

**Ep #419: Intentionally Designing Your Business**

**ROADMAP**  
*to*  
**REFERRALS**



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Stacey Brown Randall**

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Hey there, do you love referrals but hate asking for them? Well, then you've come to the right place.

***Roadmap to Referrals with Stacey Brown Randall***

## Ep #419: Intentionally Designing Your Business

This is the Roadmap to Referrals podcast, and I'm your host, Stacey Brown Randall. Each week, I break down why you don't have to ask, pay, be gimmicky, or network all the time to generate referrals for your business.

We take a science-backed approach with our methodology, frameworks, and strategies. The goal is simple, to help you take control of your referrals on your terms.

**Ivy Slater:** This is Ivy Slater. Today, I'm taking over Roadmap to Referrals podcast to share an interview that I did with Stacey just a short while ago.

It was such an amazing interview. And on her success story, we interview amazing women leaders and those few exceptional men to learn about their journey and how they have navigated their success.

And you could only imagine the amazing tips Stacey had shared on her journey to success, as well as one of the things we truly have in common is truly referrals and building great relationships.

Listen in because she shared some amazing tips on how to not get overwhelmed on it. I know I was taking notes because I am a huge relationship person.

I'm a huge referral person, but sometimes it can be overwhelming, and Stacey really broke it down. So enjoy the episode.

**Ivy Slater:** Hi, this is Ivy Slater and welcome to today's episode of Her Success Story. So I want to introduce everyone to an amazing dynamic woman.

Stacey Brown Randall and I got to know each other through a networking group. Yes, I still go out and network. I think it's one of the most important things to do is to truly build great relationships with wonderful people.

When I got connected to Stacey, I immediately knew there was a connection. There was so much to talk about. Then she shared she has a new book coming out. I was like, I need to hear more.

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So let me tell you a little bit about Stacey. She's the author of award-winning *Generating Business Referrals without Asking*. Now, her most recent book, *The Referable Client Experience* that just came out.

She's also the host of the *Roadmap to Referrals* podcast. Ladies and ladies and gentlemen, Stacey has such a strong passion around not just referrals, but the relationships that we immediately connected with an alignment that Stacey.

I'm so excited to have you on the show. So welcome to Her Success Story.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Thanks, Ivy, for having me. I'm excited for us to hang out and have this chat.

**Ivy Slater:** Exactly. So I have to, you know, writing one book, and I've also like the followers who follow, like gotten a few books out there. You write one, you think you're one and done.

Like, oh, thank goodness. I got that. I got that under my belt. What was your catalyst to write your most recent book, *Referable Client Experience*?

**Stacey Brown Randall:** I'm going to be honest, it took, my first book came out in 2018. So we are many, many years ago when the first book came out.

And I actually started writing this book in 2019. So like the book came out in 2018. I was like, okay, take a breather.

And then I started kind of formulating my thoughts in 2019 for this book. And then COVID hit and I used COVID as an excuse for way longer than it was actually an excuse.

**Ivy Slater:** I've been there, been there, done that. I will own that as well.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Haven't we all like, it was just like this perfect thing that like presented itself. And I just, I just milked it for all it was worth.

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And so this book probably should have been out in like 2022, but it wasn't. And then finally, I don't, you know, I'm a big believer in doing a lot of reflecting back on in your business.

Like I used to be a productivity and business coach. So before I went all in 12 years ago on like really understanding and looking at from a referral perspective and that being my zone of genius and what I teach, I was into productivity and business coaching.

So I'm a big believer and proponent to this day of looking back at the end of every year, reflecting back on the year. And it was just one of those reflecting activities I had done.

Like, you know, if people aren't referred to me, because obviously I practice what I preach. If people aren't referred to me, where else are they coming from? Because you should always have more than one way for your prospects to land into your world.

And so what I noticed is that the folks that were actually reading my book and then were downloading the, we do secret insider resources that are available just for people who purchased the book. Like there's a special link inside for them.

It was the people that were downloading the resources. And those were the people that I would eventually have conversations with that would eventually hire me if they weren't initially referred to me.

And I was like, why am I waiting to do another book? Business perspective-wise, it makes a lot of sense to have a second book out and probably is going to make sense to have a third book out at some time in the future.

That was the catalyst for me, like, okay, I've got to buckle down. I've got to do this.

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Half the problem with that, though, is once you have your first book, and you know this, Ivy, once you have your first book, you know exactly what you are walking into. And how hard it's going to be.

