**Message from the Publisher, Viki Winterton:**

*Insights Magazine* brings you leading experts in coaching and empowerment, sharing their wisdom, vision, secrets of success and personal defining moments of inspiration. We hope you will enjoy your new Insights.

**In this Issue:**
- Insights magazine is now published quarterly.
- Coming soon: Neale Donald Walsch, *Conversations With God*
- **Insights Bonus:** Annual Superstar Showcase—Limited Edition
  All of our fabulous 2010 cover interviews, all in one place—ad free
  FREE when you **Subscribe for 1-year**
  In July, look for our new **PUBLISHED!** magazine.

We will private label Insights for you as your own publication!
- Circulation: 17,500+
- Insights online, downloadable & available in Print.
  *Enjoy on your Kindle & iPad!*

**Insights Magazine** is a member of
**Expert Insights™ Family of Opportunity**

*Insights and PUBLISHED!* magazines
- The Coaches Edge: Extraordinary events
- Write Away, Write Now!: Where writers and opportunity meet
- The Coach Exchange (tce): Coaching network and showcase venues
- Top Global Resources Directories: The best coaching and publishing has to offer

[www.getei.com](http://www.getei.com)

Publisher: Expert Insights™, Charlotte, NC 28213  Publisher@GetExpertInsights.com
All Rights Reserved: Reprint or use of any content prohibited without permission.
Message from the Publisher, Viki Winterton:

Insights Magazine brings you leading experts in coaching and empowerment, sharing their wisdom, vision, secrets of success and personal defining moments of inspiration. We hope you will enjoy your new Insights.

In this Issue:

**Sandy Forster**, Best-Selling Author, International Speaker

*Learn how to focus on what you want and make it happen!*  
Page 4

**Viktor Grant**, Internet Entrepreneur and Expert in Virtual Communities

*Your Web site speaks volumes—find out what it’s saying.*  
Page 10

**Tsufit**, Author, Actress, Comedienne, and Coach

*Discover what it means to become spotlightworthy.*  
Page 18

**Burke Allen**, CEO and President of Allen Media Strategies, Author, Media Marketing Expert

*Learn tricks of the trade to help you make the most of every media opportunity.*  
Page 26

**Eve Agee, Ph.D.**, Certified Life Coach, Medical Anthropologist, Best-Selling Author

*Identify and transform the beliefs that could be holding you back.*  
Page 32

**Orvel Ray Wilson**, Award-Winning Speaker, Coauthor of the Guerrilla Marketing Book Series

*How can driving up prices help you maintain long-term customer relationships?*  
Page 38

**Judy Mackenzie**, CEC and Founder of TEVO Leadership Coaching and Consulting Inc.

*Enhance your leadership skills in any stage of business.*  
Page 46

**Kathleen Gage**, Street Smarts Marketing, Best-Selling Author, Internet Publicity Expert

*Pinpoint your market, increase your visibility, and create a sustainable business.*  
Page 50

**Insights Expert Directory, Events and Resources**  
Pages 56-59

Celebrating All the Experts Who Have Graced 2010 Insights Pages!  
Page 60

*A special “thank you” to media personality, Stacey Chadwell.*
Sandy Forster

is an international speaker, millionaire mind-set mentor, best-selling author, and award-winning business owner.

Sandy was awarded the 2010 Business of the Year in Australian Home-Based Businesses award as well as being named a 2008 International Mentor of the Year. Sandy has transformed her life from welfare to millionaire and is now mentoring others around creating their own success.

Her book, *How To Be Wildly Wealthy Fast*, is an international best seller and has introduced tens of thousands of people to Sandy’s practical and proven methods to create a life they love.

I: *How To Be Wildly Wealthy Fast* is an international best seller. Why are people so interested in it?

SF: When it comes to life, most people would love to have more money. *How To Be Wildly Wealthy Fast* really hit a nerve because in it I not only share practical tips for how to create prosperity, but I also share what I consider to be most important—metaphysical tips. These are tips for creating that millionaire mind-set—tips for how to take where you are now and turn it into a life filled with abundance and prosperity.

Most people know they want more money, but don't know how to get it—how to create it. They consistently—day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year—find money elusive. They want it, but they don’t know how to get it.

In *How To Be Wildly Wealthy Fast*, I share all the tips, ideas, and secret strategies I used to keep my focus on prosperity and the abundance I desired—tips that took me from a place of struggling to where I wanted to be. It's an easy read, and I think it has become very popular simply because it works.

I: Why did you write *How To Be Wildly Wealthy Fast*? Was making money easy for you, or did you always struggle financially?

SF: I wrote the book because it was an area of struggle for me. Growing up, my family didn't have a stack of money. We weren’t poor by any means, but we weren’t rich either. We were an average family.

When I left home, I rented, I had a job, and I did the normal things, but as I decided to go down the business path and start my own business, instead of making money, I found myself getting further and
further in debt. I ended up divorcing my childhood sweetheart, and I found myself with two babies, trying to support myself, and going backwards financially.

It was a really challenging time for me. I was over $100,000 in debt. I was on government welfare; I think I was receiving about $15,000 a year, which is just not enough to survive on. I was just getting further and further in debt, and I really didn’t know where my life was headed.

Luckily, I discovered the personal development industry, and I fell in love with a particular personal development course. I started marketing it and I started making money. I thought my money worries were over because I had gone from making $15,000 a year from the government to making about $150,000 on my own; I really thought I would live my life on easy street forever.

It was really bizarre, because what I found was that, as fast as the money was flowing in, it was flowing out even faster. All sorts of things were happening in my life to make that money disappear: I had a car accident, some of my teeth needing dental work, machinery in my house blew up—even the welfare service wrote to me and said I owed them $7,000!

It was just amazing. As fast as the money came in, it flowed out. I realized that it didn’t matter how much money I brought in; unless I changed where I was in my head, I would find ways to make the money disappear. Making and managing money has never been easy for me; however, I decided that I wanted to make money. And I not only wanted to make money, I wanted to keep it.

I set about putting together all of the different ideas, strategies, secrets, processes, and exercises that would keep me focused on abundance and prosperity, because what I did understand was this: What you focus on is what you attract. What you focus on is what you create. What you focus on is what you bring into your world.

I had been focusing on the fact that I didn’t have enough money to pay the bills. I was scared to answer the phone in case it was someone saying, “You owe us. We need you to pay up now.”

I realized that while, logically, I wanted to be wealthy, I wanted prosperity, I wanted abundance and the freedom those things would give me, at a cellular level, who I was on the inside was still someone who was very scared and worried that I would never have any money, that I would never be able to pay the bills, and that I would never have that freedom.

I put together all of these different ways to shift my focus off of what I didn’t have, to instead focus on what I did want—to focus on feeling rich, feeling abundant, and feeling like a millionaire.

I started writing all of these ways down. I’m the type of person who gets very bored doing the same thing over and over again, so I came up with dozens of different ways to focus on abundance. After I wrote them all down, I wanted to share them with people. I started sharing through a teleseminar and it was great; but then, what was originally a four-week teleseminar turned into six weeks, and then eight weeks, and then twelve weeks, and I thought, This is ridiculous! It’s getting longer and longer, and it’s getting more expensive for people to take part.

The whole point was to help make people more prosperous, so I just put all of that information into a book, and from there it became a best seller. I think it has remained so popular because I like to keep things really simple and really easy and, more than anything, really fun.

In the past, becoming prosperous, becoming wealthy has seemed like a very serious business, but I wanted to make it fun, because that’s what the Law of Attraction is all about. That’s what prosperity and abundance should be all about. It’s fun, it’s light, it’s easy, and, as I said, it really works.

I: Let’s talk more about prosperity consciousness as it is mentioned your book.

SF: Most people think they must have a prosperity consciousness if they want to be wealthy. There are two sides to the coin. There’s a prosperity consciousness and a poverty consciousness.

A good example of poverty consciousness would be the people you hear about who have no money
and then they win the lottery. But a year or two later they’re back to having nothing again.

You never hear the other side of the coin; consider someone who is a multimillionaire but makes a bad business decision, or experiences a downturn in the economy, and they lose everything. Usually, within a year or two, they’re back up there with their millions.

Why does that happen? I realized it’s because people have a consciousness around money. That consciousness is who they are at a cellular level. It’s who they are inside and unless you change that, it doesn’t matter what changes in their external circumstances, they’ll go back to where they’ve always been.

One of the things I love to do is to help people to create a prosperity consciousness, to help them change from the inside out, because, for me, while I knew I wanted to be rich, while I knew I wanted to be a millionaire, it hit home for me very clearly one day.

My daughter had spent the day with my mom and dad. She said to me, ”It was scary in the car with Pop today.” I was thinking, Oh no. My dad is an OK driver. I know the car is a bit of a bomb, but he’s an OK driver. So I said to her, “Darling, why? What happened?”

She said, “We got to the top of Buderim (we live on Buderim Mountain) and he turned the car off and rolled all the way down the hill.” I suddenly remembered he does that to save on gas. He would always turn the car off on the top of any hill and coast down as far as he possibly could, hoping he’d build up enough speed to get him miles and miles down the road. He does that to save money. But why? Because he has a poverty consciousness.

Then all the things I’d heard as I grew up came back to me. Things like, “It takes money to make money,” and “The rich get richer and the poor get poorer.” I realized that while, at a logical level, I wanted to be wealthy, who I was on the inside was someone who had acquired a poverty consciousness at an early age, and I needed to change that.

That’s another reason why I came up with dozens of different ways to keep my focus on the abundance and prosperity I wanted; I knew that if I kept my focus there, then bit by bit I would transform from the inside out. When you transform the inside, everything on the outside changes.

I: You were filmed by the team of the mega phenomenon, “The Secret,” which is all about the Law of Attraction. What’s the connection between prosperity and the Law of Attraction, and what’s the formula for applying the Law of Attraction?

SF: It was very exciting when I was contacted by Rhonda, who is the producer of “The Secret.” Even before “The Secret” came out, I was in love with the Law of Attraction. I loved the idea that we could focus on what we want and bring it into our world, because I was always of the understanding that you work hard, make money, save money, and invest money, and that’s how it’s done.

To me that’s so boring and so hard, and so discovering that there is such a thing as the Law of Attraction, and that you can use it in any area of your life, was life-changing. What I decided very early on—when I cracked the code and actually began attracting prosperity and abundance—was that I wanted to share with other people how to do the same thing, because I myself was no one special.

I mean, I know we’re all special, but I’m just like everyone else. I was a struggling mom trying to raise her two kids on her own and getting further and further in debt and really getting despondent about where my life was heading. But I changed it. I turned it all around by using the Law of Attraction—by focusing on the abundance and prosperity I wanted.

It was only ten years ago that I was $100,000 in debt and struggling, and here I am now. I live in a multimillion dollar home, I have beautiful acreage, I’ve got my own spring-fed dam with kangaroos.
lying around it, and I’ve been able to experience some amazing things with my kids. We’ve been to Africa and watched the wildebeest migrate across the Serengeti plain. We went to Peru and we trekked the Inca trail to Machu Picchu. We swam with the dolphins in Hawaii and took a helicopter ride around where they filmed Jurassic Park. I’m very much into experiences. I don’t buy flashy cars and jewelry—not that there’s anything wrong with that—but that’s my choice, and where I am now in life gives me the freedom to have those experiences.

For me, and for the people that I teach, it’s all about changing your mind-set. It’s about creating that millionaire mind-set and then using the Law of Attraction to attract to you what it is you want, all while keeping it fun, easy, and simple, because the Universe is there waiting to give you everything your heart desires. The only reason you don’t get it is because you don’t have a belief that you can get it, and because you are continually blocking it. But if you just open yourself up to receive and believe it can happen, then absolutely anything can happen.

The Law of Attraction is very powerful, and my focus has always been helping people to understand how to use the Law of Attraction to create that prosperity simply by focusing on what you want, by talking about what you want, and by keeping your mind-set, your vibration, and your energy on what it is you want, rather than what you don’t want.

I: Could you talk more about creating a space for prosperity?

SF: People need to understand that the Universe is all about abundance, and the Universe hates a vacuum. So where there’s a space, it has to be filled. One of the really simple things you can do can actually take place in your home; I don’t mean your whole home in one weekend, because that will drive you insane, but choose a room in your house where you’ll begin. In that room, choose a cupboard, and in that cupboard choose a drawer, and in that drawer, start to clear out the clutter.

When you have clutter in your life—even though you may not realize it because you have gotten used to it—that clutter actually blocks the flow of energy. And money is simply that—a flow. It flows in, it flows out. If your life is filled with clutter, if your mind is filled with clutter, you’re blocking the flow.

Let’s say you need more clothes. If you were to spring clean your wardrobe and get rid of everything you don’t want—whether you give it to charity, sell it at a yard sale, donate it, or give it to friends—you would be surprised at what would occur in the ensuing months that would allow you to replenish your wardrobe, whether it’s more money coming to you so you can buy things, or whether somebody gives you something that you’ve always wanted and it’s your size—you’d be astounded.

That same principle can be applied to everything in your life. If you create a vacuum by clearing the clutter, the Universe is able to fill it; but while you’re stagnated, nothing can come.

Think about a beautiful, crystal clear flowing stream. It flows in and flows out. Everything is easy. Now think about a pond that’s green and stagnant and smelly. Think about the energy, the area, and the environment in your life. Do you have a lovely flowing stream that allows things to flow to you, or are you that stagnant pond? If you are the pond, you need to get in there and declutter.

I: You’ve built a million-dollar business around what you love. Tell us how that evolved, and perhaps share some tips for our readers who either have their own business, or are thinking of starting one.

SF: Business, together with the Law of Attraction, is the most magical thing. For me I always thought, as I said previously, that I needed to work hard, create a plan, stick to the plan, etc. But I could never do that because I’m not a planning type of person.

I decided, I want to be a millionaire. That is my destiny. It’s going to happen no matter what. I was thinking this while I was $100,000 in debt and on welfare, so it was probably a bit of a laugh at the time, but I truly wanted to be a millionaire.
I decided very early on to find people whose footsteps I could follow. I wanted to find mentors, and if that meant getting on a plane and going to see them at a seminar or a live event, I would do it. If it meant purchasing someone’s book, going through their home study course, listening to an audio teaching, or getting on a live teleseminar, I did whatever I could to tap into the minds of people who had created the success I wanted.

I actually had a surf wear company; I designed and manufactured swimwear. But as the business grew, the more debt I got into. I closed the doors on that, discovered the personal industry, started marketing a course, and made a lot of money, but I was still struggling.

In the end, that business folded, but then I found coaching. I went through the training and became a coach, and decided very early on that, instead of being a general life coach, I wanted to focus on coaching people around where I’ve had some success, and that was around prosperity. Although I wasn’t a millionaire, I had discovered that if you focus on what you want, you’ll create it.

I started coaching people who had less than I had, teaching them how to focus on prosperity and create success, and it grew from there. At that point I started to think, I should turn this information into a book. So I did, and I made it a best seller. I also created mentoring and coaching programs.

Even before all of that, at one stage I had decided again, I want to be millionaire. I want to come up with a million-dollar idea. I woke up one morning with the words wildly wealthy women in my head. Without even thinking, I jumped online and registered the domain name wildly wealthy women.

Then, a couple of months later, I said to my business partner, who was marketing a home study course on real estate with me, “You know what? I think we should do something with this name. We should put together a program specifically for women that helps them create prosperity and success—something that helps them work with their mind-set as well as offering them practical strategies.” So we moved forward and launched that program, and within three months over 650 women joined. We made close to two million dollars from what started as just an idea.

My main theme when I teach people, when I mentor them, when I coach them, is, “Don’t think you have to have all your ducks in a row, and everything perfect, before you get started with an idea.” Some people prefer to do it that way. Some people are very methodical in their approach, and they need those step-by-step, practical plans all laid out. The rest of us aren’t like that, and if we were forced to do it that way, we would get so bogged down that we’d never move ahead with an idea.

I tend to attract people to my products, programs, and mentoring who are like me, who just want to come up with an idea and run with it. What I teach people to do is to fix it up as you go along. Tweak it and perfect it and make it better as you go.

The thing I love about the Internet is that you can come up with an idea, put it on the Internet, and begin to market it. If you decide that you want things to be different, you can change your Web site in an instant. Change the price. Change the services you offer. It’s instantaneous.

Previously, if you launched a business and put out a brochure, those brochures that you spent a fortune printing and getting out to the world were out there forever. To make changes meant you had to reprint, change your listing in the yellow pages—all of that practical stuff that would bog you down.

These days you can run with an idea very easily if you learn how to use the Internet, which is another thing I love to teach people. You can absolutely take an idea and start making money quickly and easily, and then tweak and improve as you go along.

I’m teach people how to use their passion to create a business, because if you’re in a business that’s not your passion, then you’re really just in a job—you’re in something that you, day in and day out, are not really enjoying, just because you’re making money. I’ve taken my passion, the Law of
Attraction, and I've niched it down to create prosperity, business, and success.

Imagine taking your passion, whatever that happens to be, and learning how to make money from it; your life will become so much fun. You'll feel like you never have to work another day in your life.

I: What is your definition of success?

