

Breakthrough Masterclass Workbook

*Take the Thriveable Pathway©
to
Breakthrough Marketing*

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Introduction

For easy reference, here are the full transcripts of all 5 Episodes of your **Breakthrough Masterclass**.

PLUS there are **Bonus Interactive Sections** you can use to take notes.

Contents

Episode-1 Take Away the Stress	Pg 2
Episode-2 Asking the Right Questions	Pg 5
Episode-3 The Engagement Method for Stronger Customer Relationships	Pg 8
Episode-4 Creativity in Business	Pg 11
Episode-5 The Magic of the Story	Pg 14

Episode-1: Take Away the Stress

One of the biggest lessons I've learned in life, that has had a major impact on my business, is all to do with mindset.

If you approach any issue in your business from a stressed, urgent, panicked place, the decisions you make, most often, aren't the best.

When I first time heard this, a few years ago, I thought back to decisions I'd made that didn't go the way I had hoped.

It was clear that each bad decision was made when I was highly stressed. And the problem with that, is it compounds.

As a consequence, now, every time we have to make any decision, we follow the process that I'm going to share with you here.

I'm sure you can picture a stressful moment - things are being thrown at you from every angle, and in the middle of that, everyone needs an answer.

Sometimes, you have to make immediate decisions, but if you start each day with these techniques, you'll be better equipped to handle them.

Every day I start with a SMILE, really. Actually it starts the night before.

Ending each day with gratitude, even if it's the worst of days, there's always something to be grateful for – and helps you sleep.

Now if you're rolling your eyes and thinking this is a bit new-age, just hang in there, I promise it will help.

Because I've been doing this practice now for several years, I can even see the benefits of bad experiences.

I'll say something like "I'm so grateful that I now know that I don't want..." whatever it is. Or "I'm so grateful that I was presented with this challenge, and I know a solution will come to me when I least expect it".

What that does, is take it out of your head, so you don't spend a sleepless night worrying about it. It takes practice, but it works.

The next morning, if the problem is the first thing that pops into your head, give yourself permission to put it aside.

What I do is turn it around to, "I'm really looking forward to today, I know I can tackle anything that comes my way".

I used to start my day looking at what needed to be done, checking emails, and instantly getting stressed. And that mood followed me all day.

So, the simple practice of changing my morning, completely changed my life.

I became happy, I'm creative, and everyone around me feeds off that energy.

There is lots of science behind this, which I won't go into here.

Except to say that your hormones play a critical role, and you have the ability to change them... to turn on your love and happy hormones.

And that will change your life. It will change the way you make decisions, and the way you see problems.

But most of us will need to refresh that morning mood during our day.

And the best way to do that is breathe.

The military uses a technique before going into combat called Box Breathing.

Now let's give it a go. Breathe in for 4 counts, then hold 4, breathe out for 4, and hold for 4. Relax your body, and do it a few times without tension.

I think about an actual box in my mind while I'm doing it. It helps you move your mind away from the problem.

Have you noticed how your heart rate has slowed, and you feel more in control? You might need to do this a couple of times. Essentially, breathing is the key to calm. So try clearing your mind through breathing.

In fact it's something we recommend you start any meeting with. It gets everyone on the same page so you can focus on the task at hand.

There are times however that breathing alone isn't enough. That's when it's time to do something different.

You can try meditation, go for a walk, watch a funny video, and smile at life.

Make a commitment today. Write down, using the space below, what you can do to bring more happiness & clear thinking into your day.

Episode-2: Asking The Right Questions

Asking the Right Questions will unlock fresh thinking about a marketing problem that needs solving.

Whether that's how to develop and deliver a completely new offering, or maybe you need to find an innovative way to repackage your existing line.

Sometimes a solution can be staring you in the face. And is only obvious afterwards because you're too bogged down, spinning wheels, to clearly see alternatives.

This is how most of us approach a problem in business - you schedule a meeting to try and come up with solutions.

But if the team gathers to just discuss how bad things are, starting the meeting by asking, "what can we do to solve this problem?" all you've managed to do is increase the amount of stress and waste more time.

But as soon as you step outside the problem, and look at what you're really trying to achieve, that's when you can find a different solution.

Which could have nothing to do at all with the original problem, but has actually opened up a new opportunity.