And some people, like the writing for me is easier than I think for others, but it's still a ton of work. And the rewrites and the second guessing yourself and then the launching of the new book.

Like, you just, you know, you've walked the path before, you know what this looks like. And so I kind of kept putting it off because it is a lot of work.

**Ivy Slater:** It's a lot of work. I mean, there's the expression of ignorance is bliss. Having launched Best of the Best last June, it's like, oh my goodness, it was so much easier launching a book before that because ignorance was bliss.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yes.

**Ivy Slater:** So let's talk about, you ended up niching down into the world of referrals. What was that transition and transformation for you about? Like, how did that come about?

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yeah, so I didn't wake up like one day and be like, okay, my whole business is going to be based on referrals. This is amazing. And this is how I'm going to teach it.

I had a business failure. So my first business was an HR, human resource consulting firm, and it failed after four years. So I am part of the 85% of small businesses that does not make it to the five-year mark.

**Ivy Slater:** Congratulations. That is one of the greatest experiences and learning lessons, unfortunately, we can go with. And it sucks in the moment, by the way. I don't make light of that.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yeah. The only thing good about a business failure is all the things that come after it's done and passed and you're like recovered.

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Like then you're like, okay, now I can reflect on it. Now I can, I can see it in other people's businesses. It's kind of freaky in that regards.

So when my business failed, I had to go back to corporate America. I'm not meant to play in a sandbox with a whole bunch of other executives. Like that's just not how I'm built.

And so I was always looking for an escape route. I got certified as a productivity coach while I was in corporate America. Left.

**Ivy Slater:** Good for you.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Thank you. Left, knowing that was my exit strategy. And started building my coaching practice, focused on productivity and then also business coaching.

And I was coaching small business owners, solopreneurs. That was kind of like, and most of them were also parents because that was my world as well as a business owner and being a parent.

And I was like, okay, this business has to succeed. I don't need to be a two-time member of the business failure club. So how are we gonna make this work?

And I was willing to do things that I didn't do before. And one of those things was just throw spaghetti on the wall when it came to referrals.

The traditional advice is that you have to ask for them, pay for them, be gimmicky and promotional, like put in your email signature, the greatest compliment you can give me is a referral.

Or network all the time to always be seen so you're never forgotten. And none of those align with who I am, right? None of those align with the time that I have as a mom of three kids.

None of those align with how I want to show up in the marketplace. I don't want to be asking people to refer me, right?

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Like there's a sense of desperation that comes with that or an awkwardness for most people, not everybody, but most people. The sense of having to ask means that it's awkward and desperate, and that's not how I wanted to show up.

**Ivy Slater:** It is, let's, bottom line, it is, it's like, oh, would you mind, like, how do you start, like, it's how do you start that sentence sometimes, because you do feel awkward when you're asking.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yes. Which means you shouldn't start it on. So you should never start it, because, and we'll talk about this as well, but like, you know, there's reasons why you should never start that question.

So for me, I was like, I'm not doing that. Like, I know myself, if it doesn't feel right, I won't do it. Now, it can't feel amazing and not work either, right? Because obviously I didn't want to be a business failure two times.

And so I was just like, I'm going to build this business the best way I know how. And at the time it was like, throw spaghetti on the wall and see what works from a referral perspective.

And I started generating referrals in my first year. My fourth client I ever brought on in my productivity coaching practice was referred to me by the second client I brought on, or maybe my first client I brought on.

And I just started paying attention to what I was doing. And in the beginning, I don't know what it was. Like, I'll be honest. Like it was like, it was happening and I was like, awesome.

But I ended up getting 112 referrals in my first year as a productivity coach that I never asked for or paid for.

**Ivy Slater:** That's wild.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yeah. And so at that point, you're kind of like-

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**Ivy Slater:** So if you could actually, hold on, I'm going to jump in here. So if you could actually take that and seal it as a methodology, you have sustainable business, not just for yourself, period. And then I would guess people are like, well, wait a second, how are you getting business?

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yep. And that became my business focus. I did it because I couldn't fail again.

And then what I had to do and made happen, and then I could reverse engineer what I was doing and how I was doing it and putting my strategies in place, then that became the thing that my business would be focused on.

I mean, it was just one of those moments where it was like, it's like, hey, you're generating all these referrals, Stacey. Thanks for teaching me how to tame my calendar or tame my inbox. I'd rather learn your referral strategy.

