

Ep #193: The Conundrum: Sharing vs. Asking



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With Your Host

Stacey Brown Randall

Roadmap to Grow Your Business with Stacey Brown Randall

Ep #193: The Conundrum: Sharing vs. Asking

Stacey Brown Randall: It may seem subtle or nuanced, but there is a conundrum for folks when they're determining the idea of sharing versus asking.

You are not just another hustling salesperson. You are the expert, the resource, the valuable partner for your clients, and how you grow your business should reflect how your clients see you.

Welcome to the Roadmap to Grow Your Business podcast. We generate referrals without asking, build positive client experiences, and help you take control of your business.

Here's your charmingly sarcastic host, Stacey Brown Randall.

Stacey Brown Randall: Hey there, and welcome to episode 193 of the Roadmap To Grow Your Business Podcast. I'm your host, Stacey Brown Randall. I want to give a quick, awesome, awesome shout out to my friends, the team at Rev Grow. It's a B2B LinkedIn lead generation company. Mark, who owns Rev Grow, has been a client of mine for many, many years, and I just adore him and his team. They are amazing, amazing folks. And I just wanted to give them our little shout out for today to talk about the number of referrals that they brought in last year. That's right, for the entire year of 2021, they brought in 112 referrals. Woo-hoo! Worth almost \$150,000 in revenue. That is incredible. That is so amazing.

Now, did they close all those referrals? Of course not, but the ones they did close brought them a very sweet revenue amount, and I'm so pleased for them. They have been following the Referral Plan Strategy and Cultivation Strategy for a couple of years now and they've been able

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to grow that to 112 referrals in 12 months, a 12 month period, which I just think is incredible. That's not where they started when we started working together in 2018, 2019, but that's where they've grown it and I just want to say congratulations. So if you're sitting here wondering, you've listened to me do these shout outs of people's success that they have had over the last few weeks, I mean, we've been starting to do this since the first episode of 2022, I've been talking about the reality of what people experience, I just want you to know this could be you too.

Because all of these folks at some point probably had the same questions you had about, will this work for me? And what will the workload look like? And will I be able to do it? And most importantly, will I have success? And that's why I'm sharing these shout outs with you guys at the beginning of these episodes, to just remind you that, yes, there are other business owners, other sale professionals just like you having success and you can have this success too. The difference between them and you though probably is that they're doing the work. They have a strategy. The ones that I teach, whether in Growth By Referrals or Referring Machines or in our signature program, Building A Referrable Business, where they get all the stuff, all the goods, all the strategies, and they're implementing it and they're doing the work. And for that, they are being rewarded because the strategies work and when you work them and do the work that is when your reward comes in. Congratulations to the team at Rev Grow.

Okay, we are going to have a conversation now about a conundrum. So here's the conundrum that I hear from folks. And for some of you, you're going to think this is

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extremely nuanced. And for others of you, you're going to notice the difference right away and you're going to think to yourself, "I've wondered that too." So we're going to tackle it. Is having someone share your content or your service offerings that you do, is having someone share your content or service offerings the same as asking for a referral? Dun-dun-dun. I know it's like, wait. For some of you, you're thinking, "I never thought of it that way." And are others of you, "I've been wondering this all along." So let's dive in and let's talk about it. The first thing I'm going to start with is the end in mind, and the end in mind here is ultimately, folks, this is going to come down to personal preference.

The what you do, the strategies you use, and how you consider this information will all come down to personal preference. Whereas, in my opinion, there may be a better answer or a more right answer than another one. At the same time, you are a grown up running a business and making these kinds of decisions is your job. So deciding on how you feel about it and what you want to do is just one more of those decisions you have to make when it comes to thinking about how you want to grow your business. So when I say the answer here all comes down to personal preference, it does. There are a lot of hard and fast beliefs and philosophies and strategies that we execute from in my world if you are a client of mine or a long time listener of this podcast or you've read my book and you're implement strategies.