SF: My own personal definition of success is being able to do the things you want to do when you want to do them without having to check the bank balance first. For instance, I live in a beautiful place on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, Australia. I got up this morning and I went for a walk along the beach, and then I came back and I checked a couple of emails, and now I'm sharing with you, hopefully getting people really inspired and excited about their ability to create prosperity in their life. I get to do what I love on a day-to-day basis. To me, that's success. If people can create that in their own life, they will have achieved their own success too.

I: I understand you have a free gift for our readers. How do they access that?

SF: We want to give readers what we call our Prosperity Package. It's valued at about $375, but it's totally free. They'll get a millionaire mind-set audio guided visualization. It's about a 45-minute audio that helps people move into a very prosperous vibration. They can also take part in the Millionaire Money Game, which is a fabulous six-week email course that helps you expand your prosperity consciousness. We're also giving them another 40-minute audio, "Affirmations To Your Abundance," which helps you to create prosperity and attract the riches, abundance, and wealth you desire.

Readers can go to www.wildlywealthy.com/bonus and submit their name and email, and they'll have instant access to those audios and that game. We hope to get them into a place of really changing who they are at a cellular level, from the inside out, so that they naturally attract more abundance and prosperity into their life rather than chasing after it.

I: Do you have any parting words of inspiration you’d like to leave our readers with today?

SF: I want people to understand that if I can go from welfare to millionaire, anyone can. I dropped out of school in grade 11. I didn't have any contacts, anyone backing me financially, a great skill, or any great knowledge. But I did have a burning desire to create a life filled with abundance and prosperity, and I never gave up. I persisted. I thought, If this is going to work for one person, if Universal laws are Universal, meaning they work for everyone, then I am never going to give up. I'm going to keep going until this works.

I had to keep going for quite a while, but once I cracked it, I cracked it big time. Find a mentor, find people that you really align with, that you feel connected to, and learn from them, and then apply what you learn and create that millionaire mind-set. Have that belief in yourself, keep going, persist, and you can absolutely create the life of your dreams.
is a recognized expert in the creation and maintenance of virtual communities. Viktor is an Internet architect and entrepreneur responsible for pioneering multiple technologies in the computer industry and on the Web, including multiuser roundtable chats, artificial intelligence based e-commerce systems, viral marketing services, video magazines, real time credit card content publishing, online book selling, and copy protection systems.

His thirty years of programming and project leadership experience began with writing the world’s consumer grade copy protection software program for the Apple II while still a teenager.

I: What problem have you devoted your life to trying to solve?

VG: Simply stated, we all are aware that the planet is undergoing changes, and that we’re probably being a very wasteful society. A lot of people are not fully aware of information overload and digital waste.

Google is trying to organize the world’s information, but has anyone really asked whether this information is worthy of being organized? I would say that most of it would be better off deleted than archived, or at least cleaned up.

The problem that I’m focusing on is helping people optimize and increase the value of their Web site so that they provide a greater value to their community. There’s a lot of junk out there on the Internet, and as a mentor of mine once said, “We’re cleaning up the Web one Web site at a time.”

I have been focusing on information overload and waste for the past fifteen years—building software and systems that streamline the process and make it easy for you to manage your content in a way that is a pleasure for people to understand what it is you’re trying to communicate.

I: Why should people listen to your Internet advice?

VG: I’ve been around for a really long time. I started off doing search engine work for ad agencies in New York back in the 90s when search engines first came out. Before that, I was working on the MSN project, Microsoft Network, in 1994. It’s always an exciting moment when you get a personal invitation from Bill Gates and his staff to join in an educational software summit. Then they unveiled this amazing technology.

Go back in time and think about what the world was
like in 1994. The Internet was not really prevalent. We had AOL, which was really the big kid on the block, and there were a few other online services around, and Microsoft was just about to launch Windows 95 and a new online service for it.

Microsoft asked me to produce live events for them around the human potential arena. I brought in people like Jack Canfield and Deepak Chopra. It was really funny working with Microsoft PR because they would say, “Viktor, why do you keep bringing this Indian guy on our show? He seems to bring in thousands of people, but we’ve never heard of him.”

We would run chat rooms back in that day, and I just want to share a little story with you about the global brain. Many people talk about the global brain. One of my colleagues and mentors, Peter Russell, wrote a book called *The Global Brain*, but this was really the first time that we actually saw the global brain in action. Let me clarify that.

What happened with Deepak Chopra is that we would bring in a live event; I had Deepak on the phone and a typist would transcribe his interview in real time—she typed 160 words per minute. I would interview him, and whatever he said would be typed into the chat box, and then we had about 2,000 to 3,000 simultaneous connections going and people would ask questions. I had about ten volunteer hosts that would queue up the relevant questions for me, and then I would ask those in my interview with Deepak.

It was really exciting, it really worked, and it generated amazing online content. But here’s the amazing thing about the global mind: What I observed happening is that I would think of a question I wanted to ask and within a few seconds, someone from the audience would ask the same question I had been thinking—it was haunting. It was almost as if the interview ran itself.

We tried this with other interviewees when we had maybe 500 or 1,000 people connected and that phenomenon did not occur. But as soon as we crossed the threshold of 2,000 people simultaneously connected, we would see this happen over and over again.

In many cases, the environment we had at MSN was much more of a connected community than we have today with things like Facebook and Twitter. All of these things are great—Facebook and Twitter are fantastic technologies—but they’re too big. There are too many people on them and there are too many distractions that occur.

One of the things that was happening in the online world back in the 90s is that we could actually see friendships forming. When you had a user ID, that was it. You could never change it. In today’s Internet world, you could have a zillion Web sites with a zillion different identities. No one really knows you and, hence, no one can really trust you.

We started to build profiles and relationships with the people who were in this online community at MSN, and the same people kept coming back; people held their own chat rooms after an event. One of my dear friends, Andy, runs a computer store in Berkeley, California, and at that time he had a chat room called “Andy’s Torture Chamber.” You could enter that chat room and he would have a group of people who would do nothing but insult you. It was a hoot! You could always count on having a good time.

Of course we experienced other things through these connections. We had several online weddings. We even connected with someone who was going to commit suicide and, because our hosts were there in the middle of the night, they were able to talk him out of it. These were the kinds of things that took place in that virtual community. We had a fairly stable community of about fifty thousand to sixty thousand registered users; it was an amazing group of folks.

It ended in 1997 when MSN moved to the Internet, but I’ll tell you, everything that I’ve done since then has been trying to re-create the ability to bring such a mass of common-minded people together in one place at one time. It’s unfortunate that people who are on the Internet today don’t experience that kind of community. I feel really grateful for having been there in those early days.

We once conducted an interview with the late Timothy Leary, and that’s when we had the roundtable
that you mentioned in my bio. In the roundtable event, we created a contest—almost like American Idol today—where we had two hundred to three hundred people asking Timothy questions. He had finished writing a book about cyberspace. I believe the question was, “What is cyberspace?” The people who came up with the most compelling, intellectual answers were allowed to remain in the roundtable discussion. Then the final twelve winners went on to engage in an interactive dialogue with Tim Leary live and in person. It was a pretty amazing event.

That’s where I got my start. I have something valuable to teach and to share because I was around before the Internet became prominent; I witnessed the beginnings of the Internet, and I also know a lot of the people who are the pioneers of this new Internet revolution that has come upon us. I can offer a fresh perspective that can only come from years of experience.

Most basic users who are on the Internet today have probably entered the fold within the last five years. There are still people out there, as hard as it is to believe, who don’t even have Web sites today. I think what we’re seeing, though, is a revolution when it comes to mobile technology. Now that the Internet is no longer a fringe thing, it has become a mainstream communications global technology, and the next big evolution of that is what we’re seeing right now—a connected society where you’re always on and you’re always connected.

We are entering an era where there’s so much information coming at us so fast that we don’t know how to process it all. When you suddenly receive a million e-mails, to the point where you don’t even want to check your e-mail anymore, that’s when you need a new kind of technology to process your information. There is something called intelligent agents, which we can cover in another interview.

**I:** Why did you create Earthgrid? What are its origins? Why the name? And what is a grid?

**VG:** Earthgrid was born on December 2, 1997. I was designing a search engine for things that change all the time. Before that, I was doing consulting with a variety of clients, including the ad agency that was handling the online activity for the great author Tom Clancy.

They had a serious problem, so they called me up and said, “All of these fan clubs have sprouted up about our client, Tom Clancy, but the problem is that when you do an Internet search for Tom Clancy, you don’t get Tom Clancy, you get all this other stuff, and most of it is just not meeting his quality criteria. Is there something you can do about it?”

We started working on that, and what I realized was that the positioning of information and what people search for changes all the time. For example, how many times have you searched on Google for something, only to find that the events that are popping up have already happened? In fact, some may have even happened two or three years ago, but it’s still on the Internet.

What I then realized was that we needed a search engine for time-sensitive information. We needed a way to get information to people for events, concerts, parties, social meetings, or even a local Chamber of Commerce meeting, and then, once it was over, that information would be gone.

There’s no need to keep track of the information that’s outdated and old. What starts to happen is you get overloaded. If 99% of the Web is comprised of information that is all in the past, then you omit the present and the future altogether.

My team started working on a tool to be able to message people to inform them of upcoming events, workshops, and seminars, and then create a search engine around that. We encountered a few
problems, the biggest one being e-mail. E-mail was growing in volume and spam was rising. The latest statistics at that time were suggesting that 88% of all e-mail was spam. Therefore, the probability of getting someone’s attention was very minimal; we needed something else to be able to interact with people, so we started developing a mobile text messaging system. Keep in mind, this was probably ten years ago, and phones back then were large, bulky, and the screen was only about an inch wide. That was the mobile text messaging system that we had.

Right around 2003 we ran a test for a group in Los Angeles that was putting on a concert in the Hollywood Bowl. We put out a text blast that said, “Hollywood Bowl event planning committee meeting 6:00 PM,” and then we included a restaurant address with the words, “Free food.” Thirty-five people out a hundred showed up with one-hour notice. I guess it was the free food!

You couldn’t even conceive of doing that on e-mail. You’d have to send people two or three e-mails several days before an event. This was an emergency meeting. It worked perfectly in LA because everyone was sitting in their car in rush hour traffic anyway, so to get to Santa Monica and go to this fancy restaurant, they thought, Maybe I’ll just get off the freeway.

We’re going to be a connected society, but we’re going to have to start trusting our sources much more. The reason that message worked was because the source that sent it out was a trusted source. The recipients knew they weren’t being sold discount life insurance on their phone—they knew it came from a person they knew and trusted, who had an identity, and had built a reputation.

"We created Earthgrid to solve a problem that I saw on the horizon: We would be soon inundated with information we wouldn’t be able to process and organize, and the net effect of that would be immunity.”

We created Earthgrid to solve a problem that I saw on the horizon: We would be soon inundated with information we wouldn’t be able to process and organize, and the net effect of that would be immunity. Immunity, in this context, means that you can send out an announcement, and it can be really great, but people are so immune that they won’t even notice it. By the time they do notice it, it’s already too late. You can actually see this starting to happen with information technology today.

There are several great “seeds” that the planet gives to various people simultaneously around the globe. For instance, Myspace was conceived of in 1996, and Facebook was conceived of in 1997, according to public record. Earthgrid was also conceived of in 1997. We were all coming up with this idea at the same time, and I can't say I take full credit for it. I would say it's really the planet's concept. Several of us just thought of it at the same time.

It works in the same way as the Deepak Chopra interview that I referred to earlier. These seeds are planted in various people around the planet, and then it’s almost like you’re compelled by some invisible force. People ask me, “Why are you doing this?” It’s as though I have to do this.

It brings to mind a spiritual story of Francis of Assisi. He had to build a church one brick at a time. He said, “God told me to build this church, and this is where I’m going to build it.” Pretty soon, he got everyone in the community to help him add bricks to the structure. That’s how it works in every area; when something’s time has come, people sense it, and everyone starts to work on it.

What’s interesting is that we were all working on different aspects of this technology. Myspace, hands down, took the music industry by storm. They were focusing on multimedia and visuals and really kitsch graphics. Facebook focused on the social aspects of college initially and expanded from there to other social groups.

At Earthgrid we were focusing on the business work group. Let me qualify what a business work group is. Why we call it a grid is inspired by Buckminster Fuller, who was one of the great thinkers of the twentieth century. He talked about geodesic grids as a way of exploring what he called “the geometry of consciousness.”
He said that the minimum system is made up of four events. You could also think of it in reference to a minimum team being made up of four people. When I was hanging out at Microsoft I started noticing that four-man teams were the critical group that you wanted to get together. As an example, when I was living in Hawaii, I was conducting community meetings. About eighty or ninety people showed up, and I would follow a process I called community procedure where I would create four-man teams. Then we would generate community projects like gardening or starting a community farm or a community center.

Each team of four would focus on one project. We started seeing that we needed a system for these teams to communicate with each other in a nondistracting way. Nondistracting also implies one of the core concepts of Earthgrid, which is the destructive principle. The destructive principle basically states that when an idea is outdated and no longer viable, it should be eliminated to make space for a current idea to burst forth.

What happened was that people would share ideas, write messages to each other, collaborate on concepts, and then come up with a statement. We called this statement an announcement, and when this announcement was two or three sentences in length, and as soon as all four people on the team agreed with it, magic happened. The project that they created together took on a life of its own. It gained support from other members of a larger community, and it just started to take off.

The process of holding those community seminars and workshops among the local community participants is what we model at Earthgrid today. Let me explain a few distinctions: I talk about Earthgrid, but there are really three Earthgrids. It’s easy to remember the difference between them:

1) www.earthgrid.com is about cloud computing, onscreen editing, state-of-the-art Web sites, and commercial Web sites. We realized that before these groups could express what they were doing in the world, they needed a Web site to memorialize their project so that it would get noticed by everyone else.

2) www.earthgrid.net was the mechanism by which they would bring all of their ideas into the fold, and that has always been free. My goal is for it to remain free. Basically, they’re free mini Web sites, very much like Myspace but without all of the graphics and animation. It’s really for business. It’s a way to say, “Here’s my project, here’s what I do, here’s what I’m all about, and here’s how you can connect with me.” That’s the essential purpose of these Web sites. We’ve had tens of thousands of people create free Web sites. It’s a way of giving back to the community.

Inside of Earthgrid.net there is also a search engine to help members find each other. Once connected, there are messaging tools that the work groups can use to communicate with each other. We’ve recently been working on developing the www.earthgrid.net mobile platform so that these groups can use their cell phones to quickly send messages to each other.

Whenever you send an SMS on your cell phone, you have to look up that person’s contact information in your phone. Oftentimes, you get distracted during the process; you see other contacts, and you may not even get the message sent.

The mobile system we built is automated, and everyone is responsible for maintaining their own profile, which links their mobile number, e-mail, bio, and Web sites to their Earthgrid username. As I discussed earlier in the MSN example, this was the key to building trust in the community. And using this messaging system allows everyone to easily keep in contact by messaging via usernames versus numbers, with everyone in your workgroup at your fingertips.

If you were to switch carriers or change your number, simply log in, change your profile, and the new information replaces the old. That service is totally free. You can find out more at www.earthgrid.net.

3) www.earthgrid.org is the third element. It is dear to my heart because it involves working with charitable and humanitarian organizations. We are focusing on doing things that are good for the
planet, but even more so for the people residing on the planet. A lot of people say, “We have to save the earth.” I say, “The earth is just fine. What we have to do is listen to what the earth is telling us, and we need to save ourselves.”

A number of charitable and humanitarian groups are doing great things around the world, but they don’t always have the best looking Web sites. So we have created news feeds over at www.earthgrid.org that are growing in size and scope. There are also links to thousands of articles on Internet marketing at www.earthgrid.org.

Between these three Web sites, you pretty much have everything you need to get involved, or as we say, “Get on the grid.” It’s an ambitious project. I can’t really know where it’s going to go, but I’ll tell you, it’s certainly accelerating. We’ve been at it a long time—fourteen years—and we’re going to keep at it for a long time to come.

I: What advice do you have for our readers who have Web sites and want to improve their conversion rate, SEO ranking, or sales?

VG: Let me share a bit about Web site optimization. The first principle I want talk about is conversion rate. There are a lot of coaches who help people come up with better language, better copy, better ways of positioning themselves in the business, etc. I help you increase your conversion rate.

Let me explain. One of my clients recently had an e-mail campaign with about 25,000 names on the list, but he had some challenges. When he first sent out to that list, he had so many spam complaints that the ISP complained to us saying, “You’re sending out too many e-mails that people don’t want.”

We started cleaning up the list and we refined the language of it. We took what was an abysmal failure and, by the time I was done with it, we produced a 35% open rate on that e-mail. It completely sold out his event. That’s what happens when you start to apply some of these principles.

The first thing you need to do is to come up with an irresistible offer. The irresistible offer has to seem like you’re not really selling but providing information. In the case I just mentioned, we started a buzz through other means, such as social networking or telephone, in the LA community that people were expecting this offer but, for some reason, it wasn’t getting to them. They were all eagerly anticipating the offer letter, so when we finally got that e-mail out, we had an audience that was hungry for it, and they responded powerfully to it. Using a word-of-mouth campaign prior to sending out the actual e-mail offer is an amazing strategy for increasing your conversion rate.