Many businesses are now experiencing disrupted supply-chains, threatening the basis of their product or service. Or customer needs and behaviours are changing over the course of the pandemic.

So instead of focusing on 'What' you are providing and trying to patchwork a short-term fix, start by asking the really basic question of "WHY are we doing this?"

This is not to create negative self-doubt. But in the spirit of freeing your mind and being open to fresh positive thinking, it's about understanding what your customers actually need from you.

Because it's not your product or service itself that matters to them, but the end-benefit they gain in their life by using you.

You've probably heard the story about the reason WHY people buy a quarter-inch drill, is not because they want the drill. It's because they want a quarter-inch hole.

And WHY do they want the hole?

It might be to build a shelf, to brighten their room with a much-loved piece of art or homeware. Which they can show off to other people, and so on.

So, if you understand your customer's WHY, which by the way is often an emotional motivator, not just functional, you can then explore "WHAT IF we did this differently?" using materials, experience, knowledge, and skills we do have available, to deliver that end result.

“Assumptions are made and most assumptions are wrong.”
— Albert Einstein

ASSUMPTIONS can lead you astray. By nature, we're creatures of habit and will stick with what we know. After all, if the business has prospered in the past, why change?

Except the future can be very uncertain, as we well know. And if we don't challenge ourselves to get ahead of the game the 3 Cs of CIRCUMSTANCES, CUSTOMERS, COMPETITORS can cause us to remain stuck in the past, and irrelevant in the 'new normal'.

Asking WHAT IF can be very stimulating and energising. As well as reinventing the way you deliver the customer benefit, it can also lead to uncovering new opportunities for filling a customer need you hadn't thought of before.

Which leads to the final step of asking "HOW do we make this new idea happen?"

Do we have everything we need to build a prototype model or system? Or do we need more information?

The HOW question may need to be broken-up into manageable chunks for testing. And a series of further WHAT IF questions needed to make progress.

Which all add to your new knowledge and perspective on WHY you're doing this in the first place.

Takeaway

There's no need to feel bogged down in a problem looking for just a short-term fix.

Apply a free mind and fresh thinking by Asking the Right Questions to open up new opportunities and ideas, based on your customers REAL needs.

Ask ...

WHY are we doing this?"

"WHAT IF we did this differently?"

"HOW do we make this new idea happen?"

So, instead of being stuck in the past, you have both a solution to address the current situation, and a positive way of tackling problems as they arise in the future.

Episode-3: The Engagement Method for Stronger Customer Relationships

So who DO you talk to, for the information you need to find new opportunities and create new ideas?

Top priority has to be your CUSTOMER. Of course, along the way you'll probably talk to your team, suppliers, stakeholders and so on. Which is fine and helpful.

But none of this is truly actionable, and will be wasted effort - unless you involve Customers in the process. And for the quality and depth of answers you need to break through, you must have a strong relationship with them.

Just as in real life with your family and friends, you can't have a deep & meaningful chat without having firstly established trust and an emotional bond that goes beyond just the transaction.

Now Customer Relationships is a massive topic, with so much you can study about it! For good reason, as it's the lifeblood of your business - directly leading to sales. So today, I just want to focus on some key points that directly relate to stimulating fresh thinking, and lead you to **Breakthrough Marketing**.

Which I've organised as a summary called **The Engagement Method®**. It's not complicated, and hopefully makes a lot of common sense. But many small businesses still miss out on the benefits, which I will share.

Let's start with how we observe many businesses interacting with their customers in a cold, 'transactional' manner, across their touchpoints. And it's too easy to fall into, especially online, when customers are seen as nothing more than numbers on a spreadsheet.

When in reality they are all flesh & blood, real human beings. HUMANISING your customers means doing some homework.

A technique we see used by successful businesses is creating a profile of their IDEAL CUSTOMER. They give them a name and compile their gender, age, location, occupation, income, family size, recreation interests, social media habits. Which is a good start.

But how about their hopes, fears, and aspirations? What does a typical day in their life look like? Because these all have a great impact on the types of products and services they'll seek out to fulfill their emotional needs, not just the product function.

You could run a fun TARGET-STORMING session with your team to capture everything you possibly can...

To paint a detailed picture of the most important person in your life, that you want to form a close, long-term relationship with.