There are some distinct sets of beliefs that we believe that allow us to be successful because that informs the strategies and the tactics that we deploy. But then there's other things that fall into the gray. And if things fall into the gray, you get to decide what's going to work for you,

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what's going to feel right, what's going to feel authentic for how you want to show up. And so, in that case, this whole idea between having somebody share your content, share your social media posts, share your articles, share your book, share your service offering, share that promotion that you're running right now, there's the concept of having someone share it and you wondering, how close is that to me asking them for a referral? And more than likely, again, if you're a long time listener or even a first time listener of this podcast, you've stumbled here because you love the idea that what I teach you is never ever going to be teaching you to ask for a referral.

But now we're in some gray because having someone share that stuff, asking them to share, is it the same thing as asking them for a referral? Well, like I said, it all comes down to personal preference. So for you to determine your personal preference, let me define for you both scenarios and then you decide. So let's start with referrals first. A referral is someone putting their reputation on the line to refer another person to you in which that other person is going to understand they're being referred and more than likely working with you means that they will spend money. So a referral is when a referral source, that's what we call the person who's going to connect you to the prospect, so when the referral source connects you to the prospect that prospect has a need that they know you can solve and they're open to being connected because you can solve their problem and they trust the person who says, "Yes, Stacey can solve your problem. I'm going to refer you to her. I'm going to connect you to her."

So a referral is always human to human. It is always a human referring you or connecting you with another

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human who needs a problem solved, and because they know they need to solve that problem and they recognize you're the expert they should trust. That's why they're willing to be connected to you. So I always say there's a reputation on the line and there's typically money on the line. I'm referring you because you're probably going to have to spend money to get your problem solved and here's the right person to hire, and I'm putting my reputation on the line that this person will do a good job. That's how we define our referral. There's a reputation on the line by a referral source and there's money on the line by the prospect deciding to hire you. Let's talk about sharing then.

There is a difference between sharing your book or your podcast or a specific episode. There's a difference when you think about sharing content like maybe an article you wrote. So there's this idea of sharing things that don't necessarily end immediately with someone buying, but the fact is they may become aware of your business could one day lead them to buy. So that's how you have to think about this and this is where you have to get into the gray and make a decision on how you feel. If having people and you're okay with requesting for those people to share maybe a particular podcast episode, maybe your book, maybe they're going to share an article you recently wrote or an article you had published somewhere else or a post on LinkedIn, they're going to share that or another social media post, having people share that. The best is when they just share on their own and they don't have to be prompted by you. That's amazing. That's what we all want.

But the other piece of this is that having them, and this is typically coming by a request from you to share that,

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you've got to decide, does that feel closer to the family of asking for a referral or does it feel like you're just asking them to share content that you've put out there, which is actually different than asking them to share a service offering that you have? Maybe it's a promotional that you have going on. Maybe it's some kind of special deal you're running. Asking them to share that, that is an offer. So clearly when somebody, they share it, that is because they are putting their reputation on the line, and if someone sees it and agrees to it, they may ultimately end up spending money with you. So I think there is a difference. I know you guys are like, "Whoa, we are getting into the nuanced layers here." This is where I spend my days, really thinking through this stuff and really helping my clients understand it and apply it to their business.

And I will tell you this, fundamentally, I believe you should never ask for a referral because those are manufactured asks, those are manufactured referrals, and they never go the way that you want and they never create the consistency of more referrals that you ultimately desire. And then there's the sharing of the offerings that you have, the promotions that you're running, or the discounts that you're offering. And that's pretty close. In some cases, it could be seen as pretty close to the referral piece. And then there's this third layer of the sharing of your content, the sharing of your resources that don't have a dollar amount attached to them. They are the free resources you put out there, whether it's social media, podcast. Technically, a book isn't free because you're probably going to spend less than \$20, but it's definitely not thousands. And then, of course, articles that you may have published, social media posts, things like that.

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So the decision you've got to make here, and what you have to consider here is, ultimately, what this looks like for you. Are you comfortable having people, requesting that people, asking people to share your content versus asking them to share your service offerings or a discount or a promotion versus asking them to actually refer a client or potential client to you? While they seem very similar, there's some differences between them, and what you feel comfortable for should ultimately drive the decision that you make when you find yourself in this position. I typically don't do, I shouldn't say typical, I don't do any of the three above. So I am not going to ask people for a referral. Never, ever. I am not going to ask people to share my discounts and promo codes and service offerings of joining my programs and I'm not going to ask people to share my content.

