

Business For Superheroes Podcast Transcription: Episode Forty Seven: Trust Me, I'm A Rapport-Builder



In an industry stuffed with marketing bullshit, empty promises and shiny-suited liars, one woman's had enough. She knows what it's like to have the wrong clients, no money and no time for fun, but she also knows how to fix it, and, on the Business For Superheroes Show, she promises to tell the down and dirty truth about business, sales and running away with the circus! Here's your host: Vicky Fraser...

Vicky: Hello and welcome to the Business For Superheroes Show. It's a spooky Halloween episode this evening!

Joe: Ugh, it's not. It's not even a little bit spooky

Vicky: Aw man. It's really foggy outside. It's like uber fog. You are so mean.

Joe: I am.

Vicky: Welcome to the Business For Superheroes Show. My name's Vicky Fraser and I'm going to be really boring for the rest of the podcast because that's what my co-host, Joe Fraser, would like to happen.

Joe: Hello!

Vicky: Hello.

Joe: Hello.

Vicky: So it actually is Halloween right now.

Joe: It is. We're sat in front of a window and there will be, at some point, some small child turning up rattling a bag.

Vicky: Or possibly a horrifying zombie clown-face.

Joe: Or possibly a horrifying zombie clown-face. If there is a scream in the middle of this podcast it's because somebody has snuck up on us and is peering in the window.

Vicky: Or maybe actually snuck up on us.

Joe: That door is closed, right?

Vicky: I don't know. It's closed. So, it's Halloween today and we made a spook-tastic Halloween marketing video over the weekend, didn't we, Joe?

Joe: Yeah. It had amazing production values, it was well-rehearsed. It was everything a top-notch video should really be.

Vicky: It was neither of those things but it was very cool.

Joe: Neither of those things.

Vicky: Well, it was everything a top-notch video should be because - tell the listeners why it was top-notch...

Joe: I filmed it. No?

Vicky: I won!

Joe: Oh, you won the competition.

Vicky: I won the competition, yeah. I subscribe to Ben Settle's Email Players - he's like the email marketing dude and he knows pretty much everything there is to know. I'm going to ask him to come on the podcast at some point and talk to us about email marketing.

Joe: That'll be a good one.

Vicky: It will be a good one. It'll be a really bloody good one. And now he knows who I am because I won his competition, he might agree to come on the show, which is really cool. Anyway, he has done-- Every month they do an

email competition basically, so you'll write an email and put it up there and the winner will get a bag of swag. Don't know what the swag is yet. Apparently it arrives on a magical unicorn, which is what I'm most excited about.

Joe: That'll be cool.

Vicky: But this week they had a guy called Tyson Zarna - I've probably pronounced his name horribly wrong there so many apologies. But he's a video marketing expert and so this month it was email and video form, basically. So you know how sometimes I do my daily emails on a video. I've just started a YouTube channel, finally. I've been meaning to do that for months. Yes, so I thought, "I'm going to enter this" and I entered it and we put together this Halloween video, didn't we?

Joe: We did.

Vicky: Which you should totally go and watch by the way because it's hilari-mouse. It's at www.tinyurl.com/spookydingle.

Joe: Good shout. Well done.

Vicky: I know, right. The link will be in the show notes but you should go and have a look at it. Partly because I think it's amusing, partly because I won and that's pleased me greatly, and partly because it's relevant to what we're going to be talking about today, on today's podcast. Carrying on the FBI hostage negotiation theme--

Joe: Will it ever end?

Vicky: Will it ever end. I don't know, probably not. It could go on forever. Carrying on that theme, we are now on step three.

Joe: Oh good lord. What? We've done about six of these so far. How can we be on step three?

Vicky: Because we did a whole thing on active listening, which was really valuable for people. And then we did some empathy last week and played people the country blues song. So this week is all about building rapport.

Joe: Okay, how do we do that?

Vicky: Well I thin first of all, Joe, you should re-cap the previous stages.

Joe: The previous five episodes.

Vicky: No, the three stages.

Joe: The three stages. Okay, aw man--

Vicky: I haven't even given him any notes.

Joe: This is not fair. There's active listening.

Vicky: Yeah, well done.

Joe: Thank you.

Vicky: You're welcome.

