often reference the quote by John Wanamaker, who is often referred to as the father of modern advertising:

"Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted. The trouble is, I don't know which half."

How true is this?

So personally for me having been a successful entrepreneur myself, I think there are two specific areas where you should be focusing as a business owner.

Firstly, traditional lead generation

Get some clarity on who you are and who your market are, then work on implementing short-term campaigns as discussed in Chapter Six, Creating your very own Lead Generation Machine, to get yourself out there. The key thing is to grow your prospect base and your funnel, and to remember to follow up. I am surprised at how few business owners actually have some kind of formal lead-generation strategy in place.

Again, focus is really important here. Don't try and be all things to all people. When you are practising lead generation, focus on one particular service or product and promote that consistently. Don't be seduced by the lofty claims of certain marketers. The best way for you to sell your services or product is by getting out there yourself and having the conversations.

Sure, as I've already mentioned, engage someone to help you set up the appointments. But relying on someone else to do the selling for you is not only risky; they are never going to be as passionate as you. I get that there are so many other ways that you could be spending your time, but I'm also sure that you probably avoid sales because most people do and certainly as a small business owner you have every excuse not to be doing them.

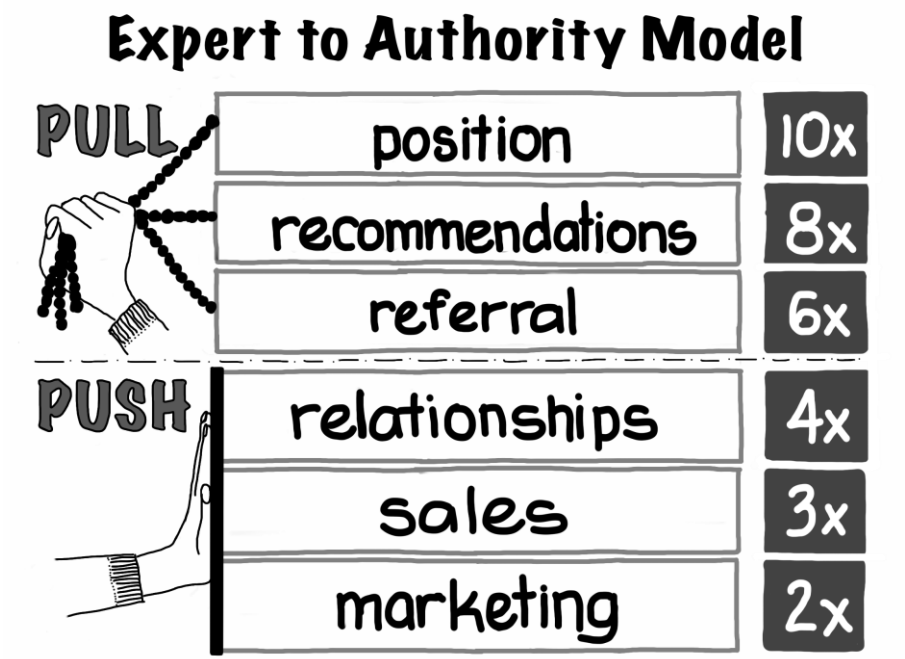
One way that might work is to engage your team in helping you to sell and to achieve your targets. By having some fun as to how many conversations you can each have that are based around sales and even having them be a stand for you and getting out there and creating your own success through creating a great sales funnel. In Daniel Pink’s book, To Sell is Human, he shares that we are *all* selling now, and he also challenges the notion that sales is deceptive or bad; it’s simply what we do.

Secondly, you can be more commercially successful as a small business owner by positioning yourself as a thought leader in some area associated to your product or service.

What we want you to do is move from being an expert, someone who knows something about your business, to an authority, which means being *known* as the authority in your business.

Basically, the way you do that is by writing the white papers, writing the books, and getting out there and speaking at industry events. This is an extraordinarily powerful way to communicate with your audience whilst not directly selling and it's not yet being fully embraced by the small business community in either New Zealand or Australia.