Now, sometimes people will mention to me, "Hey, this is really, really good," and that's awesome to hear them saying, and I may use a throwaway line like jokingly, "Tell all your friends." I may use a throwaway line, but I'm definitely not going to individually reach out to people and ask them to do work for me. But that is a personal preference. And I have other strategies in place that help me deliver what I'm trying to deliver to grow my business. If I didn't have other strategies in place, like my other key signature referral strategies in place and my situational referral tactics in place to allow me to grow my business, maybe I would consider these things. But I don't. That's not how I want to show up. That's not the reputation I want. That's not the brand reputation that I want. And that's not how I want to feel. I don't want to ever feel uncomfortable when it comes to growing my business.

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There's enough things I'm asked to do in life that makes me feel uncomfortable. I mean, I am parenting three middle schoolers. I feel uncomfortable and completely ill-equipped all the time. I don't need to feel that way in my business. There's enough technology that my business runs on that I feel like I don't know what I doing. I don't also want to have that in a sense of how I'm growing my business. But because I choose not to do these things, there are other things I have to replace it with that are, yes, still work, but they work and I'm willing to do them. And that's the nuance here. That's the gray area you've got to get it down into and decide. You have to decide what you're comfortable with. In the future, may I decide to reach out to some folks that I'm tight with and say, "Hey, would you mind sharing this?" Possibly.

But I'll tell you this, if I ever were to do that, it would be sharing content. It would never be sharing something that had a direct line to money or to a dollar amount that someone was going to ultimately spend with me, because that's just not how I grow my business. That's just not how I show up. A lot of you are in the same camp as me. Some of you are not. You feel differently. You have no problem requesting or asking people to share your offerings, your service offerings, or your promotionals, or your discount, and you have no problem asking people to share your content. The cool thing about being a business owner is that we all get to do ourselves. You do you. I'm going to do me. But for those of you who were sitting there, and I know you're there because I hear from you guys, and you're wondering, is this the same thing as that? This is one of those and I just wanted to address it.

And, again, there's no hard and fast here on where you're supposed to fall in terms of the conundrum of what side of

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this you fall on, but what you are supposed to do is be a business owner and make a decision. But just make sure whatever decision you make, that you have strategies in place to help you grow your business. Because when we say no to one thing, it's because we're choosing to say yes to something else and you've got to make sure you're doing that. And that is most important. So the conundrum always being, is having someone share your content or promotional service offerings the same as asking for a referral? You get to decide for you. And I hope you'll come back and tell me. I hope you will jump into our free community on Facebook. It's called Referrals Without Asking. If you're not a member, go join. Just search for it on Facebook, Referrals Without Asking, or go to staceybrownrandall.com/community, and go ahead and grab your spot in Referrals Without Asking.

And, of course, you can find this on the Show Notes page at staceybrownrandall.com/193. So you can get to the Facebook group from the Shown Notes page, and that's 193. Stacetybrownrandall.com/193. Stacy has an E. Or you can get through it through our community link or just going into Facebook and searching Referrals Without Asking. But I'd love to know your opinion. Where do you fall on this debate? Again, nobody is right or wrong here. So, when we have a conversation like this in the group, it's personal preference. So just share what you prefer and what you like and what resonated with you based on this episode.

Next week, we've got another great episode coming up for you. Yes, we do. It's episode 194. Can you imagine? We're getting so close to 200. It's crazy, oh my goodness. We're coming up, next week is episode 194, and we're going to have a great conversation about two of my

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favorite topics, business protection. I know you wouldn't know that about me, but it's true. Business protection and my ultimate favorite referral, success, all in one episode. So until then, you know what to do, take control and grow your business. Bye for now.

Thanks for listening to the Roadmap to Grow Your Business podcast. To access all resources and links mentioned in today's show, and to connect with Stacey, head over to www.staceybrownrandall.com.