I tell this to all of my clients: Remember, e-mail is to inform, NOT to sell—avoid sales language in your e-mails and instead, put it on the Web page that the e-mail leads people to.

Next, the e-mail has to lead somewhere. It should only contain one link. You can repeat that link several times, but don’t include several links. The best format we’ve found for e-mail marketing is to put the link at the top of the page, then place a large graphic, a little bit of text, and then repeat the link at the bottom. When you click on the link in the e-mail, it takes you to a specially designed Web page that explains your irresistible offer.

There is a principle called “above the fold.” Above the fold means before people scroll. If you go to Earthgrid, click on support, and go to the newsletter, there are about seven other strategies that explain this principle in more detail. There is a chart and a tool that we use to monitor people’s mouse movements when they visit a Web site. Research shows that placing your mouse and following
Viktor Grant continued . . .

the visitor’s brain is a great way to tell if people are reading or not reading, where they’re going or where they’re not going.

After thousands of studies, it was discovered that the sweet spot is exactly 550 pixels from the top of the screen. If you go to www.earthgrid.com, you’ll see there is a Sign Up Now! Button located exactly 550 pixels from the top of the screen. You will increase your conversion rate immensely if you just put a button there.

People like clicking on pictures; they don’t like clicking on text. This is a recent development. Some of the most powerful Web sites are loaded with pictures that are clickable. When you go our Web site, you see the Sign Up Now! button. You’ll see that it is beveled, it has a shadow on it, and it has an exclamation point. There’s no question that we want you to click there.

Once visitors to your site click that button, you need to present them with an irresistible offer. Here’s the catch though: Many people have junk e-mail addresses. When people come to your Web site, you have to build a mailing list. How many times have you gone to a Web site and been asked to submit your name and e-mail address for a free report? I have a special e-mail address I use where all my free reports go. Why? Because I like sitting down and reading all my free reports all at once. I don’t want free report e-mails interjecting with my business mail because it’s too distracting.

I’m not the only person who is doing this. Lots of people have Gmail accounts, Yahoo accounts—how many e-mail addresses do you have?

I: About five or six. And I have a junk e-mail too.

VG: Exactly. If you’re wanting to build an e-mail list with a name and e-mail address, how would you get people to give their real address?

That brings me to another tip: Have a links page. If you go to our links page at www.earthgrid.com, you’ll see that there’s a form. This form is technology that we pioneered. It asks you for your Web site, your URL, your descriptive text, and for your name and e-mail addresses so we can contact you to follow up and exchange links with you.

At the last count, we have registered over eight thousand Web sites to exchange links with Earthgrid just by filling out the form. We also noticed that we get the webmaster’s name and e-mail address this way. And these are not necessarily small companies. We’ve had webmasters for New York Times best-selling authors fill out this form, and now we have the direct e-mail address of the person responsible for the Web sites of a lot of the New York Times best-selling authors. If we ever want to set up an interview, we now have their correct contact information.

You can actually think of Google, or any other search engine, as a giant link exchange. All you’re doing is exchanging your Web site for a link from Google back to your Web site that Google organizes according to its rules and regulations. Back in the early days people used to have links pages. Essentially what they had was their own search engine or their own directory.

Finally, and this probably the biggest secret for anyone to understand about SEO, go to www.dmoz.org and take a look at that Web site. A lot of people ask, “How do I get in the Google Directory?” Guess what? Google lifts its data from www.dmoz.org. Go to www.dmoz.org and fill out that form. They have specific rules, and let me explain a few things about this. I think everyone today should have at least three Web sites, and I’m going to give you the exact delineations of these three Web sites.

Three Web Sites You Need to Have

1) An Authority Site: This site establishes you as the authority in your particular area of interest.
2) **A Mini Site:** This site is for your primary product or service. You can link to this site from your authority site.

3) **An Article or Editorial Site:** This site provides information, content, tools, articles you’ve written, etc. This is the content-rich site you want to submit to [www.dmoz.org](http://www.dmoz.org). Then you want to make sure that there are links from this site to your other two sites.

All three of these sites should be on different servers with different IP addresses. If they’re all on the same server with the same IP address, the search engines will see them as part of the same site and will not give you the reciprocal link credit. That is why you need to have three separate Web sites.

Search engines are not evil creatures out to prevent you from getting in the Top 10 as many people believe. They’re trying to provide the most relevant information around a keyword and offer freedom to explore information that is of general interest to the public.

In a perfect world, the ads on the right-hand side are reserved for commercial businesses, and those business should be paying for that listing on the right-hand side. They don’t really have a right to list themselves in the main body of search results unless they are providing information that helps people in regards to general things, such as establishing themselves as experts in their field. Those are the kinds of Web sites that generally end up in the Top 10.

While a lot of people are trying to get Top 10 placement for their Web site, they’re not, because they think that search engines are only computerized—they’re not. They have tens of thousands of employees or volunteers who look at Web sites all day long and rate and number them.

One strategy I like to use with clients when doing SEO is to trigger an audit of their Web site by doing things that alert the search engines to want to see if there is someone trying to beat the system. Then, when the individuals behind those search engines visit your Web site and say, “Oh my—this is just the most beautiful Web site! It’s better than the one we currently represent . . .” then bam! You’re on the first page!

**I:** Excellent. We could not publish this magazine or run any of our sites without Earthgrid! Do you have a special offer for our readers?

**VG:** Certainly. Simply go to the go to [www.earthgrid.com](http://www.earthgrid.com) and click Sign-Up Now!

When you sign up for our new Earthgrid PowerSites cloud web design tool, we have a special offer that is exclusive to the readers of *Insights*. Call us and we’ll explain it to you.

Now, I’d like to close by saying to everyone that I hope you’ll make the personal and professional investment of time and money to upgrade your Web site by applying the strategies I’ve outlined in this interview. When you do this, not only will you be cleaning up digital waste, you’ll also be making it easier on Web site visitors to give you money for your services by having a Web site that makes sense and looks great!

You can find more information about that at [www.earthgrid.com](http://www.earthgrid.com). Mention “GetEI” when contacting Earthgrid for your exclusive GetEI upgrade.
Tsufit

is the author of the hot new book, *Step Into the Spotlight: A Guide To Getting Noticed*. Tsufit was recently featured in *Entrepreneur* magazine and has been described by *The Toronto Star* as, “A starburst of energy . . . bright, bubbly, and upbeat,” and by *Publisher’s Weekly* as, “A coaching dynamo.” Her book, *Step Into the Spotlight*, has been endorsed by Tom Peters, Jay Conrad Levinson, Jack Trout, and BNI founder Dr. Ivan Misner.

A singer, television actress, comedienne, and the subject of hundreds of featured newspaper articles and television and radio appearances, Tsufit has appeared doing standup comedy in nightclubs and on national TV and has appeared on television and film commercials internationally.

Tsufit coaches entrepreneurs, business owners, authors, speakers, and CEOs to catapult their brands and themselves into a starring role. She teaches her clients to get seen, get heard, and get noticed.

I: What do you mean when you say, “All business is show business”?

T: Show business is the business of telling stories and selling stories, and show business also understands that it can't exist without an audience. The most valuable asset for anyone in show business is to possess star qualities, and this is true for any business, for any entrepreneur, but not all entrepreneurs got the memo.

It’s crowded and noisy out there in the marketplace. It’s as though you’re stuck on channel 632. Your prospects have a TV remote, and they’re flipping through the channels to see what’s on. They don’t start at channel 632, and you can’t just hope they’ll find you.

You have to figure out how to attract and hold your audience’s attention, how to develop box office appeal, that’s what marketing is all about. It’s not enough to bake a better bagel, which I call the “bake it and they will come” theory. You have to know how to get them lined up around the corner for those bagels.

I: Tell us a little bit about your background, why you chose this arena for your life’s work, and why you decided to write your book, *Step Into the Spotlight*.

T: I wanted to be on stage since I was a kid, but that
wasn’t very practical. So I ended up becoming lawyer—a downtown litigation lawyer, Dean’s list, the whole thing—until one day I had that Peggy Lee moment, an “Is that all there is?” moment. I decided it was finally my turn, and I left law for the limelight.

I left law to be a singer, an actress, a comedienne. I had just had four baby daughters in four years, and I decided to follow my dream and become an actress. I got a few roles, I started to promote and publicize myself as an actress, and I put out a music CD.

I received a lot of publicity, and pretty soon the suits came calling; businesspeople, professionals, and entrepreneurs were asking how I managed to get all of that publicity without a business degree, without a background in publicity or marketing, or any of those things. I started coaching business people on how to get noticed and get known, and then, before I knew it, I started to be invited to be the keynote speaker at business conferences.

I was thinking, Why me? They’ve got all the experience. They’ve got MBAs and PhDs. But I realized that I understood something that they didn’t. It was kind of an epiphany. I realized that all business is show business. The reason I was succeeding is because I knew how to hold an audience’s attention. Now I show businesses how to use show business to get business.

When I started coaching people to do this, my coaching fee started to increase and increase, and before I knew it, my hourly rate was higher than it had been as a lawyer and higher than it is for most lawyers. People started asking me, “Can’t you write a book?” because not everyone could afford my fee.

So I wrote Step Into the Spotlight: A Guide To Getting Noticed. That way, people around the world can read it, and they don’t have to necessarily access me directly.

I: Can you share some important lessons businesses can learn from the world of show business?

T: There are so many things they can learn. Here are just a few:

Show Business Lessons for the Business World

#1: The Three D’s of Marketing
Don’t bore them. Don’t bore them. For God’s sake, don’t bore them! You can’t be afraid to have fun. As David Ogilvie used to say, “You can’t bore people into buying.”

#2: Choose a Character
Choose a persona before you walk onto the stage. When you go to a movie, the actor doesn’t just make up his role on the spot. At a stage show, the actor doesn’t make up his role while standing on stage; he knows ahead of time what part he’s playing.

I find that businesses don’t usually know what part they’re playing. Someone is a coach or an accountant, but they don’t really carve out a specific role within that.

#3: Never Step Onto the Stage With a Lousy Script
I go to so many conferences where I hear so many boring speakers. Whether you’re the keynote speaker or if you only have 30 seconds for your intro, you have a chance to really show what you do. If you bring a little show business into it, you’ll get noticed.

#4: Give a Great Performance
A Harvard study showed that what you say only accounts for about 7% of the impression you make on your audience. Much of the rest is based on how you say it, so you have to learn how to really command an audience’s attention. Some people say that’s how Obama got into office—he knows how to hold an audience’s attention.

#5: Attract Your Audience—Don’t Chase Them
I have never once received a cold call from Madonna.
#6: There Is No Show Without An Audience
If you put on a play and there’s nobody in the audience, there’s no show. It’s the same in business, but people don’t realize that. People think, OK, I studied for 95 years, I became an accountant or a lawyer or whatever, and now I’m an expert. My definition of an expert is not someone who knows what he knows, but someone who is known for knowing what he knows. You have to learn how to become spotlightworthy and how to attract an audience.

#7: Personality Matters
This is something we can learn from American Idol; I don’t know if you saw it a few years back, but in one of the competitions Taylor Hicks was competing against Katherine McPhee in the final two. Katherine McPhee is beautiful, but she’s dime-a-dozen beautiful. She has a beautiful voice, but it’s a dime-a-dozen beautiful voice. Taylor Hicks was 20-something with gray hair and tons of personality. He probably did not have as good a voice as Katherine, but he won because he was more entertaining and he had more personality. He even named his fan club.

I: Isn't it enough just to be good at what you do? Isn't that enough to get you business?
T: Yes, sure, if you live in a town with a population of 413 people and you’re the only accountant. But if you move to a bustling metropolis of maybe 4,013 people where there are seven accountants, all of a sudden people have a choice. Which one will they choose? They all look the same. That’s when it really becomes important to stand out. It’s not enough to be good. How will people know you’re good?

I: How do you become your own casting director?
T: When I was a kid I used to audition for shows. Those of us who had auditioned would be thrilled when we saw the cast list and saw what roles we got. We’d be thrilled if we got a great role and disappointed if we didn’t get a great role.

In business you don’t have to audition. You get to be your own casting director. You get to choose your role in the marketplace, and you never have to audition for business again. You can decide: Do you want to be Batman or Robin? (By the way, you know Robin is never going to get his own show, so you might as well choose Batman.) You also get to choose your specific role in the marketplace.

One of the most brilliant examples of this is the Mac versus PC spots. You can watch them on YouTube, or I have them on my blog as well at www.spotlightblog.com. Apple has characterized a computer, which is usually just a gray box sitting under your desk, as a person, a character, a persona. Mac is wearing a black T-shirt. He’s kind of cool. He’s youthful. He’s artistic. PC is this kind of Charlie Brown looking guy bumbling in a brown suit. He’s fussy and complicated and uncomfortable in his own skin.

Using this technique, Apple was able to not only position themselves to be their own casting director and cast themselves in the role as the cool computer company, but they were also able to position their opponent as being bumbling. That’s an example of what you can do when you become your own casting director.

I: What is the most common mistake entrepreneurs make?
T: There are three common mistakes that entrepreneurs make.

**The first mistake is wearing two hats.** I’ve heard the saying, “I’m here today wearing two hats.” I hate that expression. If you go to a Chamber of Commerce at 7:30 in the morning, that’s what you’re...
going to hear. “I’m here today wearing two hats.” Like, “I’m a rocket scientist, and I make gift baskets on the side.”

What it is, is a lack of focus, because you can't fit two hats on one head. A few years ago McDonald’s started selling pizza. If you were in the mood for pizza, would you throw the gang in the car and head to McDonald’s? No. Nobody would. It was a lack of focus. That’s one mistake—wearing two hats.

**The second mistake is not knowing what they’re really selling.** Even if they’re only focused on selling one thing, it’s usually the wrong thing. They think they’re selling soup when, in reality, they’re selling comfort. They think they’re selling makeup when they’re really selling confidence. Sometimes even the big boys get it wrong.

Quite a few years ago, Coca-Cola got distracted by Pepsi and began thinking they were selling taste. Pepsi did the Pepsi challenge, and everybody said that they liked the taste of Pepsi better than Coke. So Coke made a new drink that people in blind taste tests said they liked better than Pepsi or Coke—they called it New Coke.

The result was the biggest marketing fiasco in history. It bombed. It tanked. They had to pull it off the shelves. Why? Coke forgot what they were really selling. Coke was “the real thing.” Coke was the American Dream in a bottle—that’s what Roger Enrico, former CEO of Pepsi, said about his competitor, Coke. Coke forgot that it was “the real thing.” You’ve got to know what you’re really selling.

**The third mistake is suffering from “professionalitis.”** Accountants, corporate executives, coaches . . . they all look the same, sound the same, and speak the same corporate gobbledygook or coach-speak with phrases like “break through the barriers.” They’re interchangeable. They focus too much on appearing professional and way too little on showing their brand’s personality.

Business has so many rules. In show business, the only rule is you’ve got to break all the rules.

I: What does character development mean, and how can it help you develop your brand?

T: If you were cast in a role in a movie or a TV show, you’d be asking yourself or the director, “What does this character look like? What does this character sound like? What does he say and how does he say it? What is his backstory? What led him to where he is today?”

There’s a joke in theater: The actor asks his director, “What’s my motivation?” The director responds, “To get paid.”

In business, that’s the real answer. There are all kinds of questions that business owners and branding specialists should be asking themselves. You really have to ask yourself, “What is my distinct persona in the marketplace? What is my distinct character?”

For example, Al Pacino and Richard Simmons would never be up for the same part in a movie—never. Can you image Al Pacino sweating to the oldies? No. You’ve got to develop a character.

Henry Winkler played Fonzie on the hit show *Happy Days*. Henry Winkler was supposed to be a bit part, but he added huge amounts of flavor and character. He was originally wearing a cotton jacket. He changed to a black leather jacket. He had this “I’m no choir boy” kind of attitude. All of a sudden it resonated, and Fonzie became such a star that they wanted to rename it *Fonzie’s Happy Days*. He was humble enough to say, “Don’t do that.” It’s the same thing Johnny Cash did with his persona. That’s how it can help you develop a brand.

You also have to pay attention to **continuity** of your brand. For example, Unilever has been accused of lack of continuity in regards to its brand because it sells Dove, which is all about a Campaign For Real Beauty and The Beauty Within, etc. But they’re the same company that sells Slim Fast and Axe, which are totally different brands. You have to make sure there’s some continuity in your brand.
Why are stories important to business?

**T:** Stories are important to business because, when you come right down to it, that’s what people are really buying. They’re buying the story behind your brand. Why else would someone pay four bucks for a cup of coffee at one place, such as Starbucks, when they can buy a cup of coffee at any donut store for a dollar? They can probably make it at home for a quarter.

Why are they paying the extra three bucks? They’re paying for the story. Maybe it makes them feel adventurous. Maybe it makes them forget the pile of paperwork sitting on their desk at home.

It’s the same thing with running shoes. You could probably buy a very similar pair of running shoes as some of the expensive brands for about eight or ten bucks, but some people spend one hundred or two hundred dollars on a pair of running shoes. Why? Because the brand says, “Just do it” or “Go for it.”

