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Implementing Lean Marketing Systems



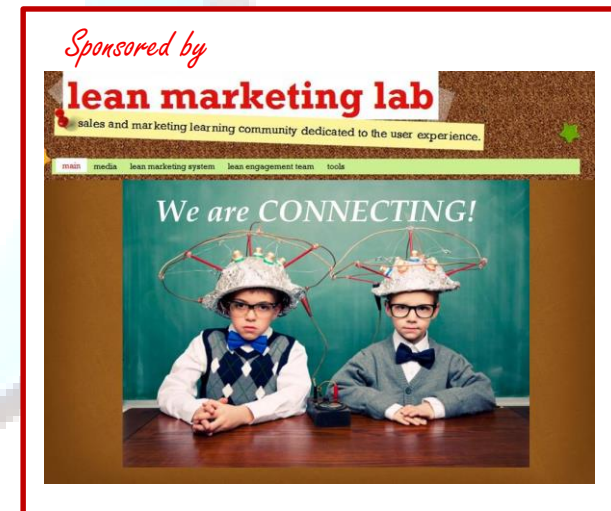
Tuning your Business Network

Guest was Judy Robinett

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Transcription of the Podcast

Joe Dager: *Welcome, everyone. This is Joe Dager, the host of the Business901 podcast. With me today is Judy Robinett. A person that takes that word, "networking," not only to a new level but re-defining it into a dynamic power grid of influence and connecting – sorry for the pun – the online and the offline world.*

Judy, I'd like to welcome you and your new book, "How to be a Power Connector" consumed my entire Fourth of July at the pool. I ended up fried to the crisp and with the lasting memory that five, fifty, one hundred was not minutes but connections.

Judy Robinett: Thank you, Joe. It's delightful to be here.

Joe: *Tell me what caused you to write the book, how it came about, and just let the readers know a little background on it.*

Judy: Sure. Well, I wrote the book because I was always puzzled that people didn't meet their potential, they couldn't get connected to the right person or to the crew or resources they needed to be successful. Years and years of experience, I've figured out there's seven billion people on the planet. There's just cash and cash equivalence in the United States. In banks, there's seventy billion dollars. In global GDP there's eighty-two trillion. Countless

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opportunities and so much information that doubles every six months and we put it in the cloud. So, there's no lack of resources.

I found that people either don't have the dots or they don't connect the dots. Most importantly, they don't leverage the dots. My goal was to really give people a boost so that they could quickly get to their goals.

Joe: *That awful word, "networking," seems so obsolete to me. Can you explain why the book describes networking differently and why it's different than that typical networking type of strategies?*

Judy: Absolutely, Joe. I hate the word networking. I think it's old school. It was transactional. If you think about how many times you've been in some meeting or room and somebody runs toward you with a business card, barely says hello or what their name is and then dashes off like it's some kind of a game. I think those days are gone. People have really realized how valuable it is to have long-term relationships with people who have your back and have your future. My focus is being authentic and determining critical quality relationships with people that have gravitas, power and influence than can and will help you.

Joe: *You take those connections and turn them into strategic thinking don't you?*

Judy: Yes, I do. My formula is quality relationships plus strategy to a very specific outcome. You know Joe, a lot of the books out there are pretty good. "How to work a

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room”, Susan Roane’s book has sold over a million copies. It is exceptional. But what I found is 95% of people are in the wrong room and even don’t understand the ecosystem they need to get in.

This is particularly true if you are trying to find funding for a startup, often people needing to get a job. So I often say, if you go to an event or you go to a conference and there isn’t anybody in the room smarter than you or can have answers or thought leaders, you’re in the wrong room.

Joe: *That is so true. I like that take on it because I would describe it that you really should make the mistake downstream. Kind of like being in the wrong room and seeing your customers’ customers in it versus going in the room that everybody is selling your customers.*

Judy: Absolutely. Absolutely Joe. That’s true. One of the best things that I recommend for people is to join powerful groups. There are amazing groups out there that are curated individuals. For people who are wanting to get to the CEO level. A good group that’s national, that has been around for must be for years is ACG. The other one is CXO. You can just Google these and find out about them.

They are not typical. A lot of people don’t know about them, but truly one of the best things you can do is join a powerful group that is across different verticals, not just service providers.