Create a thumbnail image of your Ideal Customer, and even a video slideshow of their world.

Which you then make available to every team-member, and use as a filter for your decision-making, and touchpoint messaging.

You now have a solid platform for When, Where and How you engage with customers.

In a way that's relatable to their daily life, not only for selling to them, but also asking questions.

Which leads to a second key point in The Engagement Method© about how you approach people for market research. Gone are the days of sending out a survey that looks like a tax form.

A customer survey is just as much a marketing touchpoint as any other, and must feel like a personal conversation.

Write questions in warm & friendly language, use images whenever possible, and make it about them. Don't ask 'How did we do?', but 'How do we make it better for you?'.

The third and final aspect of **The Engagement Method**© I'd like to share with you is this headline...

Customer Relationships are not a One-Night Stand!

They take time to both build, AND maintain, but are worth the effort in so many ways.

Again, going back to my original point about how a cornerstone of Breakthrough Marketing is being able to ask deeper, more meaningful questions.

Once people trust you enough to engage in conversations with you, there's so much potential for bringing them right inside your exploration and creative activities. Where you're looking for new opportunities and ideas.

I'm a big fan of building a database of VIP Customers to keep in regular contact with – but not hard-selling or hyping them! But giving them free tips, special offers, behind-the-scenes views and so on.

I've done this myself in a new retail business, and it works wonders, as people are so used to being treated like commodities, not humans.

Takeaway

Building a strong Customer Relationship brings many benefits. Not just to grow revenue, but also have the ability to Ask the Right Questions...

So you can unlock a solution to a marketing issue... find new opportunities... and create new ideas.

Use **The Engagement Method**© as a guide to making best use of your Customer touchpoints.

Notes:

Episode-4: Creativity in Business

Did you know that 98% of us were born creative geniuses? But that rapidly declines as we become adults, to only 2%.

If you haven't watched the fabulous TED talk by Sir Ken Robinson "Do schools kill creativity?" it's an eye opener.

Like any muscle it just needs exercising, and the earlier episodes in this Breakthrough Masterclass, are great ways to exercise them.

Because once you change your MINDSET, like we did in **Episode-1**, once you start ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS from **Episode-2**, and you build STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS with more empathy in **Episode 3**, you're well on your way to improving your creativity.

One of the most important elements in creativity is CURIOSITY.

The reason why children are creative, is that they constantly ask WHY?- those never-ending naïve questions that annoy adults!

One of my favourite business stories that was based on a naïve child's question, is the Instant Camera. OK some of you won't know what I'm talking about.

It was in the days when film had to be processed in a darkroom. So, Edwin Land was holidaying with his daughter, and taking lots of photos, when his daughter asked... "WHY can't we see the picture without waiting?"

Instead of replying with "well that's the way it's done", he thought about it.

Now it might have had a bit to do with the fact that he was on holiday. Had his daughter have asked while he was at work, the Polaroid, which he eventually invented, may not have happened.

And that's an important clue in creativity. We need to allow our mind time to digest an issue. Often in business, it's when someone from the outside asks the naïve questions... like, "WHY do you do that?" that sparks new ideas - but only if you're listening. Only if you have an open mind.

And that's often the biggest problem in business. No one's listening.

Your team might be frustrated about a way they have to do something. But they're frightened to say anything. In many cases they'll be seen as insubordinate, or even stupid. So they sit on their frustration which is often the silent killer of a business.

That problem might be having a bigger impact than you can see right now.

It might be slowing down a process, making it more expensive to produce, etc. Plus, that team member isn't going to be happy. They just keep going, doing what's expected, day-after-day with no real passion.

But by encouraging naïve questions, by simply giving them permission to explore, and share, you're opening up to new opportunities.

Now I know this maybe to be hard to swallow. But sometimes the best thing you can do is take a break. If you're grappling with a problem, and getting nowhere, then the worst thing you can do is focus on it.

So, rather than go off at someone, flip it around. With something like "Well, we've always done it that way, but it doesn't mean it's right. If you think of something that could be improved, my door's always open to new ideas".

You never know, you might be opening up a new and smarter way of doing it. And you're also empowering your team. You're giving them permission to question, and come up with solutions.