Joe: Then there's, oh I don't know-

Vicky: "Eh"...

Joe: Empathy.

Vicky: Sorry I was just having a bit of a yawn then, that's why it came out a bit weird.

Joe: So, empathy and then there was this one that we're talking about today, which is building rapport. Then after that comes influence. And after that comes--

Vicky: Behavioural change.

Joe: Behavioural change.

Vicky: Or control, or whatever. So today we're on building rapport because we've now, obviously, we've listened, we've shown empathy.

Joe: We've understood.

Vicky: Understood. And now we are building rapport. So empathy is what you feel. Rapport is when they feel it back. Kind of. And they start to trust you.

Joe: So at this point, at this juncture, I am the hostage negotiator? We are talking from the point of view Because empathy and rapport are just opposite sides of the same coin. Seen from a different side? No?

Vicky: Well sort of. Empathy is showing that you understand what somebody is going through and-- okay, that was a definition that I got from one of the FBI hostage negotiation articles that I was reading because I read all kinds of crazy crap like that. But then I thought, "What's the actual definition of rapport". So, the actual definition of rapport, according to the Merriam Webster dictionary (I think I got it from) is, "A close and harmonious relationship in which the groups concerned understand each other's feelings or ideas, and communicate well". Which is pretty much what you want to aim for with your marketing. And also what you want to aim for if you're negotiating with a hostage-taker.

Joe: So would it be right to say that empathy is a one-sided thing, "I understand what they're going through". And rapport is, "We understand what each other are going through".

Vicky: Yes that's a very good and succinct explanation Joe, thank you. It's very good. So that's pretty much what we're talking about here, building rapport. The whole point of this is that you want to get people to trust you because if they don't trust you, they're never going to buy from you.

Joe: This isn't about unfairly getting people to trust you. Or misleading them into trusting you. Or bending their tiny little jelly-brain into trusting you.

Vicky: No.

Joe: This is legitimate because you've spoken, and you've understood, and you've listened, and everybody is building this trust together. It's legit trust.

Vicky: Yeah, totally. This is building relationships. This isn't--

Joe: This isn't trying to sell double glazing to little old ladies.

Vicky: Not at all.

Joe: Sorry to any double glazing salesmen out there.

Vicky: Well, no. the good ones won't be offended and the bad ones will feel triggered and need a safe space, probably! [Laughter]

Joe: No, don't go there.

Vicky: Don't go where?

Joe: The whole triggering thing.

Vicky: I wasn't going to.

Joe: Moving on.

Vicky: I was glancing back at my notes because-- I can't read my notes. I'm getting old.

Joe: You are.

Vicky: This isn't even small.

Joe: It's quite far away.

Vicky: It is quite far away, that's true. So, we're building rapport with our customers and clients to build trust. We're doing it in a real way, like you say. This is not manipulating people, this is building actual relationships, which is a much more fun way to do your marketing. Total more fun. Really you want to give your prospects your attention, that's one of the first things you need to do

if you want to build rapport with them. You want to speak to the things that they care about in your marketing. When you're writing your websites and writing your sales letters, you're not having a face-to-face conversation with them, so it's not like you can get immediate feedback. This is where knowing your customer comes in. You need to be talking about the things that they care about. But you can ask them questions as well. You can interact with them, even if you're not actually speaking to them. Online surveys, online questionnaires, getting people's opinions - all of which is useful stuff to do. Also, ask your actual clients and customers questions as well. Ask them about themselves. Not just professionally, but personally as well. In the olden days, old-school salesmen had their little black books - do you remember? I say do you remember-

Joe: I was never an old-school salesman.

Vicky: No but you have heard of such a thing. They would have these books and in them would be all the customer details like name and phone number, what they'd bought, whether you'd spoken to them and all the rest of it. But they would also have in these little books their wives' birthdays, their children's' birthdays, where their children go to school, what their favourite films are. All this useful information that they can use to build up a relationship and talk about stuff that they care about. You might think, "That's a bit manipulative" but it's not really because that's actually a lot of effort to go to, to gather this information about people and make them feel special.

Joe: If you understand that they're struggling to pay college tuition. If you're looking for people, you can categorise people and help them by pointing them at the right products at the right time.

Vicky: Exactly, yeah.