What consumers are really buying is the story behind the brand. Seth Godin actually made that point about Puma running shoes. They’re buying the inspiration. They’re buying the feeling that if they wear these running shoes, they’re invincible and can do anything.

The reason stories are so important in business is because prospects are sick of being sold to, so they put up barriers. Stories sneak past the barriers. We’re all sick of being sold to, but if you tell a good story, it creates connection. People listen, they’re entertained, prospects get interested, and they get involved. They sense intimacy and, thus, they don’t feel defensive.

The other thing that is so great about stories is that they differentiate you from your competition. They make you easier to remember. When you go to a networking meeting, entrepreneurs stand up and list what’s so great about them. Even TV commercials list benefits. People don’t remember lists, but they will remember a good story that demonstrates your benefits.

**I:** What are some things to keep in mind when telling stories?

*Paint a picture in your stories. Use words like paintbrushes. Make us see it, make it colorful, and put yourself in the story.*

Tell the truth in your stories. You know how most cough syrup tastes pretty rotten? I don’t know if you have this in the U.S., but in Canada we have a cough syrup called Buckley’s Mixture. It has a great tagline: “It tastes awful, and it works.” How brilliant is that? They were so honest with us by admitting that it tastes awful, so why would they lie to us about the rest? It must work, because they admitted their flaw, they admitted their vulnerability, and they also said that it works. Truth is a very effective marketing tool when you’re telling stories.

During the election race between Obama and McCain, Obama used the technique of naming people like “Joe the plumber.” I recently saw the State of the Union address. He picked out particular people in the audience and used them as examples by referring to them as “so-and-so who drilled a hole to help the miners in Chile get out.”

Instead of just preaching at us, he told individual stories. He named people and described where they work, and now they’re more memorable to us, and he sounds less boring.

**I:** In your book, *Step Into the Spotlight*, you talk about the importance of having a 30-second introduction or infomercial. Is it really possible to attract a new client in just 30 seconds?
T: Yes. Over the eight or nine years I’ve been in business, I’ve attracted almost half of my clients with just a 30-second networking infomercial.

Business people are always saying, “It’s about long-term relationships. You can’t get a client in 30 seconds.” You always hear that, but do you remember Roger Bannister? For years everybody said, “It’s impossible to run a four-minute mile; you can’t do it, your body will explode.” That’s what medicine thought at that time.

But in 1954 Roger Bannister did it. I think another three hundred people had done it within the following year because they understood it could be done.

Let me be your Roger Bannister: if you make your 30-second infomercial or your 30-second intro interesting, you absolutely can attract new clients. It’s a mini show. It’s not a shopping list of information, it’s not a list of features and benefits. You’ve got to wow your audience. Give them a story and make them realize they’re thirsty for what you’re selling. If you do your job well, people will line up when you’re done speaking just to know more.

I: You talk about having a distinct look, and you mentioned Johnny Cash earlier. Can you tell us more about that?

T: There are a lot of country singers out there, but he had a distinct look, a distinct persona. He had a low voice. He and his band all wore black. He had some silly little story about how that was the only thing they had that matched, which is a cute story, but it was probably really because they wanted to look like they were tough guys.

Then he recorded an album. His record company thought he was crazy, but he recorded a live album at Folsom Prison with maximum security inmates. It was a huge hit—At Folsom Prison. Then they recorded another album, At San Quentin.

It was all consistent with his persona, and that’s what entrepreneurs need to do. Business people, nonbusiness people, and even people who want to get noticed in some other way need to develop a persona. It’s all about doing things to create a distinct impression in the marketplace.

I: You suggest using humor, but what if you’re not funny?

T: Humor is not just about telling jokes. Humor is a state of mind. It’s spontaneity, openness, honesty, a recognition of universal truth and common experience. There was a Seinfeld episode in which Jerry had a reservation for a rental car. He showed up to get it and it wasn’t ready for him and he says, “But I have a reservation!” They said, “Yes, but I’m sorry sir, we’re out of those cars.” He says, “Well isn’t the whole point of a reservation that you have the car?”

In another episode he went to a Chinese restaurant and had to wait for half an hour, and the whole episode is about waiting in the lobby. We laugh, not because he’s telling funny jokes, but because we’ve all been there.

There was a movie in the 80s called Punchline with Sally Field and Tom Hanks. Sally played a housewife who paid five hundred dollars to try to buy some jokes for a comedy club, and she
bombed. Tom Hanks’s character tried to teach her the same thing I’m trying to teach entrepreneurs: it’s not about standing there and telling silly little jokes; it’s about telling your story and telling it in such an open, honest way that people recognize their story.

For example, I wrote a song called “Broccoli’s On Sale at Dominion,” which was about my Jewish mother. I had people coming up to me of every nationality—Filipinos, Norwegians, and even a Chinese bass player—saying, “That’s my mother!”

When you create a persona and you use humor, it reaches beyond barriers and it really resonates with people. You don’t have to worry at all about being funny. You don’t want to be goofy. You definitely don’t want to be corny. Witty is always good.

I: Can you give an example of people, brands, or companies that are successfully using show business tactics?

T: I mentioned Mac and Apple, and Steve Jobs really understands the power of stories. There’s also Emeril Lagasse. He was just a regular chef who used so much humor that the first time I saw him, I thought he was a comedian who was a guest on a cooking show. I didn’t realize he was a chef who had a good sense of humor.

Emeril created his own lines, which is another great show business technique—you want to have your own lines. Emeril says, “Kick it up a notch,” or “BAM!” Survivor uses “voting somebody off the island,” and Donald Trump has, “You’re fired!” Having a line that you repeat is a really great show business tactic.

A company in Canada called Roots makes things like clothing and shoes. They understand the celebrity factor. They hang out with celebrities and get them to wear Roots clothing, and then the celebrity factor rubs off on them. That’s another show business tactic.

Kaile Warren understands the power of a good tagline. He was really struggling in the handyman business until he renamed his company Rent-A-Husband and came up with a great tagline: “Tall, dark, and handy.” All of a sudden, now that he has that line, his business is doing really well. I think he even had a regular guest spot on a national TV show.

Wendy’s used humor in their “Where’s the beef?” commercials. Philip Morris does the same in the Marlboro Man commercials. Marlboro and Virginia Slims both know how to build brand personality. They’re both just cigarettes, just tobacco in a case, but those are two distinct brand personalities, two distinct personas. There are tons and tons of great examples out there.

I: Why are professionals hesitant to include show business tactics?

T: That’s such a great question. It’s because they’re scared. They’re scared they might look stupid. They secretly want to get noticed, but they’re also afraid to look different, and you find this especially in corporate accountants and with independent professionals, coaches, and trainers. They’re all afraid of taking the risk.

You have to have thick skin to be a star. You might be out of fashion for a while. If you’re an employee there is a real risk in using some of these tactics. One of two things might happen: you might get fired, or you might get the corner office and a promotion.

There is a risk. There’s a company called Big Ass Fans. What do they sell? They sell big fans that would be used in places like a large auditorium. A lot of people hate their name. They find it very offensive. They get hate mail which they proudly post on their Web site. But for every piece of hate mail they get, they get tons of fan mail as well. When I studied them, they went from 7.4 million in revenue to 26.9 million in just three years. Why? Because they took a stand and they used show business tactics.
I: Can you give our readers or listeners three tips that they can put into action right away?

T: Absolutely.

**Tip #1—Figure out what you’re really selling.** If you’re an insurance salesman, what are you really selling? They all say peace of mind, security, etc., but you know who was brilliant when it came to this? Altamira (later bought by National Bank) was a mutual funds company that wanted to convey the message that you’ve got to take care of your future. They had a print ad which showed an eighty-something-year-old, gray-haired granny wearing a Wal-Mart style smock like the ones greeters wear, and the copy underneath it said, “Is continuing to work part of your retirement plan?” Brilliant.

Remember the advertising campaign that featured babies in the tire swings “because a lot is riding on your tires”? They were selling safety and peace of mind. Figure out what you’re really selling.

**Tip #2—Figure out your story and connect it to what you’re selling.** Dig deep and look for color. I had a client who came to me to help her with one of her speeches. It was kind of a dry, how-to speech to promote her speakers bureau. She wasn’t a professional speaker herself, but she was speaking to a group of professional speakers, and she was kind of scared.

When I interviewed her, I found out that she grew up on a tomato farm and that when she was eight years old she helped her dad pick tomatoes and take them to market.

I said, “Tomatoes are colorful, so why don’t you use this analogy?” She did, and she said, “Some speakers are still too green. Some are still seedlings. Others are ripe, plump, juicy, and ready for market. While others are just plain rotten.” For the first time in her life, a ton of people were interested in speaking to her afterwards.

**Tip #3—Write a 30-second spot, a mini show, to tell your story.** It doesn’t work very well to do this 30 second spot when you’re one-on-one with someone because it just feels dopey—it doesn’t feel real. I’ve seen people do it. Don’t do it. If you’re talking one-on-one with someone, just have a short tagline. If you have an audience that is twenty or thirty people, then have this mini show ready.

These are three things you can do right away. If you’re not sure how to do them, then pick up *Step Into the Spotlight*, and it will show you how. Then go out there and step into the spotlight!

I: What’s the most valuable piece of advice you can give anyone who’s trying to make an impact?

T: This is something I learned both as a litigation lawyer and as an actress in show business: *You have to know when to sit down and shut up.*
brings over two decades of entertainment business experience as a radio and TV host, writer, top rated morning show personality, radio station owner, national booking agent, broadcast consultant, and educator to his role as CEO and President of Allen Media Strategies, a full service media marketing consultation and strategy firm located in Washington, D.C., which was launched in 2003.

The firm currently works with national entertainers, best-selling authors, and media personalities on their individual strategic goals. Burke’s varied broadcast background includes stints with top radio stations at companies including CBS Radio AM and FM, Bonneville Broadcasting, and many others. He has been involved in stations and markets including Washington, D.C.; Miami and Orlando, Florida; Huntington and Charleston, West Virginia; Savannah, Georgia; Roanoke, Virginia; Salt Lake City, Utah; Las Vegas, Nevada; and Sioux Falls, South Dakota with many impressive number one finishes along the way.

Burke’s numerous industry awards and achievements include Billboard Airplay Monitor magazine’s Program Director of the Year and Pop Music Survey Music Director of the year honors. Burke’s stint as a number one ranked morning talent has given him a unique perspective on coaching high profile on-air talent.

In addition to his work with Allen Media Strategies, Burke is currently a tenured faculty member at the Connecticut School of Broadcasting, Arlington, Virginia campus. He also does some special radio projects with international broadcast consultants Alan Burns & Associates, and does occasional voiceover work for domestic clients.

In 2004, Allen’s book, Becoming Semi Famous, was released, and his writing appears regularly in industry publications including Radio and
Records and All Access. Burke is also a sought-after public speaker on media and marketing strategies.

Burke’s extensive background in the music business includes roles as a national booking agent, club owner, concert promoter, and artist manager. He has overseen and organized dozens of successful concert events with national headliner talent, from small club shows to festivals for over 50,000 people. In the past two decades, he has worked closely with some of the biggest names in entertainment, and Burke’s passion is helping performers to realize their goals through innovative media marketing techniques.

I: What took you from behind the mic as a broadcaster to working with others in media marketing and PR?

BA: It all began after I spent many years as an on-air talent. I really enjoyed that; it’s a really fun occupation.

I found a lot of satisfaction in helping other people achieve their dreams to be on the air, whether it was early in my broadcast career as a program director at radio stations when we would have a young person who was just dying for their first chance to crack the mic, or later on in my career when we began to help authors get on national television as guest experts on CNN, Fox News, or MSNBC. I found real satisfaction in helping other people achieve their media dreams.

I: What are the chief benefits of doing PR versus traditional advertising?

BA: I believe there’s a great place for both traditional advertising and for public relations, so I would never steer someone away from buying advertising if it’s within their budget to do so. But in order to cut through today’s really cluttered media landscape, you have to have a sizable marketing and advertising budget. For many entrepreneurs, you just can’t compete dollar-for-dollar with companies like McDonalds, Geico, Progressive, etc. Those companies spend millions upon millions of dollars on an annual basis on their advertising messages.

A way to level the playing field is through clever, creative PR. We help turn our clients into experts in their field so that they are able to comment on television, on radio, in print, and online as an expert. Not only is the opportunity to be on TV, on radio, in print, and online free—which is phenomenal—but it also provides an opportunity to transition from being in the advertisement world to being in the editorial world.

Research has shown that the stickiness of your message is so much higher if you’re imbedded in the content of the show—if you’re part of the program as opposed to being part of the advertising block.

After many years of commercial broadcasting, we’re all accustomed to tune away during commercials. That’s the time when you go to the bathroom or get the popcorn. If you’re driving around in the car listening to the radio and the commercials come on, an awful lot of people tune away to find their favorite song or another interview or talk segment on another station.

Because people are accustomed to steering away from advertisements, if we can find a way to imbed you in the show itself, in the content, then people will retain your message much more.

I: How important is media training in order to be able to do PR for yourself or for your company?

BA: I think it’s very important. One of the things that separates Allen Media Strategies from a traditional PR firm is that we spend an awful lot of time making sure our clients are seaworthy—that they’re ready to get their fifteen minutes of fame, if you will. Before the camera comes in for that close-up, you need to know the tricks of the trade. It’s all very learnable; anyone can do it, you just need to know what to do.

For example, if you’re going to do a television interview, and you’ve never done one before, you need to have the lay of the land beforehand. You need to know which camera to look at, and you also need
to be aware of little mechanical things, such as not rocking back and forth in your chair while you’re on camera because it distracts from what you have to say. You don’t want to wear stripes or loud patterns that cause people to be looking at your outfit rather than focusing on the message you’re trying to communicate.

You also need to know the tricks of the trade when it comes to radio. For example, if you’re doing a telephone radio interview, disable your call waiting or, if you’re doing the interview from home, make sure you’re not interrupted by your kids, your dog, or the doorbell. The training portion of what we do is really valuable in helping our clients get their message across.

I: I keep hearing that there’s no such thing as bad publicity, or that all publicity is good. Is that true?

BA: If they spell my name right, for the most part, I’m very happy. I will tell you that PR is an inexact science. That’s one of the big differences between advertising and PR.

In advertising you have 100% control of your message because you’re buying that time. If your infomercial is on TV, for example, you can say whatever you want to say because you paid for that airtime.

When you’re doing public relations media and marketing, you need to hedge your bets as much as you can to try to maintain control of your message, and lot of that is learned in media training.

You most certainly don’t want to be misquoted on the air or in the newspaper if you can help it. You want to do everything you can to position yourself in as good a light as you possibly can. There are lots of examples of people who don't have proper media training, or who choose to ignore their media training, and they come up really short on the air, and it hurts them.

I’ll give you an example from where I’m based here in Washington, D.C. There was a famous trial here several years ago for the murder of a young Washington intern named Chandra Levy. She had been interning for California Congressman Gary Condit and was killed, and the congressman was implicated in that murder.

He was interviewed by Connie Chung on national television. He was very evasive and dodged her questions and simply said, “No comment,” while looking away—he just looked guilty. The truth was that the congressman had nothing to do with Levy’s disappearance, and several years later the DNA evidence proved that to be the case. The real murderer was identified, but it ended congressman Condit’s career because he didn’t have the wherewithal to be able to manage himself and his message on television in that time of crisis.

You never know when that kind of thing might happen, so you need to be prepared to hedge your bets as much as you can against bad publicity. You will be misquoted. That’s going to happen, especially in print journalism and online interviews. It’s not going to come out exactly the way you want it to be, and now, with editing capabilities for audio and video, your message can be edited in a way that makes it seem as though you said something in a certain way. Knowing that going in, you want to make sure that you come across in the best possible light so that it’s much more difficult to be thrown under the bus.

I: What’s the number one thing that someone would need to have in order to get free publicity?

BA: The number one thing is to have a unique and compelling message. Those two words go hand in hand when it comes to free publicity.

You need to be able to say something that’s unique from all of the other voices out there. There are hundreds of people who comment regularly on the state of the economy. What do you have to say
that’s a little different than the rest of the pack? How can you set yourself apart from every other financial pundit out there? Is it your message? Is it the way you deliver your message? Is it your look? Is it your sound? What’s your sound bite that sets you apart?

That’s the unique piece, but the other piece is that you really have to be compelling. You have to find a way to compel the user on the other end—whether they’re watching you, listening to you, or reading about you—to take action on what you have to say.

Of course, you can be too unique and niche yourself completely out of the audience. There’s a very fine line where your uniqueness needs to set you apart, but you don’t want it to niche you down so tightly that you’ve alienated 99.9% of your potential audience.

The number one thing is to be unique and compelling, and a great way to do that is to look for opportunities and trends that are already making news and piggyback on those. Look for ways to comment on or incorporate those trends into your message.

By commenting on major current events, you will exponentially increase your chances of free media coverage, because so much national, regional, and local airtime and print space is being taken up by those stories. It may not always be possible, but if there’s a way to tie yourself into one of the hot stories or trends that are already making news, that will certainly help you.

