

EPISODE 106**[INTRODUCTION]**

[0:00:09.5] AT: Welcome to the Portfolio Life Podcast with Jeff Goins. Jeff believes that every creative should live a portfolio life. A life full of pursuing work that matters, making a difference with your art and discovering your true voice. Jeff is committed to helping you find, develop, and live out your unique world view so that you too can live a portfolio life.

In today's conversation, you'll hear from Dov Gordon who for years worked to figure out what his unique contribution in business would be. Then, he found it. Today you'll hear just how determined and creative he was in finding clients and learning about business and finding his unique strengths. If you've ever struggled to find out what you're meant to contribute to the world around you, keep listening.

Here is Dov Gordon and Jeff Goins.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:01:02.9] JG: So Dov, first of all, welcome to the show.

[0:01:06.5] DG: Hi, thanks for having me.

[0:01:08.2] JG: Good to have you. For those who aren't familiar with you, I love how Mitch Joel opens up every podcast episode of his that I've ever listened to, "Which is who are you, and what do you do?" I thought that would be an appropriate question for our conversation before we jump in, for those who may not know.

[0:01:26.0] DG: Interesting question. Who am I and what do I do? I'm a guy who has always had this inner knowing that I've got a lot to offer and then has spent many, many years banging my head against the wall until I actually figured out how to convey that to others or to present myself and my expertise, so to speak, in a way that others can recognize it and then build a business on it.

I guess I'm also turned out to be pretty good at, once I've bashed my head against the wall enough times and actually learn to master something, I seem to be pretty good at distilling it to the simple essence and then teaching it to others. That's what I do. That's the "what I do" part.

[0:02:07.4] JG: Dov, how do you do that? Do you do that through training, teaching, events, speaking, do you sell products, parse that out for us.

[0:02:17.4] DG: It's largely some training online, some information products although small-ish and coaching. Mostly through a coaching program where we really work with people hands on because what I've found is that information is not enough. Too many people are looking for more and more information as the answer. They think it's all about that next book, the next course, whatever. But for the most part you don't need — if you've been studying marketing for a few months or a year or two, you know everything you need to know.

Now you need to learn how to work differently, how to take that information and follow it in a way that actually — so that everything you're doing adds up and takes you in one direction instead of diffusing you in so many different directions, which is the reality for most people.

[0:03:05.2] JG: A lot of people, I get this question a lot and you may as well, a lot of people are watching what's happening on the Internet and they're going, "Oh, you can get paid to share or teach or coach a skill that you know." I think a lot of people that I talk to are writers and creative and people who feel like they have a gift to share, they have what you called an inner knowing, which I like that phrase.

Just some sense that I've got something to offer and I don't know what to do with that and they especially don't know how to get started. I hear questions from people get emails every day, going, how do I — not even just sell my stuff but figure out as you said, how do I package it? How do I take ideas and perspectives and knowledge that I have and I think people are sort of squeamish to use the word expertise and I heard you kind of clarify that and offer a caveat but that's basically what we're talking about, how do you take something that you know that not everybody else knows and essentially bring it to market so that you can use it to help people. Not just inform them but actually help transform their lives and my understanding is you help people do that.

[0:04:21.2] **DG:** Yeah, absolutely. I'm not squeamish about expertise. I'm curious to hear about those who are.

[0:04:28.5] **JG:** I think there's — I mean we can get to that, I think there is a hesitancy to go, "Oh, I'm an expert," right?

[0:04:33.3] **DG:** Okay, that could be.

[0:04:36.7] **JG:** Let's jump into that and I'd love to begin with how you did that for yourself. "You're banging your head against the wall", what does that actually mean? You felt like you had something to offer and weren't quite sure how to offer it, so what did you do?

[0:04:53.2] **DG:** I've been interested in business since about 13 when I discovered the business and self-help sections in the library. So the first self-help business book that I ever read was *Million Dollar Habits* by Robert Ringer. Don't know if you ever came across that one. Yeah, I lent it to somebody somewhere along and I don't have it anymore but I'd love to read it again.

So I'll have to get a copy one day. He had an interesting perspective on things, a lot that makes sense, some things that you kind of raise your eyebrows. That got me started and then I got married at 21 and I never went to college, I don't have a degree but I've always been a good student, insofar as just always looking and learning. It was time for me to figure out, "Okay, what am I going to do?"