I've heard the argument from some business owners that the last thing they want is a flood of crazy, time- wasting ideas. And yes, not every idea is a good one, but it might open the gate for a better one.

Otherwise, if you've completely shut the gate, you're locking out potential growth.

Another way of creating something new is by COMBINING. Which is making unexpected connections between seemingly unrelated items. Dollar Shave Club connects the traditional off-the-shelf razor commodity with an online membership model. It started from the founders' frustration with affordability, but rapidly evolved into a fun and engaging experience.

It might be adding a new twist to something old. Star Wars is a great example of a new MASH-UP of classic Flash Gordon, Westerns and WWII aerial dogfight genres.

There's a reason this works, and that's because it's based on the familiar. We're more likely to understand the new idea if we still see something in it, we know. So, from a business perspective, it's easier to gain traction.

I want to make it clear at this time, I'm not talking about reinvention, and being the next Edwin Land. Although that's a possibility if that's what you want!

But in most cases, it's about the small things in your business, that lead to incremental change. That's the sign of a business that's growing, with an eye on the future.

A business that constantly surprises and delights customers with Breakthrough Marketing.

Takeaway

Breakthroughs happen because you QUESTION ... LISTEN ... BUILD RELATIONSHIPS ... and throw the gate OPEN TO CREATIVITY.

What can you do in your business to improve creativity?

Episode-5: The Magic of the Story

The reason why marketing doesn't break through, is because many, miss the earlier, critical steps. If you jump straight in with a hard-sell 'transactional' message, you're the same as everyone else. "We need to move more widgets, so reduce the price, give them free delivery"-the list is endless. But what I hope you've gained from this series so far, is that there's so much more you need to understand, to break through, and engage your customers.

When you have a deeper understanding of customers, as we learned in **Episode 3**, you'll know what really motivates them beyond just the transaction.

When you've given your team permission to create new ideas, to be naïve, ask questions. When you listen, and question yourself.

That's how you break through - cutting through the clutter of what most businesses call marketing, which is more like yelling "over here, look at us!"

Your winning edge is standing out by connecting with your audience on an emotional level. You're different and demonstrating that in your communications.

Telling them you care, and building trust. I've spent many years both studying and experiencing what makes a successful business. And in most cases it comes back to COMMUNICATION. The leader's ability to motivate the team, and bring people along on the journey. And that's essentially what marketing communication is. You're building a relationship, bringing customers along on your journey, and motivating them to trust you with their hard-earned dollars.

Harvard Professor Gerald Zaltman says that 95% of purchase decisions are made for emotional reasons. So, if you don't understand WHY someone buys from you, then how can you connect with them emotionally?

I'm not sharing something new here, we've known this since the dawn of business. We need to motivate people to buy. But we're stuck in a rut of Ready, Fire, Aim advertising and calling it marketing. We're fixated on advertising our latest specials, and yes in some categories saving money is emotional, but it's never just that. And if your competitor is also promoting a special, then why buy from you? It comes back to understanding your customer and their deeper motivations.

Many advertising messages say they're 'The Best'. But that's only sustainable if you continue to improve. The lessons we're sharing have to be part of remaining the best. It's about continuous improvement.

Let's use Bunnings as an example. They say they have the Lowest Prices, Guaranteed. But if price was their ONLY differentiation, then they wouldn't as successful. Instead, they say "Our ambition is to provide our customers with the widest range of home improvement products at the lowest prices every day, backed with the best service".

Yes, with everyday items you can purchase in several places, price becomes an issue. But what Bunnings has done is identified OTHER motivators. They know that shopping somewhere that has everything you need saves time. And you get help on the spot, "which is the right widget for doing this...?".

Here's one more quick trick I use to understand a target audience's emotional needs. And that's to monitor national advertisers. These guys have massive budgets and they've run extensive market research - so start watching the ads, and ask what's the EMOTION they're connecting with?



That's the Story of your Breakthrough Marketing...

The magic is in how you free your mind, to ask childlike questions, and be wide open to new possibilities.

How you build customer relationships, and bring them with you on your journey of curiosity and creativity.

In the quest for new opportunities and ideas to make their life better, and give you a more secure future.

What's Your Story?

While this is all fresh in your mind, use the space below to just free-write. No one's checking for mistakes, it's about capturing your story.

What makes you different? What gives you that X-Factor?