Joe: A good salesman might know that your son is about to go to college and maybe he needs--

Vicky: A payment plan.

Joe: Maybe he needs a new bank account, or he needs some stuff.

Vicky: Exactly, this isn't about trying to sell people something that they're not interested in, or they don't want. This is about selling to people who already want what it is that you're offering but they're not necessarily going to buy it from you. That's kind of what it's all about. Let's have a little look at how we can build rapport with people. I'm going to share my top favourite ways to do that with your marketing towards the end of the podcast. But I just wanted to talk a little bit more about actual communication and one of the most important things - what's that face for?

Joe: Nothing. It's my face.

Vicky: It wasn't your normal face.

Joe: Sorry.

Vicky: It doesn't translate to radio.

Joe: It's Halloween.

Vicky: Okay. if you're actually talking to somebody in person, you want to make sure that your communication is congruent - so your verbal communication is congruent with your facial expressions. And your gestures and your tone of voice. None of which you are doing right now!

Joe: So you can't deadpan with a proper no facial expression and say, "I'm really excited to offer you this marvellous product".

Vicky: No but that's actually a really good example of how most people's marketing reads. If you were to read it out loud, that's what most people's marketing would sound like. "I'm really, really passionate about taps."

Joe: Yeah, taps are the future.

Vicky: But you can do that same thing in your writing as well. It's about having a consistent tone of voice and being yourself, which is what my event - which, by the time you listen to this, will be over - is all about. Basically, people can't read your mind. They can only hear what you say, or read what you write, and look at what you do and how you behave. I say that because it's really

important that people trust you. Often when I've met business owners in person, I find that their personality is actually quite different to the way they write and their marketing. Do you find that when you meet people? And see businesses?

Joe: Yeah, there's one guy I deal with, who is one of my customers actually, and he's charming and entertaining in person and then via his written language is so dry, so serious, so very, very unexciting.

Vicky: But that is what most business owners do with their marketing communications, with their copywriting, with their videos. These are people who, when I meet them in person -- before I meet them I might be a bit like, "It's going to be a bit trying" and then I'll meet them in person and they're - like you say - charming and funny and entertaining.

Joe: Fascinating and motivated and all sorts.

Vicky: And my reaction is always, "What on earth happened between your brain and that website?"

Joe: We are fascinated and excited by our diverse range of taps.

Vicky: I'm probably being a little bit mean.

Joe: You don't actually know anybody who sells taps, do you?

Vicky: No, I don't.

Joe: Thank goodness for that.

Vicky: Oh, well I don't think that I do. Maybe there's someone. You've derailed me.

Joe: That's kind of what I'm here for.

Vicky: I know. Oh yeah, I remember now. So, what happens between their brain and the page of boring copy is zombie marketing plague, I think. It's fear. I think people think that they need to look professional.

Joe: Sound like a legitimate business, when in fact they're just screaming children inside.

Vicky: Which means that actually what they end up looking like is all those old ladies that wander around towns wearing the same, beige coat. You know the ones I mean. And this really pisses me off, why is the only clothes choice for old people, beige? Or grey.

Joe: British racing beige.

Vicky: British racing beige. I just think it's really sad because I bet all of these old ladies and gentlemen have really exciting stories to tell. Like my friend Mo's Auntie Flo, who lived to be 101. She died earlier this year and she was this crazy old lady - not crazy, crazy but this awesome old lady, and she used to be a sword-swallower and fire eater in an actual honest-to-god circus because her husband was the Great Khan, who was a snake-charmer. She met him in the 1930s, which in itself was unusual because she was a white woman from Yorkshire and he was a Persian gentleman in a traveling circus. Which is just awesome. That's a slight divert from where we're talking about, building rapport.

Joe: But the general idea was, Don't be beige.

Vicky: Yeah, don't be beige. Be who you are. Auntie Flo never stopped being who she was. There was this really funny video of her on Facebook waving a knife around on her 100th birthday, and everyone was like, "Oh god!" So, don't be beige. Be yourself. Don't be afraid to be yourself.

Joe: What if yourself is really beige?