I'd come across business coaching at some point. I enrolled myself into a — I borrowed a few thousand dollars from an uncle because I didn't have. One of this coach training schools and that just gave me a little bit of information looking back at the curriculum 10 years later, I just couldn't believe how awful and useless it was and I threw the whole thing out. But coach training skills is still a whole other story we can go on if you find it interesting.

It did help me understand a few things, I definitely learned the model too that helped me get started. Then the challenge was at the time, I'm in Israel, I'm from New York, I live here and I was looking for English speaking business people, I couldn't quite find anybody.

It's not so easy, a lot of Israeli speaking English but I just didn't quite know, you got to find a way to start. I enrolled in a Dale Carnegie course, it was the first one a guy had just moved from somewhere in the southwest where he had a Dale Carnegie franchise and he opened up in Israel and he was at the King David hotel, it was like the his first class, he did in high class place and I don't know how much he made from it.

But it's a 12 week long class and I enrolled in it just so I can meet other English speaking business people and that's how I got started. I think it was 14% of the class became my first coaching clients and I had no idea what I was doing. I just knew that I was good but I didn't really know what I was doing. An early mentor said it to me like this, and this just hit me across the head and it stayed with me ever since.

He said, "Dov, you've got a lot of talent but that's not enough, talent isn't enough. You need skill and you need processes." At the time it's just like, "Whoa, he just told me exactly what I needed to hear." Because I felt like, "Hey, I can do this. If I could just — people just listen to me then they'll see how smart I am and then they'll be better off." It doesn't work that way, I discovered. Sounds like you might know what I mean.

[0:07:43.8] JG: Yeah, of course. So what did you do with that advice?

[0:07:47.9] DG: First of all, it helped me understand that there's this thing called skills and I had never realized before that I thought skills were physical things, like you're good with the hammer, that's a skill. I hadn't realized that skills are also intellectual or mental or thinking. You got thinking skills. I mean how many people learn how to think? That's one of the things that I learned from this mentor and from others and books he introduced me to.

How to think, and that is a very rare skill now that I look around. I mean I can tell you that so much of what I end up doing and getting paid pretty well for is help people see the difference between what and how. It sounds absurd when I present it that way but that's true, we mix that up all the time. The means and the ends. Yeah everybody, even me sometimes but just being able to see that right? Did I answer your question? I lost my train of thought.

[0:08:46.1] JG: Yeah. He helped you think differently, you started learning, it sounds like acquiring intellectual skills. I have a very wealthy friend who is constantly being asked, “How did you do this?” He will immediately respond to that question, which is, “How did you get so rich?” With, “That is not the question you should be asking.” Which I find that very successful, smart people really help you understand — that’s often the answer too if I ask him a question. They go, “No, no, that’s the wrong question.” “Okay, what’s the right question?” And then they’ll answer it.

This person says, all the time he goes, “Don’t do what I do, think like I think. Because the reality is, what I did worked at a certain point in time, with the right circumstances, luck, all of that but I responded to those circumstances in the right way because the way I’ve trained myself to think and similarly, if you want to succeed in whatever you’re going to do, you need to think like I think. So it sounds like this mentor did that for you. How did that affect what you did thereafter?”

[0:09:50.0] DG: First of all, I was able to tell that he was speaking from experience and so I just kept consuming, learning as much as I could, going out and doing things. That’s something that a lot of people don’t do. They just acquire more and more information but they don’t really implement and I’ll tell you why they don’t really implement.

Because there’s a really big difference between information or a collection of good ideas and a simple process, a plan. That was the other thing that he said, “You need skills and you need a plan.” When it comes to taking your expertise, what you’re good at, what your knowledge and building a business on top of it, you need all those things and you need to be skilled at marketing and selling, there’s just no other way around it, and you need a process for it.

Now, what happens is that a lot of people who are really good at what they do, “mastered their craft” let’s say, and they know they can help others, we have confidence in the area of their expertise, they have very low degree of confidence when it comes to conveying that to others, like we said before. So what happens is that then they kind of fall for a lot of nonsense online since we’re talking online, right?

Online, people say, “Oh, here’s this blueprint, just do this or that. Follow these steps and you too will be rich and make a million dollars in a launch overnight,” or whatever it is. There are a lot of

big promises that go around but it's simply not true. Because you can't just follow the same steps that somebody else did. The way I think about it is like this: I could be standing here side by side with a master chef and we could be following the same recipe, maybe we're making a pecan pie, right? We're following the same recipe and mine might be edible, his will probably be perfect.