I: Do you recommend your clients utilize television, radio, print, or online avenues for PR exposure?

BA: We don’t steer our clients towards one as opposed to the other. People consume media today more than ever in varying modalities. Sometimes it breaks down along age ranges and sometimes it breaks down along socioeconomic lines, but if you can tap into all of those avenues in varying degrees of success, then you increase your chances of making an impression.

For example, if you wanted to reach people today, and the only way that you have ever done that in your business thus far has been by advertising in the yellow pages, I would say you’re going to be in real trouble very soon, because research shows that very few people under the age of fifty ever open the yellow pages. They look for that sort of information online.

You’ve got to look for other opportunities. If you can have a robust online presence, if you can continue to pay attention to newspapers to target the fifty-five and older age demographic (and it’s a very upscale demographic that still reads the newspaper), if you can be aware of and in front of your local and national television cameras, and if you can make yourself readily available to radio—which is the most mobile of all of these mediums because you can access it from anywhere using your cell phone—then you’ll increase your chances of being able to get free media exposure. I say try them all.

I: What’s the chief advantage to advertising versus PR in terms of message delivery?

BA: The number one advantage to purchasing advertising is the opportunity to have 100% control over your content, your message, and your branding. When an advertiser purchases a 30- to 60-second commercial block, they control everything from the voice actors who are used, to the music beds that are behind them, to the exact wording of the script and sound effects. So, from A to Z, you have 100% control of that message, and there is a real advantage to that.

You can very strategically place your advertising in certain target markets. It’s easier to track the effectiveness of paid advertising because you know specifically what markets those spots ran in and how often they ran.

I think that’s the number one advantage to paid advertising if you have the budget for it, and by all means, advertising is still a very important part of your media mix.
I: You coach your clients to do media interviews based on a strategy called “redirects.” Can you explain this strategy?

BA: I’m based in Washington, D.C. around all of these political folks. We have people on Capitol Hill who are all about the redirect, and you’ve witnessed it whenever you’ve watched a politician dodge and bob and weave like a great heavyweight boxer in order to evade questions from reporters.

A redirect is something that all politicians are coached on by their media professionals. Anyone can use this technique. It works by using certain phrases and bridging language to redirect the line of questioning.

For example, if an interviewer asks you a question that you don’t know the answer to, you certainly don’t want to back yourself in a corner by trying to answer questions that you are not qualified to answer. Instead, respond by saying, “I don’t know about that, but what I do know is . . . “ and that redirects the conversation back to your comfort area—to your level of expertise.

Redirecting or bridging language is also useful if someone brings up a topic you don’t want to talk about. In this case you say, “Well, the real issue here is . . . “ If you incorporate that sort of bridging language in the conversation very subtly, it will appear seamless, and most reporters and interviewers will just let it go. It’s a great technique.

I: When you talk to TV and radio interviewers, what do they tell you they want in a guest?

BA: They want energy. They want topic knowledge, certainly, so if you pitch yourself, or if your media or PR firm pitches you, you need to know what you’re talking about. But really, at the end of the day, they’re looking for that energy that will compel a television viewer or a radio listener to stop changing the channel and stay there for the bulk of that interview.

That’s one of the reasons why the Fox News channel is beating CNN and MSNBC. It doesn’t have so much to do with political leanings as it has to do with the entertainment value that channel brings to their guests and ultimately to their viewers. They spend a lot of time on things like graphics that pop, whiz, spin, and are colorful, and they have hosts who are very aggressive and in your face.

We’ve had clients who have appeared with Bill O’Reilly on The O’Reilly Factor and with Glenn Beck, and there’s a reason why Glenn Beck cries on camera and why O’Reilly pounds on his counter and leans into the camera—you stop when you see that as you’re changing channels to see what people are so worked up about. These producers want that from their guests too.

They don’t want you to be professorial, they want you to be engaged and animated about your subject. If you’re an expert on privatized armies and an interviewer asks, “How do you feel about privatized armies?” and you give them a very milk toast answer by saying, “Oh, I don’t think there’s a real problem there,” that’s not very compelling for the listener or the viewer. You need to be charged up and energized about whatever your point of view is. If, in your opinion, there’s a great injustice taking place in the world, then you need to be passionate about correcting that injustice when you’re on the air.

Tips for How to Prepare for an Interview

Research the media outlet. This is the number one thing we coach our clients to do before they go on the air. It’s so much easier now than it was ten years ago because so much radio, television, and print journalism is available online. If you get booked to do Carson Daily’s morning show, which is a Top 40 station in Los Angeles, go online and find out what Carson’s delivery is like. Who is his target audience? You can pick that up by listening to the show.

Make sure you fit with the program. Are you a good fit for the program? Do a little background research on the host so that you can work in some points of commonality with them to make them feel comfortable. Where did the host grow up? What do they like to do for a living? Look for ways to
work those things in.

Do your homework and be prepared before you go on the air. Find out how long the segment is going to be. Will it be three minutes like on *The Today Show* or *Good Morning America*, or is it going to be a longer media interview, like on *Charlie Rose*? That will tell you how to frame up the answers to your questions.

**Practice.** Do some mock interviews off the air. Have a friend, neighbor, or family member interview you so that you can work on your responses. Rehearse it and play it out a little bit.

When great musicians go on tour, they go into a rehearsal hall and practice for a month or six weeks before they ever do their first concert. It’s the same concept when you’re going to do media interviews. You need to be ready for what’s going to come and be able to approximate that off the air as well as you can, so that you can do as well as you can when you’re actually on the air.

I: What is your definition of success as it relates to media?

**BA:** It’s all about whether I got my message across in a clear, concise manner that will allow the consumer an easy opportunity to act on that information. For example, we work with a lot of authors—some best-selling *New York Times* authors and even some self-published authors—and many times when they do media interviews, their end goal is to have the viewer, the listener, or the reader visit their Web site to find out more about them. Success in this case is based on whether your message pointed people in the direction you wanted it to.

Are you on air to help a cause such as a charity? The goal in those interviews then is to drive traffic to that charity. Make sure you’ve got clear, concise messaging, and you’ll succeed with the media.

I think it should be a lot of fun. There’s no harm in being picked up by a Lincoln Town Car and being taken to a television station to get pampered in the makeup and hair chair so that you look your best on national TV, or doing a radio interview in your bathrobe and being heard by four million people who have no idea that you’re in your bathrobe. Make it sound like you have your finest pearls and your Calvin Kleins on. Have a great time doing it. It really is and should be a lot of fun.

I: What is your most powerful moment of success or life change?

**BA:** I’m a very family-oriented guy. The day I watched my wife walk down the aisle of that church as the most beautiful woman I’d ever seen, being there on the morning of March 5, 2005 when my youngest son was born and seeing him come into the world and wrap his little fingers around my big finger in the first 30 seconds of life—those are the things that no camera, no microphone, can ever replicate.

I: Do you mind sharing your Web site so people can find you and get some more information?

**BA:** If any of your readers need to sort of talk it out and make sure that their message is on point, we are happy to offer a free, no obligation consultation. Visit us at [www.allenmediastrategies.com](http://www.allenmediastrategies.com) and mention that you read about us in *Insights*. We’re in metro Washington, D.C. You can come by the office and visit with us, or call us at (703) 589-8960 and I or one of my media booking specialists will be happy to talk with you.
Dr. Eve Agee

is a certified coach, speaker, medical anthropologist, and best-selling author who has helped thousands of people more easily connect their innate wisdom and power.

She is the best-selling author of The Uterine Health Companion: A Holistic Guide to Lifelong Wellness. Her empowerment products and coaching training programs inspire people across North and South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa to live rich and vibrant lives.

Before embarking on her coaching career, Eve was a political appointee for President William J. Clinton, specializing in health and education policy. She taught at the University of Virginia and at the American Cultural Center in Lome, Togo, West Africa. She has served on a White House task force and conducted research on women’s health and healing in the U.S. and West Africa.

Eve holds a Ph.D. and MA in cultural anthropology from the University of Virginia. She also has a BA in international relations from the College of William and Mary.

I: Your bio states that you are a medical anthropologist, life coach, and holistic healer. Can you tell us what medical anthropology is, and share with us how your experiences as a medical anthropologist inspired you to become a coach and holistic healer?

EA: Medical anthropology is the study of how societies, people, and cultures think about and look at their bodies in regards to health and wellness. While studying anthropology, what I found was that people in different societies have extraordinarily different beliefs about their bodies, about medicine, and about how to take care of one’s personal health.

As I was doing my anthropology research and studying how these different beliefs and cultures have such a huge impact on people’s experiences of health and healing, and literally their experience in their bodies,
I became very interested in coaching, because a lot of coaching also involves looking at belief systems and how those affect us on a personal level.

It was really an interesting transition for me; I was a researcher and a scholar in anthropology, but as I conducted my research, particularly of women’s health in the U.S., I decided that I wanted to have an active career in which I was actively helping people. After finishing my Ph.D. and getting to work for the White House in health and education policy, I ended up training in coaching and becoming both a holistic healer and a coach.

I: How long have you been a coach, and what kind of coaching approach do you use?

EA: I’ve been a coach for a decade. The coaching approach I use is very holistic. Along with coaching, I combine visualization, deep breathing, energetic release, and restoration; I really have a whole-person approach to coaching. A fundamental of mine is helping people get in touch with very deep, unconscious beliefs that may be holding them back from creating the life they want to live.

It’s based around the theory that we create our own reality from the inside out. I help my clients and the people in my programs focus on identifying and transforming any limiting beliefs and then take actions that will help them build the life they want.

Once an individual is able to start getting in touch with those limiting beliefs, they can really transform their business, their life, everything.

I: One of the main focuses of your coaching programs is empowerment. Can you share with our readers how people can be more open to self-empowerment?

EA: In our culture there’s been an old paradigm of power that was based on having power over others. A lot of people who want to help the world have felt uncomfortable with that paradigm, and they have also felt uncomfortable being in their own power because that was the way they often saw power used in our society.

I help people realize that there are other definitions of power; there are other ways to be in power. One of the definitions of power that I like the best is that power is the ability to choose, to act, to create.

Once we start thinking of power in that way—once we shift our perspective of power—it becomes much easier for people to actually open up to their power and realize that it’s the power to create what they want and to contribute to the world in the ways they most desire.

It can be very freeing for a lot of people to be able to stand in their power in a way that they feel does not hurt others and is not over others—to get out of that old paradigm of power in a way that they can openly be their authentic self and contribute in the way they want while supporting the world and those around them.

I: What is the focus of your coaching certification program?

EA: In my coaching certification program I combine all the different trainings I have done over the last twenty years. Along with coaching, while I was working on my Ph.D. in medical anthropology, I apprenticed with a native shaman for four years, and I also studied conscious connective breathing and visualization for many years.

In my coaching programs, I bring that whole breadth of knowledge, and I teach using a very integral, whole-person approach that coaches can use to get very deep in their work with clients and groups and really have amazing success. It’s been a lot of joy to bring these different elements of my own training together and to be able to teach people to coach from a very whole-person, deep awareness standpoint.

I: One of the major themes of your best-selling book, The Uterine Health Companion, is that there
has been a stigma about the uterus in our society, and the embarrassment that comes with that stigma has caused many women to have somewhat negative relationships with their bodies. Can you share with us some steps women and men can take to help build a more loving relationship with their bodies?

EA: If you think about the kind of views a lot of people in our society have about their body, there’s been a lot of negativity in many different ways, even beyond the uterus. A lot of people feel tremendous pressure and strain about their weight and the way their body looks. A lot of people feel there’s judgment from others about their body.

In our society in general, we have focused on our bodies in a way that I would suggest is fairly limiting and negative, and when we look at the uterus, that’s an area of women’s bodies where there’s been even more stigma associated with it. If you think about a lot of the uterine processes such as menstruation, menopause, and even to some degree with pregnancy and birth, there’s a lot of fear and a lot of shame around that.

In my book, and also with coaching programs I lead, I help people shift their perspective about their body and encourage them to start considering their body as the miracle that it is. When you see a young child who is two or three years old, they just have a great time with their body. They dance, they move. They aren’t held back when it comes to their body, and they don’t think about the way their body should look. Instead, they just enjoy their body.

The more we can do to start appreciating all the miracles that are happening inside our bodies—and the human body is amazingly complex—the more we can start tapping into that mind-set instead of forcing our bodies to be a certain way or to do things that are challenging, like sitting at a desk all day instead of getting up and moving around.

If you look at humankind evolutionarily, we’re actually meant to be moving more. If you take into account all the years that humans have been on the planet, it’s only been over the course of a very short time span that people have been so sedentary.

The more we can start to find new ways of relating to our bodies through a sense of pleasure and empowerment, and honoring our bodies by moving more and having more experiences that tap into ways our bodies are more comfortable, the more we can start transforming those relationships.

I: You made a point about how important it is to become conscious of any beliefs we may hold that stop us from taking good care of ourselves. Can you tell us more about what you mean by that and share methods women and men can use to uncover and change limiting beliefs so they can take better care of themselves?

EA: Absolutely. I conducted research with hundreds and hundreds of women on the subject of their health and taking care of themselves, and I also did a lot of research in healthcare clinics observing doctor-patient interactions. What I found, and what I think is fairly common, is that a lot of women, and a lot of people in our culture, do not take as good of care of themselves and of their health as they would like to. A lot of people wish they could exercise more or eat better, and there are really a lot of challenges when it comes to these areas for people.

One of the ways we can start to change that is by exploring our belief systems and identifying the beliefs that tell us it’s not good for us to take care of ourselves. For a lot of people, it may come from messages they have heard from society. A lot of women, and I think probably some men too, have received messages from society that tell them they are supposed to take care of everyone else first.

I: I think women are definitely raised that way. Our mothers taught us by their example and by their words that we need to take care of everything—our families, our children—and make sure everything
is happening that needs to. That’s definitely a sociological message we’re getting not only from our families, but from the media.

**EA:** Exactly. So many people are working and are so incredibly busy, and with the modern lifestyle with so much technology available, work has become much more 24/7 than it used to be. When you’re also trying to take care of everyone else, it leaves very little room to take care of yourself, and a lot of people end up feeling selfish taking care of themselves. That could include such things as making time to go to gym, for meditation, to go have fun with friends, or even to have a massage from time to time.

There can be a lot of guilt associated with that, but it’s actually really important. It’s important that we start to identify those beliefs, and there may be a lot more of those beliefs. One might be, *I’m not worthy of taking care of myself.*

We have to identify those beliefs in order to change them, because once we change those beliefs, it becomes easier to change eating habits that we want to change, or to make it to the gym a few times a week, or even to start doing some breathing, meditation, or visualization practice.

There are a lot of different ways people can start to transform those beliefs. One of the ways that is very helpful for someone at home is to start journaling—to start a free, conscious flow of journaling and asking, “What are the beliefs that are keeping me from taking good care of myself?” Just start digging into it and really examine that question.

All of the various kinds of coaching practices are generally very good at helping people get in touch with those kinds of beliefs. Then, once we identify those beliefs, we can start to determine what the opposite of that belief would be. We can start asking the question, “What new belief would actually help me take better care of myself if I decided to let go the old belief?”

If the original belief says, “I’m not worthy of taking care of myself,” then, once someone identifies that belief, they could decide, “I’m going to start letting go of this. I’m going to start listening to the language when I speak—when I say something that mirrors that old belief—and I’m going to correct myself and try to start talking about myself in a way that says I am worthy of taking care of myself.”

Once we identify the beliefs, we can change those beliefs and take new, empowered actions to support the transformed beliefs. I’ve worked through this with thousands of people in my programs, and people really transform their lives.

**I:** I agree. I know that I’m a much better mom when I’m doing what I need to do to take care of myself and give myself some time away. I struggle with the sociological pressure that we’ve all received. Most of us are working out of the home or working from home and also balancing the same responsibilities our mothers had—all while not taking care of ourselves. I know I’m a much better, calmer, and less-stressed mother when I’m taking care of myself.

Can you share some information about how to use stress-reduction techniques to feel better in regards to health conditions and to reduce pain?

**EA:** Sure, there are three stress-reduction techniques that I’d like to focus on: **visualization, deep breathing,** and **cognitive restructuring.** I’ll explain each one in detail.
Visualization
I really like this technique, and a lot of people are getting more and more exposure to it recently in our society. The important thing to remember about visualization is that it doesn’t mean you have to be a visual person. Some people, when they close their eyes wanting to connect with a calming energy, might actually see a sunset on the beach; but someone else might feel it or have a sense of it. They might imagine hearing the relaxing sound of the ocean; you can use your senses to connect with the feeling you want.

What’s interesting when it comes to guided imagery or visualization is that there’s an amazing amount of research that shows that once people start using this technique to focus on a really soothing or uplifting energy or feeling in their body, there are actual long-term health benefits; visualization or guided imagery actually helps heal all sorts of chronic pain and chronic problems within the body.

My book, The Uterine Health Companion, focuses on women’s health, and there’s a tremendous amount of research showing that visualization can help women heal long-term uterine health issues and actually help people feel better about their bodies and in their bodies. Visualization is a great tool for any kind of stress reduction.