Vicky: Then I can't help. But I don't think anybody is really that beige. Not to their ideal target market. Remember people buy from people, they don't buy from corporations. You need to build this rapport. You need to build this relationship. Don't be afraid to give your opinion about stuff that you care about as well, even if it's controversial. You shouldn't have to wrap your personality up in cotton wool, to avoid offending people who are probably never going to like you anyway. You'll never be liked by everyone.

Joe: Find your niche and go for it.

Vicky: I'm on the lists of people and sometimes they make me want to tear my hair out. Ben Settle, one of them - I love his email marketing, I think he's probably a really nice bloke, but some of the things he comes out with, I'm just like, "We are polar opposites".

Joe: Really?

Vicky: Yeah! Total polar opposites in some of our political ideas. He's American as well, so we're going to be wildly different anyway.

Joe: Is he going to vote Trump?

Vicky: I have no idea. I don't actually know and he hasn't said, it's none of my business. I wouldn't ask but I wouldn't have thought so. I respect him totally as a marketer and business owner, and I learn a lot from him because he really knows what he's talking about. But some of his opinions are wildly different to mine. I would imagine that some of my opinions would make him want to tear his hair out. But I bet we'd get on really well if we ever meet because we're both grown ups and you don't have to always agree with somebody to like them and get on with them. That's the way that you need to approach your marketing. You'll find that the people who you really piss off will never be your customers anyway, and they'll just go and do something else and find somebody else. But some of the people who like you, but that you piss off in other ways, might go on then to be some of your very best customers.

Joe: So they respect your honesty.

Vicky: Integrity. Yeah and also if you show a willingness to change your mind if someone can prove you wrong. I will always change my mind if someone can prove that I'm wrong, or show me that I'm wrong. And I have done many times in the past. So there you go really. Be yourself. Don't be afraid to be controversial. Don't be afraid to annoy a few people.

Joe: And don't be offended - rapport is a two-way street, we're not just talking empathy here where you're trying to understand someone else. If it's rapport,

you are displaying your true self to people and making noises and expressing opinions and getting on with it. I guess it's important that you don't get offended when other people do the same.

Vicky: Yeah absolutely. You know what? Wouldn't the world be boring if everyone agreed about everything? And nobody would ever get anything done. There's some things that are beyond the pail - like Donald Trump, for example.

Joe: Hi, Donald!

Vicky: [Laughs] That would be hilarious, wouldn't it? But by and large, most people are pretty reasonable humans, and pretty decent.

Joe: And the ones who aren't, you probably don't want to build rapport with anyway.

Vicky: Exactly. Very few people are not decent people I think, when you get right down to it.

Joe: It's true.

Vicky: And most people have an interesting take on things, and you can learn something from most people if you're willing to do so. Also, don't be upset if you do say something that offends somebody and then they send you a shitogram.

Joe: I'm horribly offended at that. Oh, okay.

Vicky: Which if you only get, "I am horribly offended at that", then you're doing quite well. I've had people telling me to fuck off and die before.

Joe: Nice.

Vicky: Yeah, I know.

Joe: That's classy.

Vicky: I know. And do you remember that woman who wrote me that awful passive aggressive.

Joe: Oh, she was going to pray for you.

Vicky: She was going to pray for me. She was just horrific. She was questioning my parents' parenting skills. Just like, "Oh my god, really? Do one!"

Joe: But she was doing it really sickly sweetly and politely wasn't she. Horrible.

Vicky: She was the very worst type of religious person. Total, nasty hypocrite who feels superior purely because of her - I won't even say faith - religion. Not because of her faith because she was not a person of faith the way I recognise it.

Joe: She was mean.

Vicky: She was hilarious. That was really funny. That was entertaining. I haven't had a lot of hate mail recently. I'm obviously not doing well enough.

Joe: You're not being controversial enough. Maybe all the people who are now listening, or whatever - Hi, Veggard! Maybe you've just pushed everyone else away with your opinion.

Vicky: Maybe I have. I don't think I have particularly objectionable opinions, do I?

Joe: I don't think so.

Vicky: on some things I probably do.

Joe: No, I think you're alright.

Vicky: I'm trying to think of a strong opinion that I can chuck out that's vaguely related to what we're talking about but I can't think of anything at the minute. Okay, homeopathy. Bullshit.

Joe: That'll do!