Refer to the model below that demonstrates how you move yourself from an expert to an authority. If you look at the below-the-line activity, that is marketing, sales, and relationships, they require quite a bit of effort. They are also absolutely essential.



However, once you have been in business for a while, it makes far more sense to have the business come to you rather than you going to the business. This is through the top three activities: referrals, recommendations, and positioning. In other words, when you first start out, you are pushing your message out there, whereas as time goes by, you start pulling clients towards you, which is a lot easier.

By positioning yourself as a thought leader through speaking and writing primarily, you will get far greater reach and have a more elegant message since you are really focused on being an educator rather than a seller. For further information on this please look at the book Thought Leaders by Matt Church, Scott Stein and Michael Henderson.

Just one more thing, if you're in business, you are certainly going to get a lot of value by looking at Chapter 19, Triage, Stop the Bleeding and implementing the triage approach. The scary but also

cool thing is that generally it's not just about you. You have other families that rely on you, so do yourself and them a favor and take full responsibility for ensuring that you have a fat and healthy pipeline.

Chapter 28 – Sales Considerations for Employed Sales Professionals

Here's what I think are the challenges around being on a sales team.

1. Lead generation is considered to be a slog and no one gets around to doing it. You'll find all the other exercises to keep yourself busy, rather than just getting out there and generating new business.
2. Many of the conversations across the board are transactional and there's a sense of doing things the way you've always done them, because that's how they've always been done.
3. Plus, the KPIs and targets don't generally don't motivate. They terrorize, and what nobody really sees is that it can be just soul destroying being part of sales team where you're constantly feeling like you're slugging out your guts but at the same time avoiding the stuff that needs to be done.

Personally I believe there are three things that you want to focus on to be successful as a professional sales person and take personal responsibility for having the most successful sales record that you possibly can.

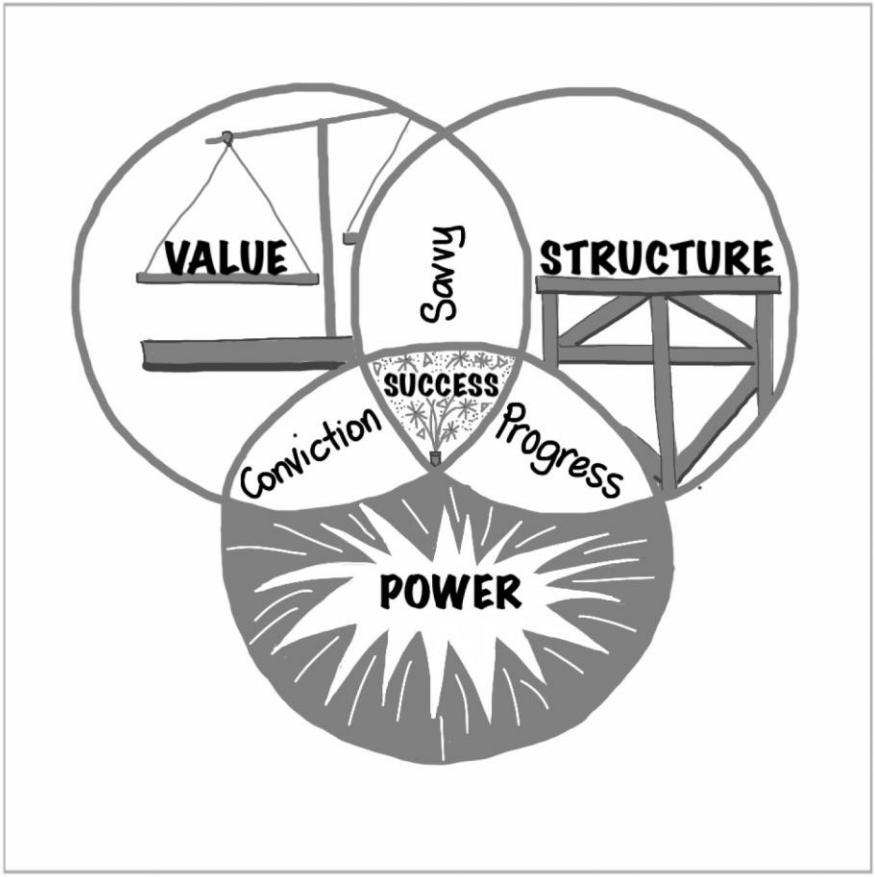
Firstly, you want to crystal clear about your market, the *value* that you provide, and the way that you connect to that market through powerful words and collaterals.