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Joe: So you're saying that I need to be in several different groups but I need to strategically place them in –for lack of a better word- different types of relationships to me.

Judy: Yes. Absolutely, and I'll give you a good story. So when I moved to Salt Lake City Utah, I met a gentleman who had been recruited by one of our big banks locally. He wasn't the typical Utan. He was African-American. He was very successful in building a book of business, getting high net-worth clients very quickly. I said to him one day "how did you do this? You move to this city. You don't know anybody and then you build a book of business with an amazing speed". He said "Judy, I joined the symphony". I have often thought people, Rosie Rios our US Treasurer once said to me "follow the money". If you think about the symphony, it has people of gravitas. People of power, of influence that are across all different industries. You're perfectly situated if you needed to talk to a governor or somebody politically or somebody in the media, a Fortune 100 company, a successful entrepreneur. Those are the kind of groups to go to.

Joe: Tell me, what is that 5 50 100 connection?

Judy: This comes about from research, relationships experts, research social scientists who have determined that we all have these orbits. The first one indeed is five to fifteen people and that's your close friend and family Joe. The next one out, I call it the "fifty" because I believe you only need fifty quality relationships to get you anywhere you want. The one hundred is kind of that next group of opt in.

Charlie Munger once said in an interview that when he goes to any conference and meets

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about a hundred people. There are twenty he could care less to ever meet again as long as he lives. There's five to ten he can't live without, and the rest are kind of opt in. Dunford's number, which is a hundred and fifty says that groups fall apart at a hundred and fifty. So quality beats quantity every time. If a group falls apart at a hundred and fifty, you can't manage a billion people in LinkedIn or Facebook. You really want people who care about you, who are authentic, who can and will help you. So quality is critical.

Joe: *When I look at my kids, I see that they have these connection streams of fifty one hundred and fifteen hundred. Is that possible? Are they changing the rules a little bit?*

Judy: Well I think some people are. Some people are more adept at managing more people. I think that statistics show we know about six hundred to a thousand people. But if you wrote down how many of those people have helped you, have honestly helped you – gone out of their way that you can count on. That would be a far less number.

Joe: *You're saying a lot of the relationships especially even in social media and so forth are the responses back, who you're connecting with, who's coming back. You should take notice and address those types of people in building your structure and your strategy.*

Judy: Yes. I think it's critical that you focus on people that first share your similar values. Joe, I used to say all the time "I would only let people in my network who had a good head, a good heart and a good gut". Because you can find people smarter than you all day long, they'll stab you in the back. You can find great "b-sers" who don't do what they say they're going to do, they don't get back to you, they don't take calls, and then people that

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just lack common sense. Those people are dangerous to have in your network. You need to guard your social capital.

I finally boiled it down to “is this person an Oprah or a Martha Stewart?” Now they’re both billionaires, extremely successful, brilliant in executing their vision in what they do. But personally, if I had to pick somebody to trust based on my values, it’s Oprah.

Joe: *When I look at this 5 50 100 - I’m a marketing guy, I segment everything. I have separate connector roles and connections out there or should work, business and pleasure be all kind of together?*

Judy: I recommend that people use the VIPorbit. Mike Muhney, who invented the CRM industry. He is the cofounder of ACT software. It's a free app. Its rated number one for your iPhone or iPad, and you can rank people in different orbits. But they could belong to different orbits. Sometimes I know someone who is a VC, who also is an author, who also is a friend. So you literally could have them in different groups.

I met a gentleman who had forty thousand names in the database. He had them all segmented. This person is in real estate, this person is a banker, but at the end of the day forty thousand people - I would prefer that people have quality relationships that they can pick up the phone. Now if you invest in a relationship and develop that relationship you can go months without contacting that person. So it really isn't as difficult as a lot of people think to build and to manage.

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What I recommend is the three metrics that I want people to have, which is; robust, deep and wide. Robust means that people will return your phone call or they will offer an introduction or they will bring you an opportunity. Deep is people that have influence, have power, have gravitas so they can make things happen for you. And then wide is across different industry segments, so that regardless of what you need, you've got some body in that group of fifty that can help you. I learned this accidentally Joe when I lived in a small thirty thousand town in Idaho and I was put on the hospital board of directors. I was writing a business weekly column for the newspaper on business ethics and leadership. My neighbor was the Senate Majority Leader and I work for a fortune 300 company. Well even though it was a small community, I could get anything done I needed because I had powerful people across different segments.