Vicky: Utter horse toss. Unicorn farts and nonsense. There you go, that should have got rid of a few followers. So, okay, my top ways to create rapport. Let's give people a little bit of a takeaway here. My top ways to create rapport: daily emails, obviously.

Joe: Daily emails work beautifully.

Vicky: They do work beautifully. I get emails.

Joe: Got an email course, if you want one.

Vicky: Got an email course, yeah.

Joe: You could get people started on how to do their daily emails, if they're not sure.

Vicky: Yeah and you can do the same with whatever products you've got out there, whatever thing that you use. Show people how you do it. Charge 'em for it. Don't do it for free. You could do a regular, printed newsletter - my gazette - with a crossword competition, and I actually do give prizes away. Which is really funny because last month I got no entries for the crossword competition at all.

Joe: What? You should have told me, I would have won!

Vicky: No! I've got a house full of books you can read. But as always I give away a book that I'm reading at the moment, which might be a business book, or it might be some daft fantasy, or some book that someone has told me to read. It could be absolutely anything. Nobody sent in the crossword last month so I mentioned that in October's gazette and I've had - seriously - about 20 people enter this month. By the way, not everybody gets a book. I'm not sending 20 books out. It's first person out of the hat gets a book. The winner has already been picked but thank you so much to everybody who sent me a crossword, that's really cool. They keep pouring in and I'm like, "This is really cool". But that's rapport, that's building a relationship because that's not just me firing stuff out at people, that's them sending stuff back to me. I also found out that Ali, who enters the crossword competition every now and then, and whose

kid is awesomely interested in marketing and fills in the crossword, he has just passed his motorcycle test and is thinking of buying a Triumph.

Joe: Good choice.

Vicky: Good choice.

Joe: Got one in the garage that doesn't go out, if you want to make an offer?

Vicky: I'm not selling my bike! You sell your bike. Anyway, daily emails, a regular printed newsletter, a podcast.

Joe: Podcast!

Vicky: A podcast because I know people love listening to this--

Joe: Because they're crazy people?

Vicky: Because they tell us and we've got quite a lot of reviews on iTunes, you know. Most podcasts don't have double-figure reviews because it's really difficult to get people to review - please review us!

Joe: Please review us!

Vicky: Please! What else? Videos! Video marketing like my Halloween video. It's got 120 views so far and I've only, literally, just put up my YouTube channel, so I'm quite pleased with that.

Joe: 120 views.

Vicky: But that's the only video I've got on my YouTube channel. I'm quite pleased about that! And it won! Write a book. Write other documents - ebooks, that kind of thing. Do training courses for people - teach people to do the things you do. Give people help and advice, charge for it. Give a bit away for free but charge for it. So, there you go. In the end it's all about loveable marketing.

Joe: Loveable marketing.

Vicky: Loveable marketing.

Joe: Is that your phrase?

Vicky: I don't know really. Yeah. I won't be able to trademark it because it's too common but that might be what my workshop that I'm doing becomes called. I gave it a really crappy name this time around because I was like, "Ah I'm doing this thing, I need to do it, I need to get it out there" and then I was like, "Who do you think you are? That's a crap name".

Joe: Still going to use it!

Vicky: Well it doesn't really matter now because it's been and gone - well it clearly hasn't yet, but by the time you listen. You know what? Let's just finish there! If you would like to Borrow My Brain, which normally works better than it does right now!

[Laughter]

Vicky: It will work much better after the event.

www.businessforsuperheroes.com/borrowmybrain

Joe: Oh?

Vicky: Yes because Ben - my lovely Ben, who does my PGC - has set up a redirect for me, so that now I don't have a stupid URL.

Joe: You don't have to remember all of the hyphens?

Vicky: No! www.businessforsuperheroes.com/borrowmybrain Let's see if that makes a difference to the bookings! And my Halloween winning video: tinyurl.com/spookydingle

Joe: Well done. That's good.

Vicky: I know, right? So, thanks very much, Joe.

Joe: No worries.

Vicky: We'll be back same time next week and we'll be talking about step number four in hostage negotiation.

Joe: Will it never end?

Vicky: It will never end. So, what's step four, Joe?

Joe: Influence.

Vicky: Yes it is. So, next week we'll be back, influencing in your ears.

Joe: Eew! See ya!

Vicky: Be good and if you can't be good, don't get caught.

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