Secondly, it's about making the work more interesting. How can you use rituals, *structures* and processes to measure and communicate your progress within the group and across the company.

Thirdly and most importantly, I think that when you're on a sales team, it's about giving up any of the negativity or negative listening

you have of sales, your product or service, your company, or even your boss. You want to come from a place of *power*, not resentment or blame.

The following model explains this in a little more detail;



1. VALUE

What uniqueness do you have personally? What uniqueness does your product or service have? What uniqueness does your company have within your market? Get clear on these and

communicate that by becoming more like an educator. We don't want transactional conversations anymore. We want inspirational ones, and that's where you share your uniqueness across the board and incorporate thought leadership into the mix.

2. STRUCTURE

Look at what you're using now. What collaterals are you using? How defined are your sales processes? How do you get your lists? What about daily or weekly rituals like setting yourself up powerfully before you get on the phone to make some follow up calls, then taking yourself out for a nice lunch afterwards? Have some fun with it. Make the progress visible, as per Jason Fox's great book, The Game Changer. Sometimes, even having a simple leaderboard up on the wall can create some interesting competition and amplify the success. If your team aren't open to it, just do them yourself. Rituals really do work.

3. CLEAN UP

Finally, clean up anything that's not being said in the sales team. That is either to each other, to your boss, or other people in the company, and even maybe to your suppliers or clients.

There seems to be such a negative underlying energy present in the unsaid things that block the flow of success in organizations. Take a risk. Set the context and have some clearing conversations with people to create some space. Have a think about what your thoughts are around meeting your quota and sales in general. Realize how those thoughts might actually be holding you back.

If you're a really great sales person, how about you start thinking about how you can start generating money for yourself, rather than somebody else? I agree that being a thought leader or owning a

business is not for everyone, but when you know how to sell, that's at least half the battle already won. Consider the options of working in a more independent capacity with some more freedom. Alternatively, just have some fun when you're out there as a sales professional. Don't buy into politics. Again, use the lead generation machine approach discussed in Chapter 6 to achieve the sales quicker.

Chapter 29 – The Future of Selling

Who remembers SPIN selling, the Holden sales method or even the consultative sales process? If you think back to pre-internet days, it was all about establishing needs and explaining features and benefits. I also think that one thing that was different to the way things are done now is that there was a clear distinction between sales and marketing. We knew where one ended and the other began.

Even when the Internet came along, I don't think things changed too quickly. Sure, we had the introduction of search engine optimization and trying to get the best Google result that we could. I seriously believe that it's only been in the last five years that things have really shifted. What has happened is it's moved into social selling. *Caveat emptor* (let the buyer beware) has been replaced by *caveat venditor*, let the seller beware.

Our buyers are more educated these days than ever before. In fact, there are interesting statistics to show how many searches a prospect has actually done before even connecting with you, both regarding researching the topic in general and you and your competitors. One way that they do that, is by going on line and researching what others say about you, through social media. This is called social selling. I think one of the most fascinating examples of social selling is that of Atlassian technologies, an extraordinary company who essentially do not have a sales force. They stand by their products being so good that people share them with their communities, and they will provide support as and when needed when someone is interested.