I replicated that model. First, regionally. Then across the United States and now globally. So literally, Lesley Seymour, the editor of More Magazine, reached out to me and said "Judy, were going to be doing an article on *Wantpreneurs to Entrepreneurs*, could you share some ideas or some contacts?" I very quickly introduced her to Katy Kay who is the author of a wonderful book on self confidence in women, "The Self-Confidence Code. I introduced her to Jon Medved, who arguably is the number one VC guy in Israel. So you know just two or three connections, she called me and went "I'm just amazed!" It's because I have these strategic relationships across some different sectors that can be very valuable. So regardless of the problem, I can connect people.

Joe: *Any more we seem to find this point of entry or connection to a company, and if we do connect and get within the company - it seemed like the second meeting, there are six*

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or seven people with different priorities and views about our product or service. Can I take some other practices from your book and start sorting that web of people within an organization? Maybe come up with my own 2 4 10 rule or something?

Judy: Yes. Absolutely Joe, and that's probably imperative for you to be successful because you know as soon as you get in a room with a bunch of people in a committee, the ability to get to the key decision-maker-you're very limited. So you're absolutely correct.

Joe: *So what are some the principles that I might use working within an organization and trying to use it from a sales perspective?*

Judy: One of the rules that I teach people, and this is either in or outside of companies, is what I call the two golden questions. You can approach people. Tell them your story or what you're doing and then you ask "what other ideas do you have for me". And two, "who else do you know that I should talk to". Often, particularly in organizations, there is the organizational structure as it exists but behind the scenes you can find out where the real power is. Often it isn't in that org chart and so by asking "who else do you know I should talk to" or "what other ideas do you have for me", that really allows you to curate the best information, in the best context and also the best people to talk to.

When I worked at the hospital, I found out that rather than the administration it was the nurses even the housekeepers who really knew what was going on in the organization.

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Joe: *What I have to ask you is, "how did you acquire the name the woman with a titanium digital rolodex"?*

Judy: Yeah. Somebody started saying that. I think they used it in a couple of articles and said I was a new breed of super connector. I have this titanium rolodex based on a how many billionaires, millionaires I have and I tell you Joe it wasn't planned at all. I remember being so excited the first time that I knew a millionaire. I grew up in a small town in Idaho. I didn't know anybody of power, of influence or of wealth. I was shy and so I learned these lessons over time and decided that I would teach. When I started, I guess you would say coming out of the closet a bit, I found out that I wasn't so shy and I found out most people are more than gracious and are happy to help. You have to ask!

People just started saying "you're a super connector! You're not a networker. You're a super connector!" The reason how to be a power connector- the power is the ability to make things happen. I love to make things happen. If you have the dots and we have all of those resources, it's just a matter of strategy and leverage. If I know X person, then how can I get to you this person. I call it in my book "triangulation" and at that point you can literally make anything happen if you have three points.

Joe: *I'm connected with this person and with this person and we're building a power network structure. But I can connect all day and at the end of the day what happens if there's nothing happening for me?*

Judy: Well then I would say that you really need to think hard about the network that you

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have and maybe bump it up to a higher level. What often happens is that people don't know. They have people in their network but they don't even know who they know.

Mike Muhney, who is the co-founder of ACT, flew to Salt Lake to meet with me. I said "I've never heard of VIPorbit. What are you doing for marketing?" He talked to me and he reflected a bit. He said, "You know Judy, if I could just get an article in Success Magazine." I said Mike, when you go back to Texas, I want you to pick up the phone. Call Wendy Keller, who is my agent and who introduced us and you've known for years. Because guess what, her friend is Darren Hardy, the publisher of Success Magazine. Literally, his jaw dropped. He said "are you kidding me".

This happens all day long. I find that people don't know who knows who in their network. So the research shows your influence is limited to a friend of a friend, of a friend. But if you have not shared with the people you already know; what you are doing, where you are going, and ask "who else do you know I should connect to", you are missing out. There's gold already in your network that you are not leveraging.