What's the difference? The difference is that I'm following a series of steps but he's following those same steps but in addition, he has a deep understanding of all the ingredients and the properties of all the ingredients and how they interact with each other and with heat and with water over time. I'm just following the steps and people have to realize, it's not enough to follow steps, you have to understand the underlying thinking like we were talking about and you have to master a few key skills. But people don't want to do that.

Now in their core area, let's say someone is an engineer, let's say somebody's an artist right? Or a writer, whatever it might be in creative. They've gotten really good at their core craft by learning how to think about it, by learning the underlying principles of it, by working hard over several years at the basic skills and then layering on more advanced skills but for some reason, we buy into the illusion that we don't have to do the same thing when it comes to selling our expertise, for marketing it, or presenting it to others in a way that they will want to work with us. We like to believe it shouldn't be that way. We want to believe that people should just recognize it for what it is. It would be nice if that was it, but it's just the world we live in.

[0:12:48.2] JG: Yeah, I read a book a while back, you're talking about cooking and I live in Tennessee, we would definitely be making a pecan pie.

[0:12:58.9] DG: Pecan. Okay, got it. I have some pecans in the drawer here. There we go.

[0:13:04.6] JG: I read this book called *Heat* by Bill Buford and the subtitle is *An amateur's adventures as a kitchen slave, line cook, pasta maker and apprentice to a butcher in Tuscany*. What he does is he goes into one of Mario Batali's restaurants and says, "I want to be your apprentice and I want to do what you do." He joins his kitchen staff because he's an amateur cook, he likes cooking food for himself and his girlfriend, I think. He goes, "I want to learn what you do."

The book is like part adventures in the kitchen, “Here is what I’m learning today as I almost cut my finger off. Part biography of Mario Batali and how he got to where he is today. It’s really interesting but when you’re talking about, “Okay, I’m following the recipe and the master chef’s following the recipe and the result is very different,” in that book, it talks a lot about mastering and talks about the decades of experience it takes to become great.

Food is really interesting because it’s timing and measurement and all this little things. The amateur, I mean Bill Buford talks about this in his book. The amateur follows a recipe but the expert, the master, it’s so ingrained in them and there was a part of the book where he talks about — I think he’s talking about Mario, he said, “The difference between me and Mario is, I’m watching the meat in the pan to see when it’s done, to see how dark it is. Or I’m watching the clock, I’m timing it. Okay, four and a half minutes or whatever and then I flip it and it’s seared.”

And Mario doesn’t even look at it, and he goes, “Okay, that’s done,” and he goes, “How did you know that?” He said, “Because of the way it sounds. I’m listening for cracks and pops and whatnot.” That to me is what it sounds like you’re talking about, which is you have to practice a skill so much that it gets embedded in your being and you’re no longer following a recipe, you’re interacting with whatever the trade is in a way that is so deep that the average observer doesn’t even know what you’re doing but you’ve just been doing it so long that it’s become intuitive, and I love that.

[0:15:21.6] DG: Yeah, I’d say there’s even more to it, right? Because we talk about the need to be persistent, right? “You’ve got to keep doing it, you’ve got to keep doing it.” I’d say persistence is not enough and I think I was just talking to somebody before our call who has reached out to me several times over the last few years. He’s made a \$130,000 as a consultant and he’s a really nice guy, but he shared with me how he’s got a part time job doing manual labor because he needs to pay the utility bills.

What’s happened is that, he just doesn’t know how to talk about what he does, how to present himself in a way that others will convey and he’s really good at what he does. It’s a pity and it’s heartbreaking because he should be making definitely \$200,000 a year and more and he can be. The problem is that he’s all over the place, he’s been in different programs and he signs up

for this and signs up for that and he told me about a half a dozen different experts, many of them I knew who he's been following them or talking to them but none of them are going to give him what he needs.

What he needs is utter simplicity. He needs a simple process to follow, he need to understand. The way I like to explain it is this, is that there are only three questions that your ideal client is going to ask. Your marketing, or whatever you do, for the sake of — “marketing”, it's a big word right? It doesn't have to be a big idea, all it means is the things that you do to convey your story so to speak, so that your clients want to work with you. It's just the things that you do.

So there are three questions they're going to ask and if your marketing helps them answer yes to that first one, then they have the second question, and if it helps them answer yes the second question then they have a third question, and if it helps them answer yes to the third question, you've got a new client. I can walk you through what that is.