They do not go out and find people. People go out and find them, and then they very respectfully answer the questions until such time as the purchaser makes a decision. What I think is even

more crazy is that there's no discounting of their products. You pay essentially the same price for their software whether you are using it as an individual or for company of 5000. There's something about the coolness of all of this, which really intrigues me!

Another newer concept of selling is social proof. Actually the idea has been around forever, it’s just been defined in a new way. If you think about social proof, it's about others telling you how great a product or service is. Imagine you've just turned up to a new city when on holiday, you walk down a street of restaurants, and one is way fuller than all the others. Providing there's a table available, you would generally go to where other people have chosen, wouldn't you? We're also becoming a little bit savvier in this direction. Amazing technologies like Trip Advisor work well, but now we're more interested in finding out where people we *know* actually recommend, particularly when we hear stories of destinations essentially creating fake reviews to boost their online reputation . Have a think about it, presently you can post a review on any location and not have to prove that you actually stayed or ate there; some advertising agencies have actually confessed that they have an entire department set up to post good stuff about their clients on line.

What's happening in the future with the *world* as well as with sales? I recently attended a fascinating seminar on the future of learning. This coming year my school is embracing the modern learning environment where rather than classrooms, there are hives of larger groups of children who are serviced by three or four teachers with different areas available in the hive to cater for all different types of learning.

If you think about the history of teaching, or indeed about the general school curriculum, it's still based on a premise that we need to learn cognitive processing tasks in order to fulfill our duties in society. Essentially what this means is solving known problems. However, that is simply not the case anymore, is it, because so many

problems that our children will face are unknown. Think about it, ten years ago, would we have been worried about cyber bullying or even identity theft? The best skills we can teach our children are to learn, unlearn and then relearn, such is the change of pace. The hives in the modern learning environment are a brilliant way to enable this.

Other interesting developments in pedagogy (which is the method and practice of teaching) are the MOOCS approach and the Khan Academy online, which is all about us learning in a completely different way to be able to keep up with the changes that are being thrown at us. Some people passionately disagree that there's any larger rate of change right now than there has been in our history, but what I think is really changing is that entire industries are potentially going to disappear in the next five to ten years simply because of automation.

As Seth Godin says, if your role can be outsourced or automated, then you'd better start thinking about something else.

What can't be automated? Two things. Firstly, making meaning out of something and secondly creativity. The computers just haven't quite learned how to nail either of these yet.

Regarding the meaning making, we have such a tsunami of information available now to us that it's more like a commodity. What the most richest man couldn't dream of purchasing maybe even ten years ago, is now available for free by the internet. Trying to make meaning out of all this information available is like drinking from a fire hydrant. That’s why I'm so excited about thought leadership because expert thinking is really a brilliant industry to be in as we need to continue to make meaning out of the ever-expanding information we're faced with.

Thank goodness that finally the creatives are being recognized for the value that they contribute. Again, I believe that Seth Godin has been a champion in this, and I'm looking forward to reading his

new book, “What to do when it’s your turn” which is about to be released.

Where does this leave sales? I think the main way that sales are affected is that people are simply not going to be fooled by manipulating techniques that have worked in the past. It's not because we were more naive back then, simply that technology and access to information makes it far harder to fool us than ever before.

That's why things like authenticity and vulnerability that we talked about in this book are so important. Daniel Pink recently wrote a book, To Sell is Human, and I think that's the biggest shift as we're just realizing that actually it's not about outdated sales departments, it's about everyone across the organization doing their bit to spread the word on the value of their product or service. And they need to do it authentically!

Marketing automation has come a long way in the last five to ten years. In fact, permission marketing is a phrase that was coined by Seth Godin as early as 2002. It took a while for us to catch up with this extraordinarily progressive concept. I remember watching the movie Minority Report when Tom Cruise goes into the Gap clothing store and has a conversation with a hologram asking him about personal shopping transactions he'd undertaken in that shop previously. How on the money was that movie?

We will continue to be presented with more customized information based on our own preferences and behavior. Personally, I think that's a good thing.