Joe: *How do I keep track of all these stuff? Digital rolodex, that rolodex or creating some structure to it? Or is it all in my head? How do I keep track of it?*

Judy: I have people, in my book, do kind of a map of the network that they already have. People write to me from all over the world and said "oh my gosh, I now can see that here I have these two people that I could do something for". First you need to get a lay of the land, have kind of a map.

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I just have them on Outlook. When I get introduced to someone, I've now gotten smart enough to put when I met them and who introduced me to them, and I actually use VIPorbit. But if you are only dealing with twenty five to fifty people and you're not dealing with all of those people in one day, or even one week or one month, then it isn't so hard to keep track of. I think it's hard initially to get your mind wrapped around this different concept. But once you've tried it, you will literally be amazed.

I tell people. Make an introduction once a week but then follow up and see what happened. What ends up happening is you become the go to person. The go to person knows about deals. They know about the how the money flows. They know opportunities. They know about jobs. So, you build a network that is like a vortex that moves up and out.

Joe: *You have to be somewhat systematic about it?*

Judy: Yes, I think you need to be a little bit at least thoughtful and strategic. Otherwise, you're like a quote I read a long time ago. "If you keep doing what you've always done, you always get what you always got." I used to think, "Well, what do I need to do different?" I didn't get it. I was swimming in a very small pond. I was in this little pond and as soon as I took the blinders off, got out of my comfort zone, expanded my network up to the next couple of levels. Then, I was shocked.

You can think about this in your own career. I worked for Universal Foods (the number 2 player in the potato industry with McDonald's). Everything we did was agriculture and potatoes. Then, I became the vice president of a hospital and my whole world revolved

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around healthcare. We get stuck in these comfort zones. What I find in people is they have their close friends and family but that next level out tends to be people just like them. If you're in sales and marketing, most of the people are just like you. So, that's a very limited network.

Joe: *Think about young people. They've grown up in this connected world with thousands of Facebook friends. Are they more apt to be able to handle this? Does it require more work of someone who didn't grow up in a connected world as what they did? Are they more natural in this area?*

Judy: I think they are a bit more natural because they've had the technology. They've got all the devices and they don't have the issues of privacy. The older generations - people like you and I, Joe - we grew up where we didn't share everything with everybody else. It seems like the younger generation isn't so concerned about that.

We're in a perfect storm with web 2.0 and all the platforms. LinkedIn is now 300 million business professionals and it's critical that you're on that. They did a study showing Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. The other ones had single digit return on your time and effort. LinkedIn had 47%. The people who are on that, they want to network. They are happy for you to reach out to them. These platforms have connected us globally. Also, with crowdfunding, we now confine funding. A lot of the access to these critical resources is much easier now that we have the technology.

I laugh when I get on a plane and a three-year-old's throwing a fit because they can't get

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on Wi-Fi. It would be fun to see what these kids create.

Joe: *What's something that I didn't ask that you'd like to add about the book and what you're doing?*

Judy: The most important thing that I want people to realize is that, often, you're just one or two people away from being able to be successful with your personal and professional goals and to understand that 95% of the people out in the world are good human beings. But you have to ask. When you get comfortable with that and just move up your emotional IQ and your social ability just a bit, you will be amazed at the payoff.

Joe: *Where can I find the book and how could someone contact you?*

Judy: The book is currently in Barnes & Noble and Amazon. My website's www.judyrobinett.com. I'm on LinkedIn. People can e-mail me judy@judyrobinett.com. I'm happy to answer questions.

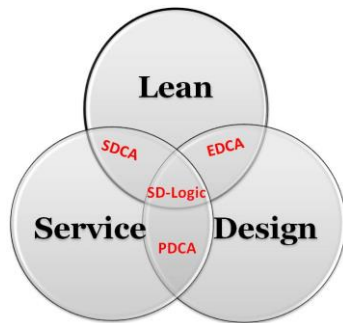
Joe: *I would like to thank you very much, Judy. It was a delightful conversation and I look forward to my next re-read of your book which I think is in the works here. I'll probably do it inside this time rather than out the pool.*

Judy: Thank you so much.

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Joe Dager is president of Business901, a firm specializing in bringing the continuous improvement process to the sales and marketing arena. He takes his process thinking of over thirty years in marketing within a wide variety of industries and applies it through Lean Marketing and Lean Service Design.

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