Deep Breathing
This is something you can do anywhere. If you start doing some sort of breathing practice for five or ten minutes each day, it’s going to have a great long-term effect on your body. Scientists from NIH (National Institutes of Health) have shown through their research that even ten deep breaths help lower blood pressure. That’s just ten breaths!

Breathing deeply into your body, and even using visualization along with the breathing, is relaxing and can help you let go of things you want to release.

Cognitive Restructuring
This involves identifying stressful thoughts and beliefs, along with stressful patterns in your mental outlook, and changing those beliefs and patterns. It helps people feel comfortable taking care of themselves and to stop feeling guilty about doing so.

Often, it’s our perception of what we're doing that actually creates the most stress. A study was done with single mothers who had children with major disabilities. These mothers faced high levels of stress on a regular basis. The mothers were divided into two groups. The control group was permitted to continue managing their stress in the way they always had. The experimental group learned stress-reduction techniques and various new methods for reducing their stress levels.

The results of this research showed a tremendous difference in the physiological stress the two groups were experiencing. The mothers in the experimental group, who had learned the stress-reduction techniques, felt more relaxed and were doing a much better job of handling their stress, even though they still faced the same daily stressors.

The more we can focus on finding positive ways to deal with stressors, the easier life becomes.

I: In your book, you state that we are experiencing a silent women’s health crisis in the United States. Can you explain what you mean by that?
**EA:** I ended up writing this book because I was doing medical anthropology research in the U.S. and in West Africa. Initially I was focusing on women’s attitudes about menopause, and what I found was that at all ages, women in the U.S. were experiencing extreme problems when it came to uterine-related issues.

Through my research I learned that in the U.S. we have the highest rate of hysterectomies—which is the surgical removal of the uterus—of anywhere in the world. Statistics show that one-third of all American women will have their uterus removed by age sixty. This is significant because new research is now showing that removing the uterus before age fifty significantly contributes to cardiovascular disease for these women later in life.

In the U.S., the uterus has almost been considered disposable after childbirth by the medical establishment. While that has begun to change in the last twenty years for some health practitioners, a lot of women are often told, “It’s not that big of a deal. You can have your uterus removed.”

This crisis is occurring because we have millions of women who are experiencing endometriosis, fibroid tumors, PMS or PMDD along with menstrual cramps, and other various menstrual issues. About three million women in the U.S. have issues with infertility, and millions of women have severe menopausal symptoms that are not present in all societies. There are societies that don’t have all of these various benign uterine problems.

I believe the uterine health crisis is a silent crisis because all of these conditions are benign. They’re not going to kill anyone. Luckily, with the Pap test, the occurrence of cervical and uterine cancers has greatly decreased in the U.S.

In my book, *The Uterine Health Companion,* I have said that, in our society, it’s thought that these issues are a natural part of being a woman. The belief is that uterine health, menstruation, and menopause are all naturally problematic. However, research is showing that in other cultures and societies where women have far fewer cases of these various problematic uterine conditions, uterine health is considered a wonderful gift.

**I:** I think it’s very significant in light of the impact on cardiovascular disease that you mentioned.

**EA:** Cardiovascular disease is the number one killer for women. Its connection to uterine health hasn’t been talked about very much. I think it was about twenty years ago that research on the uterus, outside of pregnancy-related research, first took place. Before that time, researchers hadn’t even studied the uterus except when it came to pregnancy-related studies.

Chinese medicine, such as acupuncture, has always said that the uterus is related to the heart and that the uterus supports the heart. It’s interesting that traditional medicine, which is five thousand years old, is just now showing us, through modern scientific research, that yes, uterine health actually does have a big impact on the heart. The uterus actually produces hormones that support the heart. This is key information in light of the impact this discovery can have not only on women’s health issues but in regards to their life expectancy as well.
is the coauthor of five of the legendary Guerrilla Marketing books, the best-selling sales and marketing series of all time, including Guerrilla Selling, Guerrilla Teleselling, Guerrilla Trade Show Selling, Guerrilla Negotiating, and Guerrilla Retailing.

An award-winning motivational speaker, he shows sales teams how to build value and sell more at higher prices. He is a thirty-year veteran of the platform, and has worked with thousands of companies in forty-seven countries on every continent except Antarctica. He holds the highest level of certification recognized by the Professional Speaking Industry, the Certified Speaking Professional, and he was recently voted one of the World’s Top Five Sales Speakers for the second consecutive year.

I: How does the Guerrilla approach to sales differ from other models?

ORW: The Guerrilla metaphor, of course, comes from Guerrilla warfare—how do you fight back when you’re outnumbered and outspent by larger, better funded competition? Guerrillas rely on three resources to gain an advantage. They use these in place of a massive marketing budget or deploying an army of salespeople.

These three resources are time, energy, and imagination. Within these three arenas, no one can outspend you.

Guerrillas also use information and surprise to gain a tactical advantage whenever possible. They invest in people, in technology, in themselves, and in their community to gain a competitive edge. They’re also contrarians, and they’re usually far more focused on the customer than on the competition.

I: With budgets tight, how can
businesses grow in this current market?

**ORW:** Success in this market is going to go to those who take care of their past and current customers. It costs five times as much to find a new customer as it does to make the same dollar sales to a current customer.

In this recession, in the rush to cut costs, a lot of businesses have forgotten that they’ve created an established set of expectations in their customer base. The resulting changes often drive away their most loyal and most profitable customers.

For example, most airlines now charge $25 to check a suitcase. Meanwhile, Southwest is running a national ad campaign that says, “Bags fly free.” They’ve converted something that they’ve always done into a competitive advantage by thinking in a contrary way—by being guerrilla.

Some airlines are charging as much as $1 for a cup of coffee, $2 for a Coke, and $3 for a blanket. What’s next? I can just imagine the new safety briefing that says, “In the event of an emergency, an oxygen mask will drop from the compartment above your head. Insert a credit card and oxygen will flow to the mask.” Give me a break!

The easiest source of new business is to track down lost customers who might have been seduced away by a lower price, but who then discovered problems with quality, consistency, or supply chain reliability. Just ask them, “What would it take to earn back your business?” They will tell you exactly what you can do to grow in this market.

**I:** Why do you think price cutting is so prevalent today?

**ORW:** It’s because we had it easy before this most recent recession. We had cheap money, high employment, and an overoptimistic and overheated economy. Salespeople didn’t have to work that hard to keep their customers.

With the recession, everyone is cutting back, and many companies are finding themselves going up against competitors in China or Brazil, and they just don’t know how to respond. They all received the same three-part sales training a decade ago: here’s your desk, here’s your phone, good luck. They’re just clueless. They don’t know what to do when a customer says, “Oh, you’re going to have to do better than that! We can get it cheaper somewhere else.” They’re just lost.

**I:** Is it true that companies can set their own price, even in a highly competitive market like this?

**ORW:** Absolutely. I know it sounds like a crazy claim, but it’s true. Think about it; if everyone bought exclusively from the lowest priced supplier, there would only be one supplier for everything, and everyone would buy from that one supplier while everyone else went out of business. Of course, that’s not the case. In fact, the lowest price supplier is never able to dominate a particular market.

It’s really all about margin. Many businesses face price competition from offshore manufacturers and even domestic competitors who are laying people off, closing distribution centers, and liquidating inventory. They’re out on the street giving the product away, so sales people respond in desperation by trying to match these prices.

**I:** Why is trying to sell at a lower price such a problem?

**ORW:** First of all, the customer can always get it cheaper. So what? That has always been the case. What the customer really wants is your product, your technical expertise, your availability, your service, your warranty, your technical advice, and the other guy’s price. That’s the game that salespeople have to recognize, interrupt, and refuse to play.

The problem is that if you cut your price by 10%—just a 10% discount doesn’t sound very dangerous—you will typically have to double your unit sales just to make up the difference, just to break even.

-39- (Continued next page.)
Do the math. Take a round number, for example. If you’re doing a million dollars a year in sales volume in typical business-to-business industrial sales, the highest cost of business that you have is the actual goods that you’re selling—the product itself. If you’re operating at a typical 35% margin, that means your cost of goods sold is 65% of that or $650,000. That leaves you with a gross margin of 35%, or $350,000.

You also have to take into account your variable cost of sales. This includes the salaries you pay to the salespeople, expenses for their cars, for their insurance, and their commission if it applies. You don’t spend those costs unless you actually make a sale, but variable cost of sales run anywhere between 15 and 20% in most companies. We’ll be conservative and say $150,000 to cover those costs.

Then you still have your fixed general and administrative costs. These are the costs just to open the doors in the morning, and they include real estate, electricity, computers, accounting staff, secretaries, etc. That’s going to run another 20% of your budget, or about $200,000.

If you add all that up, from that million dollars in sales, you have just broken even. For every additional dollar you sell above that first million, then and only then are you starting to make a profit; and your profit isn’t $1, your profit potential is only twenty cents. What that means is that you have to boost sales by 1.8 million dollars—an 80% increase in dollar sales—just to get back to your break-even point.

When you think about it, that’s double the number of unit sales, because you’re not selling the units for $1 apiece now, you’re selling them for only ninety cents each. Do you really want to cut your price, give away your margin, and then have to work twice as hard just to make the same amount of money? It doesn’t make any sense.

You can count on this: Your competitor—who has little or nothing to lose—is going to match your cuts and go even deeper, and far too many companies today have joined this race to the bottom. They’re cutting their prices, only to find that their sales numbers are increasing, so they think that they’re doing the right thing, all while their profits shrink to zero or even less, and they wake up one day to find themselves in Chapter 7, 11, or 13. It’s an accounting reality that many salespeople just don’t understand.

Now let’s look at the other side of this equation. If you raise your price by 10%, you can give up 34% of your gross sales and still make the same profit. Let’s go back and look at the numbers. It’s all right there. If you have 1.1 million dollars in sales, that additional million dollars in sales drops to the bottom as $200,000 in net profit. The upside potential is tremendous.

Which would you rather do? Would you like to work twice as hard and earn the same net profit, or let go of all of those price buyers that you really don’t want? You really don’t want price shoppers as customers anyway. They gobble up your capacity, they do all the complaining, and if you talk to your accounting department, you’ll discover that they’re slow to pay, they pay late, or they don’t pay at all. Or, they forecast a big number, you bring in the inventory, put it on the shelf, finance it, and once you’ve stocked it for them, they come back and try to blackmail you on price because they want it for cheaper or they’ll get it from someone else. It’s crazy!

Smart business people are looking at the market now and are actually raising their prices and increasing their profit margins.

I: What’s a reasonable profit margin for a company to charge?

ORW: That’s a great question, and I don’t know what a reasonable margin would be for a particular company. It really depends on your product and your market. But I do know that you better have a very good reason before you drop your price.
It is important to ask yourself, “Who decides what my margin is going to be?” If your salespeople are empowered to negotiate price on the street and they’re giving customers discounts, you don’t have control of your pricing. Your customer is controlling your pricing, and that’s a real problem.

You also have to keep in mind that you’re always training the customer how to buy from you. If you’re just out there matching everybody’s price, then the customer realizes that they can finance their inventory at your expense. They don’t have to pay more if they could get the same products with better service, better support, better technology, etc. from you.

One red flag number to keep in mind is that you should be operating in the range of 2% to 3% net-net. In accounting it’s called before taxes and cost of capital to stay viable. This is like flying 200-300 feet above the ground instead of at 20,000 or 30,000 feet above the ground.

If you’re at 2% to 3% net-net, you’re far enough into the black that the quarterly or annual swings back and forth in the market when a sudden competitive threat comes on the scene aren’t going to put you under water. That range will give you the financial resources you have to have in order to grow, to develop new products, and to reach out to new markets.

**I:** What should you say when a customer asks for a price cut?

**ORW:** One of my favorite responses when they say, “Well, we can get it cheaper,” is, “Well, we have no argument with those who sell for less. They know best what their product is worth.”

There was a sign in a print shop in a company we worked with in Maine, and it said, “It’s a lot like buying oats—if you want good, clean oats, you pay a fair price. If you’re willing to settle for oats which have already been through the horse . . . “

If they say, “Well, if you can give me a 10% discount, I’ll sign right now,” then you have to back up and say, “Wait a minute. Do you make that same offer to your customers?” Of course they don’t.

If they ask, “Why are you so much more expensive than the competition?” You say, “It’s because our prices are higher.” Now you get to justify your price.

We were negotiating with Disney in Orlando for some meeting space for a big meeting we were doing for IBM a few years ago. We were right at the edge of our budget, and we had this one event, and we knew the meeting space was going to put us over our numbers.

We asked the salesperson for the Disney group if they could throw in this meeting space for us. The guy leaned over the table, puts his pen down, and said, “I really wish I could.” He turned and looked over his shoulder at the security camera in the corner of the room and whispered, “But the mouse is always watching, and the mouse gets what the mouse wants.” I felt so bad; I didn’t want to get the guy fired, so of course we paid the difference.

Just ask them point blank—make it a moral issue—“If I give you a discount today, what do I tell my next customer tomorrow that pays full price?”

Many times it’s simply a matter of giving salespeople the right response and the confidence to use it. They’d rather justify the price now than to have to apologize for poor quality later on.
You respond, "No."

They say, "Okay, fine. I asked, I did my job," and the conversation goes on from there.

**I:** How can you build value in the mind of the customer to justify your higher prices?

**ORW:** We teach salespeople to think in terms of selling the total product, and you can think of your product as falling into several domains.

Visualize a diagram with a small circle in the middle and label that circle the *generic product*. This is the actual physical stuff that you sell: medical supplies for nursing homes, diapers, gasoline, etc. It’s generic, it’s interchangeable. There are other equivalents out there.

There’s bad news in the realm of the generic product. You cannot win on price in that arena. All things being equal, price will always become the battleground because there’s always someone, somewhere with deeper pockets who can give the products away just to keep their lines running and their people busy. You’ll always get clobbered there.

The good news is, if you draw another circle around the first one, you can label that domain the *expected product*. The principle here is that the customer brings to the transaction a set of expectations that become integrated into the product itself. Just like I’ve grown to expect the airlines to check my luggage for me, when they start charging me extra for that, it just doesn’t feel right. I have to pay for coffee? They used to give us lunch, even in coach. Frankly, I would much rather pay a slightly higher airfare and have those amenities included, rather than have to nickel and dime and dig around in my pockets for change, or ask if they accept my credit card. I’ve got to submit all these receipts for reimbursement, and it complicates my accounting.

Here’s something you can write down and take to the bank: *unmet expectations equal dissatisfied customers*. It doesn’t matter if you delivered on time. It doesn’t matter if you delivered top quality. If they didn’t get what they expected, they are going to be upset, and they’re going to blame you.

Think about what they really need from you. They need technical and design help. They need on-time delivery. They need to minimize their downtime. Sometimes they need to buy what they’ve been told to buy by their engineering team, their product and development department, or their marketing people.

One of the most virulent mistakes that salespeople make is they don’t take the time to find out what their customer expects, and then drive to make sure that they meet 100% of those expectations.

The only problem with the expected product is that not only do we not know what it is, but if we
deliver 100% of that, how satisfied is that customer? They’re just barely satisfied. Giving the customer 100% of what they expect from you and doing that at a reasonable price is just the price of entry into the market. Where this starts to get really interesting, and where you can gain a competitive advantage, is when we get into the domain of augmented products.

Let’s draw another circle—a larger circle that encompasses those other two—and label that domain the augmented product. This is where you get beyond what the customer expects. This is the 13th donut in a baker’s dozen. If you give the customer more than what they expect for less than what they hope to pay, they will be thrilled. They will be delighted.

A principle that we teach, and that you need to keep in mind, is the law of the slight edge. You see this all the time in sporting events. For example, in the Olympics, the difference between the gold and the bronze is measured in tenths or, in some events, hundredths of a second. You don’t have to give away the whole store to get past that 100% mark in terms of what the customer expects from you. You just have do a little bit better; give them a little bit more than what they asked for.

The bad news in the domain of the augmented product is that yesterday’s augmentation becomes tomorrow’s expectation. The way that you drive up your prices is to give the customer more and more and more until they become so spoiled that they refuse to do business with anyone else at any price. That’s how you can maintain a long-term relationship with customers. You can charge premium prices, you can make very healthy, very profitable margins, and have a stable and sustainable business over time.

Customers Will Pay More For . . .

**Quality.** Obviously, that pretty much goes without saying, although I could also give you ten reasons why quality is not necessarily the silver bullet. Quality is more expensive to produce, people don’t really appreciate quality, quality lasts longer and we want them to use it up so we can sell them more, quality requires higher quality components, and it’s going to become obsolete before it wears out.

**Authenticity.** Customers want the genuine article, whether that’s Levi’s jeans or a Mercedes Benz, as opposed to a knockoff.

**Stability.** They want to know that you’ve been in business for a hundred years.

**Reliability.** The Maytag repairman has become integrated in our culture. It is synonymous with reliability.

**Social or ecological values.** Are you using recycled materials or contributing to the restoration of wild lands or other ecological causes?

**Doing business with knowledgeable salespeople.** These are salespeople who can give customers the advice and the technical support they need.