And what will happen to the belly to belly conversations that I have mentioned in this book? Well, I think they'll always be around even if they're held virtually. Look at how the webinar has transformed the way we buy online.

It's actually quite exciting thinking about how our industry is going to shift over the next decade. What that shift will be exactly, who knows? Keep on being committed to having clarity around your value, being smart about the way that you share that value using whatever technology works for you and truly own it with authentic conviction, and I promise the future will be looking bright.

Chapter 30 – Next Steps

So what next? I trust that you have picked up some valuable hints throughout that book and feel more comfortable about your future in sales, regardless of where you are right now.

But what happens now? You've read the book and you're still faced with a daunting pipeline and probably most likely still feeling resistance as to what to do next. So here's what I believe you want to do to shift into a new level of selling.

1. JUST FOCUS ON THE NEXT 90 DAYS

Remember we used to have 5-year plans? What on earth is the point of these now that things are shifting so quickly in our society? Check out Chapter 29, The Future of Selling.

In Thought Leaders Business School we only ever focus on the next 90 days and I think three months is a nice chunk of time on which to set up some sound sales activity.

You've seen how to set up a lead generation machine in Chapter Six, so go on, find one product or service you're going to focus on, find a market you're going to communicate with, a way you're going to communicate with them, and then just get out there and make it happen.

Don't get distracted by the bright shiny objects and make sure that you test and measure the success of each campaign. Then introduce another campaign in the next 90 days. If a campaign is working well for you keep that one going whilst you launch the next one.

2. MANAGE YOUR DIARY

I really think working on your diary is a great way to move to the next level. Carve out dedicated time to connect with people, however that looks for you. Some people swear by getting the less desirable actions out of the way earlier in the day; you may wish to schedule your sales activity time accordingly.

3. SET UP AN ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM

Go find a coach, a mastermind group, or even simply a buddy, an accountability buddy, to help keep you on track for the next 90 days and beyond. I promise you, YOU are the biggest thing to get in the way of your sales success, and if you find some kind of way of not being let off the hook, then as much as it may seem painful at the beginning it will serve you in the end.

4. FIND YOURSELF A COMMUNITY OF LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE

I think we've forgotten sometimes that we really are tribal beasts at heart. Whatever industry you're in, whether you're working as a thought leader, you're a business owner, or you're a sales professional, to congregate with a bunch of people who are facing similar challenges to you is a powerful support mechanism.

Give up the looking good and share both the challenges as well as the wins with this community and grow it by being active. You can't *make* a community engaged. The community itself needs to be engaged. For me personally, I found a winner with Thought Leaders Business School.

Just as I've been recording this chapter, I've looked at the online community to see one of my amazing fellow mentors share about how she really lost track of self care over the last couple of months and ended up needing to seek professional help regarding her sleeping. You should see the support that's been flooding in after her sharing so vulnerably.

So get yourself clear on what you want to achieve, but have some fun with it. Don't set yourself up to fail with unachievable targets. Then once you've done that focus on the next 90 days, set up your diary accordingly, get some accountability and find a community, and I promise your life will look very different, particularly around the way you do sales.

About the Author

Laurel is well known as both a lead generation expert and thought leader champion in New Zealand and Australia. Her high energy and massively infectious approach is welcomed by both individuals and organizations, particularly because of her ability to make a topic that is often perceived as dry, feel entertaining and informative.

An identical twin, Laurel has a degree in psychology, and earlier roles cover hospitality, admin, theatre and IT consulting. She has set up and sold two recruitment companies, ITmaniacs (which was ranked #2 in the Deloitte Fast 50) and Amplify Sales.

She has been coaching, speaking, mentoring and training since 2012. Laurel is a Certified Freefall Coach and Accredited Thought Leader Mentor.

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You can also subscribe to her free 8 part video series of sales tricks and tips.

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Laurel is available for speaking engagements, one-day lead generation training workshops, private one on one lead generation coaching, and thought leaders mentoring partnerships.

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