And I was like, OK, let me teach it to you. And then I was like, let me figure out first what I think I'm doing. Like, but I'm a process person.

**Ivy Slater:** It's so right. If you are a process person, Stacey, like you say, hold on a second. I'm doing something naturally, I never really broke it down. So let me take a second and actually think through. I know I hit the same thing.

I do running business, one business or another for 30-some-odd years, like things are like, I just do.

And then I was like, I have to slow myself down and say, wait a second, how exactly, what are my steps that have become part of like my dance? Because it's so smooth at this point.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yeah. And the big thing for me is, is that like breaking down the steps, like reverse engineering it and breaking down the steps was really, really important.

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But it wasn't until I actually started having to verbalize it and teach it to my clients. So in the beginning, it was part of their coaching practice.

If they wanted to talk about productivity and referrals, we did. And so that kind of gave me permission to not be like, here's the five-step framework, right? Now I have that.

That totally exists. I have 20 different strategies that I teach. Nobody needs them all. But depending on your situation, I've got you covered. And we're always adding them as things change.

And so now it's totally different. But in the beginning, it was like, OK, try this. This is what I'm doing. Try this. And if it worked, I'd be like, perfect.

Or if I taught something and the person was like, I don't get it, and I'm like, well, I don't think get it. I'm like, oh, they need a visual. I need to map this out for them. Okay, this is how this looks, right?

And so that's how it all started. And then I was just, because I had had a business failure, and this is the key piece here, because my business had failed, and I never figured out how to scale.

I always knew with my second business, paying attention to that was really important.

So I went in eyes wide open. I'm gonna start this coaching practice. I am not gonna scale my productivity work. I think the person who certified me has scaled it beautifully and I didn't wanna compete with her.

And so for me, it was like, I was always looking for that. What's the thing that's gonna make me different that I can scale? Where's my blue ocean?

When I discovered it was referrals and then I realized it was referrals without having to ask or pay for them, which that did not come at the very beginning. Took like a year or two for that to like, oh my God, this is what makes me different.

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**Ivy Slater:** It does take some time for us to actually step out or step away from our own day-to-day to actually see what we do.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yeah. And when that all happened, I was like, this is what I'm going to scale. Then I got very focused on documenting everything.

And that helped because one of the strategies I teach today, it's my longest running strategy. It's the strategy in my first book, *Generating Business Referrals Without Asking*, is based on.

And it is the one strategy that most of my clients will start with because it has the fastest ability to generate referrals, is when you have people referring to you, how to get more from them.

Because they're already doing it, but there's a way that we cultivate them to get more from them. There's some things that haven't changed in 12 years.

But then other strategies I've added as I have been teaching them to my clients. So like my second book, that's this one, the *Referable Client Experience*, I started teaching this strategy to my clients back in like 2020.

Because I noticed with my clients, I would always be like, okay, you've got referrals, here's how we're gonna get you more. And it always came with this massive disclaimer; I'm assuming you're referable.

And I used to say, I can't help you with that. I'm assuming you're referable. I'm assuming you do great work. I can't help you with that.

And then I realized, wait, there are pieces of that I can help with. And I did start teaching it. And then that naturally developed another piece of body of work.

And then we've had years now, I mean, it's five years later, of seeing it work in clients' businesses. And those are the stories that we tell in the book.

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And so for me, knowing that I was looking for something to scale, knowing that I was paying attention to something that would be different, finding it, and then writing everything down kind of created that process in me.

And that exists to this day. Like, we have a strategy that I started teaching about a year ago. And I never taught it before. I had one client test it out.

I'm like, you know what? I'm curious about something. Are you willing to experiment with me? And they're like, yes. And I'm like, I want you to send this.

I always tell folks, this is part of my intellectual property. It's something I only give to my clients. But I told him to email this one thing to his clients. And I was like, let's just see what happens.

And then he got referrals. And I was like, oh. Hmm, I was right. Now let's do it with some more clients.

And now it's like a standard thing a lot of my clients do when they first start with me, if they need like a jumpstart to referrals.

But now I document everything. And it's a process of how I built my business. When I come across something that works, there's a process to document it.

**Ivy Slater:** It's so interesting is sometimes when we're building our own businesses, and I'll just talk in general is when we're building our own businesses is so many of our listeners are either already building businesses or on the path to building businesses or run their big companies.

We do so much for what we know, a bit of gut instinct, right? And whatever SOPs are in the system, but we don't think about that in stepping outside of ourselves in a referral process.