[0:17:09.5] JG: Yeah, that would be great.

[0:17:12.2] DG: The idea here is that you should never feel like you have to do everything. We live in a time where if you're good at what you do and you want to sell this or that but you're not a natural at it, you wake up and you say, “How do I get more clients?” There are so many tactics available, there is Facebook, Facebook advertising and ad words and SEO and public speaking and Instagram, I mean, technology has made it so that there is — remember when blogging was big? Right?

[0:17:38.6] JG: Or new.

[0:17:38.9] DG: It wasn't that long ago, right? You did well with guest posting, that was a big thing and it still works really well and I really enjoyed, I'll just say, I enjoyed reading your eBook that you give away and if anyone doesn't have it, where can they get it? Because it was really worth reading.

[0:17:52.5] JG: Which one?

[0:17:55.1] DG: How to build your first, was it hundred thousand subscribers?

[0:17:57.2] JG: Oh yeah, it's on my blog, at Goinswriter.com, that's the first thing you get so yeah. Thanks.

[0:18:04.3] DG: Well worth reading, I have it, I read it through it once on an airplane. Every tactic and work and every tactic can fail. You have to understand why does it work when it works, and why does it fail when it fails. I think that it works when it works because it's answering this questions. The first question that your ideal client has, when they come across your message, again, it doesn't matter you've got a booth at a convention or it's a Facebook ad, the first question their brain asks is, "Should I pay attention, is it interesting? Should I pay attention, is it interesting?"

If your messaging causes their brain to say, "Oh that is interesting," instantly they have a new question. That second question is, "Okay, you got me interested but who are you? Can I trust you? Are you for real?" If your marketing helps them conclude, "Yes, I can trust you, yes, you're for real," then they have a third and final question which is, "Okay, is what you recommend right for me? You've got me interested, I see that I can trust you, but is what you recommend right for me?" And if they conclude, "Yes, what you recommend is right for me," then congratulations, you have a new client.

What we show people how to do is everything you do should only — every action you take, every tactic or whatever, anything that you spend time and energy on should only be there to help your client answer yes to one or more of those questions. Okay? So for example, the first question is — and they don't care about, they're not going to ask the third question until they've gotten yes to the first and second. A big mistake people make is they start talking about their product or service before the other people are ready to listen.

Because their brain is like, "Should I pay attention, is it interesting?" And we're already talking about, "Hey, look at this offer, isn't this great?" And so on, and they haven't yet asked, "Is what you recommend right for me?" So there's this massive disconnect where people are talking about their methodology, their program, their whatever, the other person isn't ready to hear it, right?

A very practical situation where that happens a lot is where you're talking to a potential client and say, "Why don't you send me a proposal?" And you're all excited because, "Oh wow, they asked for a proposal," you go off and you write a proposal, you send it to them and then you never hear back from them. Because they weren't really ready you know? You thought they were really ready but they weren't, they didn't feel you understood them. So they weren't really ready, it was just kind of to get you off the phone.

So the first question, let's focus on that first question right? How do you get someone to conclude, "Hey, should I pay attention, is it interesting?" The good news is that there are only two things that anybody's ever interested in. This little insight has turned on the light for thousands of people right? If you talk about one of these two things then your ideal client's brain will go, "Oh yeah, that's interesting," and they'll come closer to you. If you talk about a problem they have and don't want and if you talk about a result they want and don't have, you'll get the attention and interest of your ideal client.

Let me give a couple of examples, okay? Because this is what we call marketing helium right? Because here's the story, you've got Bob and Sally. Bob is holding a blue balloon, Sally is holding a red balloon. Bob leaves go of his blue balloon and falls to the floor and hits a tack and it pops. Sally leaves go of her red balloon and it starts to drift higher and higher and we're all sitting around admiring that bright, red, shiny balloon against the occasional white cloud and deep blue sky and you think to yourself, "I don't want to blue my Bobs, I want to blow up Sally's."

So you go out and you buy yourself the brightest, the shiniest, the reddest balloon you could find and with a twinkle in your eye which you have, looking at your picture on Skype. You take a deep, you know, this knowing twinkle in your eye and you take a deep breath and you start blowing up your bright, shiny, red balloon. You tie a knot and you leave go and your bright, shiny, red balloon falls to the floor and hits the same tack and Bob's and pops right there.