**A good reputation.**

**Partnership.** They’ll pay more if you can somehow partner or co-op with them on a particular venture.
Consistency. This is why McDonald’s is absolutely obsessive about their French fries, and they went so far as to genetically engineer a potato—it’s called the Burbank Russet—that has exactly the right combination of moisture and sugars. It fries up perfectly every time. They use that exact same potato in all of their restaurants all over the world.

Customization. When you go to Burger King, you want it your way.

Authority. If you’ve written a book, or you’re a recognized authority or a celebrity in your field, they’ll pay a premium.

Popularity. How else do you explain the Beanie Baby craze?

Exclusivity. They will pay more for things they can’t get anywhere else. They will also pay a premium for you to do business with them exclusively and to agree not to sell to or advise their competitors.

Availability. If you have it in stock and your competition doesn’t, you’re going to win every time.

Delivery. When it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight, you’ll pay $15 instead of forty-four cents for first class mail. They’ll pay more for expediting because they want it yesterday.

Financing. Can you finance it for them or arrange financing on their behalf?

Advanced technology. Apple is predicting to sell more than 12 million 4G iPhones this year.

A product that arrives in perfect condition. Maybe part of your cost structure is your packaging, but a higher ratio of the products actually perform when you put them on the test bench.

Problems that are fixed quickly.

Environmentally friendly products. Do you use recycled paper stock or control the chemical emissions in the atmosphere from your factory?

Benefitting a third party. Otherwise, why would you pay $4 for a box for cookies if it wasn’t to support the Girl Scouts?

Local sourcing. There’s a major trend in the restaurant industry now toward what are called “localvors.” These are people who want to shorten the distance between the field and the table and reduce the carbon impact. In fact, 82% of Americans have consciously supported local or neighborhood businesses.

Prestige brands. A Gucci handbag or Oakley sunglasses are two examples of this.

Referrals. This is often overlooked, but customers will pay more to do business with a referral. That is, if you’ve had a good experience and you tell me about your experience, I will be happy to pay a premium to do business with a company that you’ve referred me to because of the confidence that I have in that referral.

Reduced liability. Keep them out of court—everyone knows how expensive that is.

A representative that is more fun to do business with. A survey conducted in the hospitality industry by Meeting Professionals International showed that 87% of meeting planners said they would switch vendors if they found someone who was more fun to work with.

That isn’t the complete list, but I certainly would challenge you to think about all of the different ways
you can augment the value of your product so that when you finally get to the price for the customer, it feels like a bargain.

**I:** In the training you do, you have a reputation for very deep research and made-to-fit customization. How do you go about that?

**ORW:** When you’ve been doing this for over thirty years, you get tired of telling the same stories over and over again. What I prefer to do is to take the time to drill into a company and interview their CEO, CFO, National Sales Manager, and Regional Vice Presidents. Many times I will spend days doing ride-alongs in the field, watching exactly how the salespeople go about their day. I interview their customers and walk through their warehouse.

We did some work for a fast food company recently, and I actually went through their assistant manager training and learned how to make tacos and burritos and I actually ran a drive-through window for a day. I have the paper hat to prove it! I do these things so that when I show up to do the training, I understand their issues, their strengths, and their vulnerabilities. I understand their competition, and I can usually see a couple of critical touch points where there’s room for improvement.

I can give you another example. We recently did a program for a bearing services company in Houston, Texas. They have forty-seven distribution centers scattered across seven states, a sales team of about 200 people all together, and inside and outside sales. The problem they approached us with was that they had a competitor who was actually switching over to a Memphis-based model, warehousing all of their parts in racks so that someone at Fed Ex could just pull the part off the rack and send it to the customer overnight. They were closing distribution centers and literally giving the products away. So far that year, the sales team had given away more than three-quarters of a million dollars in unnecessary discounts.

We approached this problem head-on. I spent four days in Houston working with their people. We did a three-hour, half-day training, and thirty days later, we had increased their gross margin by 3%. You may think, “Oh, 3%, that’s not very much.” But multiply that times 120 million dollars in sales, and you get the picture.

Sometimes very small changes in the way a sales team functions can have a huge impact on their profitability, and unless you really take the time to drill in—not just be an expert that drops out of the sky, but to truly be a consultant to them, to truly coach them in the arenas where they need help—that’s the only way you can produce that kind of deep impact.

If you want more information, you can go to [www.guerrillagroup.com](http://www.guerrillagroup.com) to find numerous resources. Or you can call me toll free any time at 800-247-9145. I’d be delighted to answer any questions you might have.
Judy Mackenzie

MBA, CHRP, CEC, PCC is the founder of TEVO Leadership Coaching and Consulting Inc. where she specializes in executive and leadership coaching.

Judy’s primary goal through TEVO is to support companies in reaching their strategic goals by developing leadership and people management systems that allow employees to be at their best. Judy believes engaged employees are fundamental to business success.

I: How did you develop an interest in this particular niche within the coaching world?

JM: It’s the culmination of my life’s work. I started out as an individual and family therapist. Over those fourteen years I came to understand the challenges involved in making change stick, what fear of failure is all about, and what “blocked learners” are.

I moved into the organizational development and HR area, so I jokingly say that I became a corporate therapist. I took that change agent role from the individual level to the corporate family.

Then I moved into an executive role where I really saw firsthand how some of these corporate and personal mismatches affect business outcomes, but more important were all the people involved in those businesses. The impact on productivity and profitability was astounding.

When I decided that I wanted to move into my own practice, I was looking at what kind of work I was best at and what type of people I liked working with to create a challenging and stimulating practice. I determined I liked to work with goal-oriented success mongers in situations where there is a burning platform for growth—they are leaders in transition. It’s exciting with an opportunity for success or failure. That’s the kind of client and work environment that promotes an open mind due to the risk factors.

I: Why is the failure rate so high?

JM: There are two key contributing factors to the failure rate. The first one involves a company’s selection committee that is
looking to hire an executive. They put together their skills wish list and think those are all the skills they need, which are very often technical, without thinking about the corporate strategy. They mismatch what they need with who they get.

For example, if a company is in a turnaround position, with the task being to get the broken unit functioning again, they need a leader who understands the specific needs of turnaround situations and who has the professional traits to manage it.

The challenge for the new leader is dealing with a group of demoralized employees, key stakeholders, customers, and suppliers. Furthermore, the ability to handle time pressure while making quick decisions that have a maximum impact is key. Finally, being able to make tough human resources decisions while possessing top notch communication skills to get everyone behind the new strategies is essential. These are generally not discussed during the early stages of employment, but a coach specializing in these areas can keep a new leader on track and in control.

If a company hires a technically-oriented leader who has not demonstrated the competency to analyze large amounts of data in short periods of time, or to put together a compelling plan while possessing the managerial courage to deliver a tough message that will motivate and rejuvenate those who want to stay interested in the company, there will be problems in the future. There is a danger during selection of getting the wrong person in the seat at the wrong time.

The second factor has to do with the leader themselves. Often the individuals don’t understand their own skills, strengths, and weaknesses. These leaders are all usually extremely bright, but they rely heavily on their intellectual capacity and not enough on feedback. The vast majority of failures are not the result of technical incompetency, but of a failure to diagnose and lead effectively.

It’s a 50/50 breakdown in terms of where the responsibility lies for success and failure. However, I now have clients who call me when they’re first considering a new role. They want assistance in determining what they bring to an opportunity, whether it’s a great next step for them, and what they need to learn before they get started so that they can beat the odds.

The only area you can control is yourself. I advise leaders to be curious when looking at a new opportunity; look for what is not being said and understand the culture. They need to have a curious mind-set.

Peter Drucker, who is known as the father of management, said, “The leader of the past knows how to tell and the leader of the future knows how to ask.” I think that is well worth remembering for both leaders and coaches.

**I:** Where do you begin when a leader calls you for help?

**JM:** I start by identifying their burning platform. What do they want to accomplish with a coach? Then I move pretty quickly into finding out what they are prepared to do to be successful and if they understand their strengths and their weaknesses. We review the types of feedback they have received and identify what success looks like for them in their new role. Do they have a clear picture of what they’d like to accomplish?

We start talking early on about how they want to be viewed as a leader. What do they hope others are saying about them? Those are the kinds of messages and thoughts I present to leaders in an effort to lay the foundation for long-term success.

**I:** All transitions can’t be the same, so where do you start with the planning phase?

**JM:** There are commonalities regardless of the transition, but there are four key corporate stages that all companies must be aware of. These stages actually dictate things like pacing and priorities during a transition process.
Four Corporate Stages

#1—Startup: During startup there are likely few processes in place and making money with a product is a priority. A leader coming in at this stage could face the expectation of assembling all the different capabilities including people, financing, and technology to get a new business off the ground. There are few ground rules; you have the pleasure or the agony of setting the scope, defining, and shaping the organization as you see fit. One of the key challenges in this stage, however, is building a high-functioning team very quickly.

Many startups fail when they hire leaders who are technically savvy but don’t possess the necessary people skills. A startup is not only about getting a product to market quickly. It’s also about getting a team functioning effectively and independently so that you can then increase their scope with time.

#2—Turnaround: This involves getting a business that is in serious trouble back on track. Time is critical in a turnaround situation. Turning around a company, and in some cases an industry, requires a huge amount of vision and dynamic skill sets to embed the vision into what is often a demoralized workforce.

#3—Realignment: This stage deals with a deeply ingrained cultural norm that no longer works for the company. It often requires restructuring to be successful. The most common example of realignment is when a company comes out of a “Chapter 11” type situation. I can’t say enough about the importance, especially in this stage, of matching the corporate needs with the skills a leader brings to the table.

#4—Being the Successor: While it seems like it might be the easiest on the surface, I think this is one of the most difficult stages due to the challenge of sustaining success. This stage involves being the successor to a wildly successful leader who has had a strong reputation and track record and who is now stepping down. Even though the company is doing well, determining how to put your own stamp on the business to continue, and perhaps accelerate, the existing growth is a challenge.

When Jeffrey Immelt of GE had to follow Jack Welch, I remember thinking I would not want any part of that because Jack was an icon. He became a media star in his own right, and he had done so many things well on the people side as well as the business side of GE. One of Jack’s key strengths was his leadership succession bench. He knew what GE needed in order to go forward, and had a good range of talent ready to take the helm. I can't think of a more challenging role to be in than following someone who has become a leadership icon.

A leader’s ability to transition effectively is directly related to their rate of success or failure. It is recommended that a company use an outside person to assess what is needed based on these four corporate stages. Doing so reduces the risk of failure by 50%. That translates into a healthy ROI.

I: What is the hardest part of all of this for a leader?

JM: Leadership is risky business because with leadership comes things like power, position, prestige, and money; many leaders are successful in spite of themselves rather than because of their skills.

The perks of leadership can create arrogance, tunnel vision, disrespectful behavior, and blind spots. As a leader, you really have to know your strengths and weaknesses. They’re human traits we all have, but some leaders feel they can’t admit them even to themselves. There is a vulnerability needed in order to be open to identifying weaknesses or learning challenges.

With leadership comes all of the insecurities that should make us humble but, unfortunately, they don’t. There’s a term for some of these kinds of behaviors: derailers. If these behaviors aren’t dealt with, they can really put you in a tough spot. Let me list a few classic derailers for you:
Defensiveness—not being able to accept constructive feedback. I can't tell you how many times I've had leaders come through 360 programs saying, “That’s not me. There’s no way.” They are not open at all to considering this feedback.

Overdependence on a Single Skill—using the same set of skills or strategies in the last three companies and forgetting that each company is unique. You will often see leaders bring in former teams they have worked. This can isolate the group and the leader.

Political Missteps—not reading the culture, and alienating key people around you. You can't afford to do that.

A Blocked Learner—a leader’s belief that he or she is already pretty successful and has nothing new to learn. These leaders demonstrate a reluctance to take in new information, and they have of habit of living in the past. They don't feel that have to add any new edge. It is due to fear, mostly. I encourage these leaders to have 360-degree feedback, and I do my best social work in helping them integrate that information into their system.

If leaders don’t stay current, someone else will come up from behind and overtake them.

I: What can you leave our readers with as tools to assist them in their own transitions or in coaching others through these transitions?

JM: There are six key points. First, be open to learning—mostly about yourself. Put the same rigor into learning about yourself that you put into learning about the company you’re going into.

The second is know what you most urgently need to know about the business. Don’t get caught up in analysis paralysis. Figure out what you need: the policies, the culture, the processes.

Third, develop a great relationship with your boss. There’s an old saying, “What my boss finds interesting I find fascinating.” Keep in mind that the boss is marking the score card, so know what you’re being scored on. The beginning of a new position is not the time to find out that you don’t care for the company’s values or ideas.

Fourth, develop productive relationships with your direct reports and those you rely on in terms of accountability. Make sure you know who you can trust within your colleague group. Know their strengths and their weaknesses, their good points and their bad points.

Fifth, build alliances. Work hard at listening. Engage in turbo listening for the first three months. Find out who those partners and key stakeholders are. Watch out for people who want you to be successful and some who might not want you to be successful. Keep your network of supporters and advisors very close to you.

Finally, know the systems, processes, and the organizational alignment that is going to support your goal. Pay attention to those cultural components because they are powerful. If there is a contest between you and the culture, the culture will win—100% guaranteed. Make sure that you understand how decisions are made within companies and keep vigilant—keep watching.
Kathleen Gage

is the CEO and founder of Turning Point, Inc. and Maxwell Publishing as well as a best-selling author, keynote speaker, and an internationally recognized Internet marketing and publicity expert for speakers, trainers, and authors.

Kathleen is known as the Street Smarts Marketer, and has owned and operated her business for nearly two decades. She is recognized as a creative and effective Internet marketing advisor who works with spiritually minded coaches, speakers, authors, and consultants who are ready to turn their knowledge into money-making information products and life-impacting services.

Kathleen has been a featured speaker at conferences and conventions. She is the host of Daily Awareness radio show and has been a featured guest on hundreds of teleseminars and radio programs. Her signature series, Street Smarts Marketing and Promotions, is a favorite with thousands of clients around the globe. Kathleen’s greatest passion is working with those who realize and accept their role in raising the consciousness of businesses.

I: Tell us how you got started in coaching.

KG: It actually happened by accident. I didn’t plan it as part of a career move. I started my business nearly two decades ago and I actually left a corporate environment.

When I first started my business, I was doing corporate training. It was a natural evolution to go from corporate to corporate, and then I got a contract with a seminar company that had me traveling all around the United States and Canada. I did this for four years. I loved speaking and training, but being a road warrior just got to me after awhile. I was living in Salt Lake City at the time, so I started building a training clientele in that particular market.

As fate would have it, I got noticed by a career development company, and they invited me to interview for the branch manager position. I thought, I’ll go check it out. I don’t really want a job, but I’ll go ahead and see what they have in mind. The interview went great. After a second and a third interview, I was hired, and within a month I became the Vice President of Career Development; it was just a natural evolution.

It was during that time that I really got exposed to my passion for working with people on a coaching level. I had a staff of twenty-five people who were very good at what they did, but some of them needed a little fine tuning. They had a lot of potential, but they would come
to me and ask, “What I do about this? What do I do about that?” I found that by asking them the right questions, they were able to tap into the answers themselves.

Over the course of eighteen months we raised revenue by 80% and had some phenomenal success in the marketplace. I didn’t have too much one-on-one involvement with clients because I was working with the staff who worked with the clients. After I left that company, I went back into my own business and doing more training. At that point I was doing a lot of marketing for companies and teaching them how to market. Right after that, 9/11 happened.

After 9/11, a lot of business tanked. In the speaking, training, coaching, and consulting industries, many contracts were put on hold. It was then that I decided to move into a new direction in my business, and that new direction was product development.

I started hosting free seminars for the local business community, filling rooms with anywhere from fifty to four hundred people, and selling my information products on the back end. It was during that time that I rebirthed my desire to coach because my clients would ask, “What about this? What about that?” and it went beyond consulting. I was working on a personal level with many of my clients.

That’s how it all started, and now most of the work I do is one-on-one with clients, though I also do group coaching.

I: What do you think is the most important thing for a coach to focus on?

KG: First of all, know who you are and what your area of expertise is. Too many coaches are ambiguous in their description of who they are.

Also, know who your market is. Who do you want to work with? Who wants to work with you? Who do you have a congruent relationship with?

There’s no point in working with people you’re struggling with. Many times when people start coaching, they think they have to take everything that comes along, and that’s not true. Many certified coaches haven’t figured out quite yet that they need to know how to market, and that they can also pick and choose who their client base is going to be.

A coach’s client base may change as they grow. I have a coaches and consultants group on LinkedIn, and it’s interesting when I look at the profiles of people I want to invite into the group. There are life coaches, business coaches, and marketing consultants—it’s that vague.

Being a life coach is great, but who are you a life coach for? For example, are you a life coach for stay-at-home moms who left the corporate environment? Or are you a life coach for executives? Or are you a life coach for athletes?

Pinpoint your market so that it’s easy for your market to immediately identify whether you are the solution they are looking for. I saw one coach who’s description of what she did was, “I work with professional athletes who want to change the world.” How clear is that? I think it was even narrowed down further to professional football players. I thought, Wow, is there such a market? Obviously there is—she’s doing quite well.