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We always think about SOPs and, you know, how are we getting through our emails, our calendar, how are we hiring, what is our marketing SOP, right?

We have SOPs for so much in our organizations, but we don't have SOPs for referrals. And I think that is a brilliant piece that you bring to this table.

It's like, well, of course we need an SOP for, like, of course we want Stacey, so we need an SOP for our referral factor. It's a lot less expensive in marketing to get referrals than it is to get other leads. Yes, I love that.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yeah, I mean, and that's the thing I always tell folks is like, there's work involved no matter how you want to generate leads.

I think it's a question of what will feel best to you, what will feel easiest to you, but also recognizing that there is work involved.

But I tell folks the stuff that we do is way more fun than trying to like cold call or direct message a stranger or do all those things we don't or just like see if that ad will work.

Like I'm not, pooh-poohing any of those other ways that people can generate business. And I think you should have multiple ways that you try to bring in clients. I certainly do.

**Ivy Slater:** Absolutely.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** And it's got to work for you and your personality. But I just think that a business that doesn't have a focus on referrals is like, they are leaving so much on the table.

**Ivy Slater:** I have to ask you this, what is one thing that has surprised you? And now coming through, working in corporate, starting a company, having a failure, redoing, having success, and then rebranding it in a specific direction.

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It's not a whole new direction, but a very specific direction. What is some of the things that has surprised you in your own journey?

**Stacey Brown Randall:** I think one of the things for me that I kind of look back on, and I'm like most people, right? I look back, I'm like, why did it take so long?

Like, right? Like, oh my gosh, Rome wasn't built in a day. I got it, right? I get it. But like, why did this take so long?

And most of the time when I have to answer that question, I'm like, oh, because I got in the way. Because it's usually on ourselves. I think about where I'd be and what things would be different and maybe faster progress. I'm like, oh yeah, I got in the way.

But then it always takes me back to that place of, but I'm building a business intentionally that supports the lifestyle that I want.

And I don't mean lifestyle like there's a Lamborghini parked in my driveway, because there is not.

**Ivy Slater:** Yet. If you wanted that.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** I mean, I don't. Right. Of course. And that's not something that I actually will ever want that I can't imagine. But, you know, for me, it's like supporting the lifestyle that I want in my business.

And that has been probably more. important than anything else that I've done is like, I want to knock off at two or three o'clock in the afternoon when the kids get home for school. And I want to be at every one of my son's varsity baseball games.

And I don't want to miss any of the, you know, any of the games where my daughter is cheering. And I want to be at every play that she's in. And I want to be able to have that freedom and that flexibility.

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And so I'd say for me, when I find myself like surprised, like, why am I not further along? I also am like, wait, but I'm right where I need to be and I'm right where I wanna be because of the lifestyle that I ultimately want.

And for me, I'm surprised that 12 years in, I still have to remind myself of that. Like, I'm like, oh, that's right. Stop the comparison game. You're right where you wanna be.

Like, this is what I wanted and I built it intentionally, like painstakingly. And yet sometimes I'm so surprised that I still get caught up in comparing myself with other people.

And I'm like, wait, but this is what you wanted. And so that I would say it's probably one of the biggest surprises for me is like the fact that I know I'm where I'm supposed to be. And yet sometimes I still wonder why I am where I am.

**Ivy Slater:** You know, it's interesting you say that because I know for myself, I'm very self-competitive. I don't compete with, oh, this one's scaling to this, or this one's doing this.

And I'm in communities with a lot of people who do similar things to what I do, and we support each other. And I learned early on; I compete against myself.

And sometimes that's just harder or tougher because I raised my own bar so high. And it's like, we gotta go for this. And I was like, wait a second. And I have like, I took a few hours, and I played with my granddaughter and I'm like, oh, I could do that.

And I can create my life my way and still have an enormous amount of success, still make an enormous amount of difference.

But I think it's always so important to do things on our own terms, in our own life of what's important to us. So you might not want the Lamborghini, you might want the Porsche, the four-seater instead. Who knows?

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Whatever it is, you will have what you desire because your priorities are there and knowing what's important to you and why that's important.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yes, I mean, right now we're just looking forward to getting those kids off to college, right? I mean, that is like the ultimate dream.

**Ivy Slater:** You have two seniors; this is a big year in that house.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** We're just trying to get as close to an empty nest as we can right now, that's the dream.

**Ivy Slater:** So if I asked one tip or piece of advice for our listeners that we can continue to learn and follow from you.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** You know, I would say from the perspective of referrals, I think the biggest thing I spend time with when folks are new in my world is this belief that it is possible.

That it is possible to generate referrals without asking or without compensating or without being promotional or gimmicky or feeling like you've got a network all the time.

It sounds like you're like, oh, yeah, of course, that sounds great. But then when you really get down into the practice of it, what people don't realize is how much that's ingrained in them. How much this idea that you have to ask is ingrained.

I mean, I've had people who will come into my programs and then they'll learn my strategies and they're like, I still kind of kept waiting for you to tell me how to ask. And I was like, I know.

Because it's ingrained in us that that's what you have to do to generate referrals. And I'm here teaching you an entirely different way of looking at it based on the science of referrals and based on different strategies that we've known have worked for more than a decade.

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And I'm still always competing with pushing that boulder up the hill with folks to understand that it doesn't have to be the way that they told us it has to be.

And I think that's the thing I would tell folks is to pay attention to is the beliefs that we have that are based on what other people have told us but not necessarily based on what we want to believe or what we've seen possibly work.

Just the things that we believe because we've been around forever. And I think that's so very important for folks is paying attention.

It's kind of like the bias you have and you're not really quite sure where the bias came from because you don't remember having that bias, like a formal thought. It was just like, this is how it is.

And like, you're like, wait, I'm going to pull myself back from that. That's the thing I always tell folks is that when they hear referrals, everyone lights up, they're like, yes, I want them. And then they immediately go to, but I don't want to, it's an ick factor.

**Ivy Slater:** Yeah. And so I'm hearing you say there is another way, and there's another way that fosters ease, kindness. And I'm putting that in, not that I heard you say it, but I've gotten to know you enough to know that it's there in that way of I can do this.

So listeners, if you're curious to know more about Stacey, please check out her podcast. Most importantly, check out her book, because I know I'm excited to read my copy. And most importantly, Stacey, what's the best way for people to reach out to you?

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Yep. So the home base is the website, [StaceyBrownRandall.com](http://StaceyBrownRandall.com). I know you'll put that in the show notes page, so people know how to spell Stacey correctly. Yeah.

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LinkedIn and Instagram are my two main, I'd say my two main social media platforms. We're also on Facebook but shoot me a direct message if you've got questions.

But really, I think there's a ton of free resources on my website. The two books are definitely a place to start, and my podcast, Roadmap to Referrals.

There's plenty of places to go the way you want to consume information to learn about this new and different way to generate referrals, even though it's new to you, it's not new to us. We've been doing it for more than a decade.

But this way to generate referrals in a way that works for you and will actually work too. So a great starting place is the website.

**Ivy Slater:** I love that. Stacey, thanks for joining me today on Her Success Story.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Thank you so much for having me.

**Stacey Brown Randall:** Thank you, Ivy, for hosting this episode for our listeners here on the Roadmap to Referrals podcast.

And thank you for asking the questions and having a dialogue about the things I don't think business owners talk enough about. About building your business, overcoming challenges, like in my case, a business failure, and still finding a way to be successful on your own terms.

I just don't think enough businesses or enough business owners talk about that as we should. So thank you, Ivy, for having that conversation with me and for then, of course, being here as the host, as the temporary host of this podcast as well. Thank you.

Now, we will link to the show's transcripts if you're interested in those, and of course, all the ways that you can learn about Ivy, plus connect with her on social on the show notes page for this episode, which is

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[StaceyBrownRandall.com/419](https://StaceyBrownRandall.com/419), or for my YouTube watchers, of course, you can always find the links below the video.

Alright, we have something very exciting coming up that's kicking off in a couple of weeks. That's called Summer School for Referrals.

It's three classes held a little less than an hour over three weeks. So one class per week for three weeks, about 45 minutes to an hour, depending on questions. And I think you should be there.

Now we have all the details coming out, but we have gone ahead and released the registration link.

So if you want to go ahead and secure your seat, because Zoom is only going to put so many people in the room, if you want to go ahead and secure your seat, you can do that now by going to [StaceyBrownRandall.com/school](https://StaceyBrownRandall.com/school).

That's [StaceyBrownRandall.com/school](https://StaceyBrownRandall.com/school). And of course, we'll link to that in the show notes page or below this video on YouTube.

Well, thanks for making it to the end. Until next week, take control of your referrals and build a referable business. Bye for now.