Some people tend to believe that if they narrow their market down to that level that there will not be enough business. There’s more than enough business, especially with the awareness that people now have of what coaches do, of the need to have a coach, and of how much they can benefit someone’s life.

The most important thing is to identify who you are specifically and who your market is. You don’t have to limit yourself to just one identification. Start with one and grow from there.

I: From your perspective, what are the trends in the coaching industry?
Kathleen Gage continued . . .

KG: There are lots of trends, but I want to take a step back and elaborate a bit on why I believe, when I was with the career development company, we increased revenues by 80%. We’re talking a multimillion dollar company, so it was a substantial jump.

It was because we re-identified our market. When I got there, they would take anybody who could fog a mirror—seriously. They accepted any credit background. If someone had D credit, which is very bad credit, they would sign them on a contract, because it showed good on the books. I went in and said, “Oh no, absolutely not. If we’re going to do this right, we have to identify our market, and we have to be very clear about the kind of clients and the financial responsibility we’re willing to take on.”

Now, to answer your question about trends, let me list a few for you.

Trends in the Coaching Industry

Awareness in the Marketplace
There’s definitely more awareness in the marketplace of the fact that there even are coaches, and also that there are many different types of coaches. I have a friend who works with professional athletes on high performance; that’s the kind of coach she is. She teaches athletes how to visualize their success, overcome their fear of failure, and things of that nature.

Collaboration
The mentality in the past was that there was only enough to go around, and I think, because of the Internet, there’s a very high consciousness now among many coaches that they can collaborate with someone who specializes in another area, and they can actually both work with the same client.

Social Networking and Social Media Marketing
This trend has allowed for more visibility and for each coach’s voice to be heard. With today’s technology, we have so much power to be able to speak whatever our truth is, whatever our purpose is, whatever our passion is, and it’s because we have tools such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. We have all the vehicles necessary to put our message out there.

Authenticity and Transparency
I always encourage people by saying, “Step out of your comfort zone and speak your truth.” People are being very transparent in who they are, and in that, we tend to attract more of the kind of customer and client and market that we really resonate with.

I: What do you feel is one major mistake coaches make when trying to build their business?

KG: The biggest mistake, again, would be not identifying their market—having a loose fit so that everyone needs their services. Take a nutrition coach, for example. A lot of people may need the services of a nutrition coach, but they may not want to work with that particular coach.

Another mistake would be not learning how to market. If you really want to do well in your business, you need to learn how to market. Marketing, for a lot of people, has a very negative connotation. Marketing is basically just about raising the awareness that you exist, and what you bring to the marketplace.

You need to know your market and you need to learn how to market.

I: How important is it for a coach to market themselves?

KG: My background is in marketing, and I used to do traditional brick and mortar type marketing. I worked for a radio station many years ago in the sales and advertising department. I started out in broadcast media. These days there are so many people vying for the same client base because they
haven't identified a *unique* client base. If you cannot differentiate yourself, if you cannot stand apart, if you cannot become visible, you're going to have a difficult time building your practice. In my estimation, and because I've seen success in my own business, I would say it's absolutely essential for coaches to know how to market themselves.

The key is to learn how to avoid chasing after the bright shiny objects that come our way. Social networking is a bright shiny object to a lot of people. They jump around and get pulled in many different directions. It is essential to have discipline in the way you conduct your business and to set aside a certain amount of time for marketing or for building a marketing team.

When I started out, it was just me. I now have five people who support the goals of my business. They're all contracted workers, and some work more than others, but they each have their own role, and because they each have their role, they help me to build my business beyond what I thought I could do. They do marketing. One is a social media marketing expert, another works on my article distribution and other avenues of marketing, and one is my Web designer. It was something I grew into, and it's definitely something people need to consider.

I: With so many coaches coming onto the horizon, how can someone differentiate themselves?

7 Tips for How to Differentiate Yourself as a Coach

#1: Be yourself—unless you're so strange that it's not an asset— but seriously, be yourself, be authentic.

#2: Write articles. There are plenty of article directories that would love to have more and more articles.

#3: Start your own blog. Make sure that you are blogging on a regular basis, and use your own voice for blogging.


#5: Develop information products that are unique to your niche.

#6: Notice who you are surrounding yourself with. Are you spending time with naysayers who talk about how bad the economy is and how there's no business out there, or are you surrounding yourself with possibility thinkers who believe that there's an abundance of opportunity and that what they have to offer is essential to improving the lives of their clients personally and professionally?

#7: Do whatever you can to gain visibility for your authentic and transparent self. Standing apart is a good thing, because then you can look at all the leaders in a market and say, "I'd like to partner with that person to bring more value to my client base."

I: You work with authors who, many times, are coaches, and coaches who want to be authors. Is being an author helpful in one's business?

KG: I believe it is. When I became an author, even though the subject matter I first wrote about had nothing to do with business, the fact that I was an author gave me more credibility. A book is a tool you can use to get your foot in the door and to build your credibility and your visibility.

It's a real twist for some people, but we have to move to a mind-set that asks the question, "What is the market perception of who I am?" It's not about "Who do I think I am?" but "What do other people think about what I offer, who I am, what I do, and my level of quality?"

Let's say you have two coaches who coach on the exact same thing, but
Kathleen Gage continued...

one has written a book and one has not. All other things being equal, the coach who has written a book, in the consumer’s mind, will be viewed as being more of a professional.

Having authored a book ties back to the marketing and the visibility I mentioned earlier. With a book, you can gain a lot of visibility. It’s much easier to get publicity when you have written a book, and you can use it as a revenue stream. There are so many things you can do.

There are multi-skilled coaches today. Years ago, coaches only focused on coaching. There are still coaches who focus solely on coaching, but who also realize the importance of being a writer and expressing themselves in many different ways. It’s not just about the spoken word; the written word is also a great avenue for sharing your message.

I: There’s a trend towards more coaches incorporating either a conscious or spiritual aspect in their business. What are your thoughts on this?

KG: I think it’s great. The term spiritual can cover many different areas. I think that with the state of the world today, many people are having the courage to the step forward and say, “Okay, we need to do this in a much more conscious way.”

I was having a conversation with someone recently who said, “The world is just falling apart. There’s no end to this.” From the perspective of someone who has a high level of consciousness and awareness and spirituality, yes there is a lot of outward evidence that things are falling apart, but that’s also evidence that this is a time of change. It is our responsibility, for those of us who do view ourselves as very conscious and spiritual in what we do, to take that message out to the market—not to force it down their throats, but to offer our views through books, articles, and interviews. These are great avenues for being able to speak truth from our perspective.

One of the things that I love about a lot of the consciousness today is that there’s an acceptance that there are many different ways to the end path; it’s not just one method or one belief or one spiritual practice or one religious practice, but it’s a respect that there’s a whole diversity going on. It’s about oneness rather than separation. Personally, I am thrilled with what I’m seeing. It’s exciting because it means that this is the time that many change-makers are fulfilling the purpose they came here to fulfill.

I: What are some steps coaches can take to gain visibility within their market?

KG: Like I mentioned earlier, article writing is a great way. The thing about articles that’s so wonderful is that you can write a 250-word document, and many of the article directories view that as an article. You can also write for trade journals that people in your market would be reading.

For example, let’s say you’re a coach for dentists who want to build their dental practices. Let’s say that’s part of what you do, and you also coach dentists individually and consult on their businesses. There are trade journals that, if you were to submit articles there, you would be pinpointing your visibility within that particular market.

You can also write white papers. This is a great way to get your foot in the door. Let’s say you do coaching within a corporate environment—executive coaching. You could write white papers to send directly to the CEO or the top level decision maker saying, “I thought you might enjoy this. It’s something I wrote, and I wanted you to have it.”

You could also study the trends and the challenges that a particular business has if you’re try to get your foot in the door there. Notice what problem they are facing, and then write a white paper offering a solution to that problem. Don’t ask for anything in return, simply say, “I thought you might enjoy this.” If you do that, you’re going to get noticed.

Another way to gain visibility is to write a book—definitely write a book. You could also be a part of teleseminars and telesummits that are specific to your market and your industry.
I: What is one thing you would recommend for coaches to do to create a substantial and sustainable business?

KG: Before I answer that question, I have to say that in this last year I saw evidence of how important having sustainable income is. I’m a Baby Boomer, and I’m going through what a lot of Boomers are going through; I lost one parent, and I’ve been the primary caretaker of another parent. As a result, I wasn’t able to spend as much time in my business. Thank goodness I listened to my mentors and coaches about developing multiple streams of revenue.

This is something that, over a period of time, if you are consistent with developing information products and different ways that people can pay you—for example, through membership programs—then when you have a period where maybe you just don’t want to work, you want to take a couple months off and travel around the world, or maybe you have a sick relative you need to take care of, you can actually set it up so that money is coming in every single day because you had a plan of action already in place.

One of the things I recommend is to start working on your plan for information products. Information products can be home study courses, monthly audio files that are downloadable, membership programs, or information products like e-books and e-reports.

I have one revenue stream where I offer free teleseminars. I record them, have the recording transcribed, and then turn the transcript into a report. Then I bundle these together and offer them to my market for anywhere from $17 to $27. Keep in mind this was originally a free event. I do some pretty proactive marketing and I make a few thousand dollars in 24 to 48 hours. It sometimes boggles my mind how much I make from this revenue stream. I learned this from another coach.

This is one reason you want to surround yourself with the people who believe in possibility, because this is where you get your ideas from.

I would encourage people to avoid focusing on why something might not work, and instead say, “I can do that! Wow! I wonder how I could figure that out.”

I saw a campaign recently by a coach that was a huge, huge, huge success. I looked at it, and in the past I would have said, “Oh, I could never do that.” Now I look at it and say, “Huh . . . How long will it take me to create something like that?”

Language pattern is so important in creating your sustainable income, your market position, and your visibility. You have to look closely at what you say on a consistent basis. But the way to create that sustainable revenue and that sustainable business is through multiple streams of revenue coming in.

Start with one thing and grow from there, because oftentimes what happens is someone will look at someone like me—I’ve had my business for two decades—and they’ll say, “Oh, you’re so lucky.” Well, I would say, “Yes, the harder I work, the luckier I get.” I’ve had coaches and mentors, and I’ve applied the information that was most appropriate for me to apply. But it was one day at a time, one step at a time.

I look back and say, “Yes, I have accomplished a lot, but it didn’t happen overnight.”
Discover How to Successfully Write, Publish and Market Your Transformational Book!

Learn from Top New York Times Best-Selling Authors and Leading Book Experts... the 6-Step System to Transform Your Book ‘Idea’ Into a Published Book, and a Thriving Business!

Featuring:

John Assaraf  Marci Shimoff
Gay Hendricks Christine Kloser
Sonia Choquette and many more!

(Register now for FREE!)

www.TransformationalAuthor.com
The new community where writers find everything they need for every stage of their journey...

www.Write AwayWriteNow.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insights Directory of Experts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Judy specializes in parenting and family coaching.  
“I partner with parents to help them create the happy, healthy, successful family that they always envisioned.” | **Eve Agee, Ph.D., Certified Life Coach, Medical Anthropologist, Best-Selling Author and Speaker.**  
Inspiring you to create your most magnificent life and make your biggest contribution.  
[www.theparentingplan.com](http://www.theparentingplan.com) | **Agnès van Rhijn** - Coach at CoheChange, France, founder of the CoheChange International network.  
CoheChange empowers individuals who wish to take ownership of their life and career, and helps organizations to implement ethical and sustainable Leadership and growth.  
[http://www.cohechange.com](http://www.cohechange.com) | **Susan Guiher**  
Certified Coach, Speaker, Published Writer and Co-Founder of Thrive for Success, LLC  
Assisting entrepreneurs, small business owners and direct selling leaders who want freedom, passion and success!  
Assoc. Director, Education Service Center  
Institute of Developmental Coaching  
The IDC offers cutting edge coach training programs and services for professional and personal development.  
[richard.alvarado@esc20.net](mailto:richard.alvarado@esc20.net) | **Dr. Sherry Buffington, Founder of The CORE Multidimensional Awareness Profile® (CORE MAP) - far more than just assessments.**  
They are systems for deep and insightful analysis.  
helps you step into your leadership role with confidence, and understand and embrace what “High Potential” means…  
[http://www.parachuteexecutivecoaching.com/](http://www.parachuteexecutivecoaching.com/) | **Dr. Candice Smithyman**  
Dream Mentors Transformational Life Coaching Institute and International Tribune of Christian Coaches  
Discover the Keys to Understanding What Motivates Your Christian Clientele  
[http://dreammentors.biz](http://dreammentors.biz) | **Karen Wright, Master Coach, Founder, Parachute Executive Coaching**  
helps you step into your leadership role with confidence, and understand and embrace what “High Potential” means…  
Managing Director, Aspectum Consulting  
President/Founder – SA/India Chapter ICF  
Become more profitable by operating in a customer driven way.  
[http://www.aspectum.in](http://www.aspectum.in) | **Dr. Sharon Melnick, Harvard Researcher and Founder, Productivity Mind Mastery** will help you Get Out of Your Own Way when it comes to Managing your Time... and make your career dreams come true within days and weeks instead of months and years!  
[www.productivitymindsetmastery.com/](http://www.productivitymindsetmastery.com/) | **JoAnne Ward**  
Grow Forward Business Consulting  
Empowering small business, nonprofits and their teams to greatness!  
Every great coach deserves a great coaching business!  
Let Quantum Endeavors help you build yours now!  
[QuantumEndeavors.com](http://QuantumEndeavors.com)  
[YourCorporateSuccess.com](http://YourCorporateSuccess.com) | **Joyce Oddison , M.A & PCC**  
Interpersonal Wellness Coaching, Inc (IWC®)  
Helping you find the link between your personal wellness and the success of your interpersonal relationships.  
Join the Peace At Work Day, May16th!  
[http://www.interpersonalwellness.com](http://www.interpersonalwellness.com) |
Insights Expert Resource Center

Where over 2800 coaches from around the globe and opportunity meet!
www.thecoachexchange.com

Committed to providing practical and impactful mentoring, training, tools, and coaching today for shaping the business owners of tomorrow.
www.solopreneurs.org

Your Tribe is Gathering...
JOIN NOW FOR FREE!

LeadingCoachesCenter.com
Where top business, leadership and executive coaches connect online to play, learn, contribute and advance together.

12-Month Subscription-Advertise-Brand As Your Own
http://www.getei.com/insights.html

~Until next month, wishing you success and creative Insights~

www.peaceatworkday.com
Get Ready for Peace@Work!
More at:
www.peaceatworkday.com

PUBLISHED!
Coming in July:
PUBLISHED! Magazine
Preview at:
http://tinyurl.com/publishedmag

Published!

11th Annual Healthy Workplaces Conference

12-Month Subscription-Advertise-Brand As Your Own
http://www.getei.com/insights.html

~Until next month, wishing you success and creative Insights~
Superstars who have shared their wisdom and graced Insights Magazine Pages in 2010:

Dr. TC North, Dr. Sherry Buffington, Dr. Kevin Fleming, Susan Guiher, Ford Myers, Helen Kerrison
Dr. Joan King, Lisa Murrell, Linda Claire Plug, Dr. Marshall Goldsmith, Peter Scherer, Gina Morgan,
Milana Leshinsky, Kendall SummerHawk, Toni Reece, Michael Bungay Stanier, Rhonda Hess, Evelyn
Kalinosky, Ann Farrell, Michael Neill, Jennifer Davey, Jennifer Wilkov, Ray Williams, Jan Kearce,
Gary Henson, Dr. Judy Kings, Joshua Zuchter, Suzi Pomerantz, Viktor Grant, Dr. M. A. Greenstein,
Dr. Conrad Milne, Kathy Esper, Susan Rae Baker, Dr. Richard Johnson,
Dr. Relly Nadler, Jerry Moyer, Kathy Jo Slusher-Haas, Liz Cosline, Ran Zilca
Schelli Whitehouse, Paulette Rao, Angela Carr Patterson, Katherine Poehnert,
Joyce Oddisio, Tiamo, Suzanne Falter-Barns, Sharon Sayler, Marc Manieri, David Wood, Melinda Cohan,
Lisa Bloom, Max Simon, Redia Anderson, Dr. Roxanne Howe-Murphy, Dr Matthew James, Jackie Lapin,
Dr. Sharon Melnick, Diana Fletcher, Kathryn Troutman, Rev. Chavah Aima, Lou Bortone, Dr. Ann Deaton,
JoAnne Ward, Sharla Jacobs and Jesse Koren, Donna Amos, Christian Mickelsen, Regena Thomashauer,
Todd Newton, Kate Steinbacher, Bill Baron, Jayne Warnlou, Anne Wilson, Andrea Feinberg, Shayla Roberts,
Kim Kimmse Toth, Jane Perdue, Kim Ades, Michael Port, Dr. Cathy Greenberg, Marsha Wieder, Ali Brown,
Dr. Candice Smithyman, Dr. Deepak Chopra, Jack Canfield, Jim Stovall, Cheryl Richardson, Michael Gerber,
and Rev. Dr. Iyanla Vanzant. A special “Thank You” to media personality, the wonderful Stacey Chadwell!