You're crushed, you're frustrated, "What did I do? Why didn't my — I didn't do what Bob did, I didn't get a blue balloon like Bob, I got a balloon like Sally's." Of course the answer is obvious, Sally filled her balloon with helium and you filled yours with hot air. It's the same thing with all

these different marketing tactics, they can all work and they can all fail. The difference is what you put inside. Do you fill it with marketing helium or marketing hot air? Marketing hot air is when you do things for attention like in LinkedIn groups. Have you ever been in a LinkedIn group?

[0:22:05.3] JG: Yeah, I try to avoid that.

[0:22:06.8] DG: Exactly, there must be somebody out there teaching, “You want to get clients, go into LinkedIn group and ask questions.” Someone else doesn’t go answer these questions right? So you have this people asking questions that never needed to be asked, people coming and answering them because they can’t tell the difference. The clients that both parties want poked their head in LinkedIn group, looked around and their brain says, “Should I pay attention? Is it interesting? Oh no, just a lot of hot air, I’m out of here,” right?

The idea is that, to get your client’s attention and interest, you have to talk about one of the only two things they’re interested in and that is a problem they have and don’t want and/or a result they want and don’t have. Quick example. Back to that. It took a while, but we’re here. I had a guy in a webinar once who his website said, “We sell dashboards and reports that help executives deliver better business results.” It sounds okay. The question we have to ask ourselves is, “What problem does he help solve, what result does he enable?” And I don’t know the answer, it could be a hundred different things, right?

Now, this guy’s ideal client is Joe CEO who is the CEO of a \$50 million dollar company, Joe CEO wakes up in the morning and what’s on his mind is, “Why can’t I get the data I need from my multimillion dollar information system so that I can make this difficult pricing decisions? Why can’t I get the data I need from this multimillion dollar information system that we just installed so I can make this difficult pricing decisions?”

Now, I want you to imagine two scenarios, right? One scenario is Joe CEO — let’s say we could put a billboard right opposite Joe CEO’s front door. On one billboard it says, “We sell dashboards and reports that help executives deliver better business results.” Joe CEO walks out his front door, walks to his car, he doesn’t even notice, right? But if instead the billboard says, “We help you get the data you need from your multimillion dollar information system so

you can make difficult pricing decisions,” he’ll be on the phone with your company before his rear-end hits the seat of the car. I mean you can feel the difference, right?

I’ll give you another example. Now we can talk about the decision most of us, I hesitated to make for two years and then I know people are afraid to do this, right? I had a client who retired from a major billion dollar construction firm in the states and she was in charge of a 50 person marketing department and she wants to become a leadership consultant, right? So now, imagine you’re at an event and you ask somebody, “What do you do?” “I’m a leadership consultant, I’m a management consultant.” “Very nice. Next.” It’s really not that remarkable.

[0:24:31.2] JG: Right.

[0:24:31.7] DG: That doesn’t get interest, right? Because you’re not talking about a problem your ideal client has and doesn’t want or a result they want and don’t have. So I said to her, I said, “I want you to make a list of all the specific problems that you can help solve and all the specific results that you can enable.”

She made a list and what we picked was the following. We picked, “I can help you solve the problems you have from that employee who is too valuable to fire,” okay? Now compare that with, “What do you do?” “I’m a leadership consultant.” “Very nice,” right?

What do you tend to think about leadership consultants? Is they’ve read some books and maybe they’re halfway qualified. But if you tell me that you can help solve the problems from that employee who is too valuable to fire, every company has employees too valuable to be fired. Right away, that tells me that you’re not like everybody else.

[0:25:13.9] JG: Yeah, love that.

[0:25:16.3] DG: This is something that most people don’t want to do because we think, “Well I can solve lots of problems. I can also help a strategy and team building and all the other things. And if I only talk about that then they’re not going to realize they can help with something else.”

But what we need to understand is that this is the human brain, we have to work with the limitations of the human brain. Human brain is going to ask, “Hey, should I pay attention, is it interesting? Well I’m only interested if you’re talking about a problem I have and don’t want and the result I want and don’t have. The more specific you are, the easier it is, more likely I’m going to be interested.”

[0:25:48.3] JG: Yeah, absolutely. Okay, I wanted to interject. We’re working through these three questions, you mentioned earlier that you’re not uncomfortable with the moniker “expert”. I think a lot of people aren’t, I think a lot of people have some inner knowing as you said that they have something to offer but the go, “Oh lots of people know this or lots of people have read books or I’m just not that good.” I think there are a lot of people out there that just need to go get better. But as you mentioned, just because you’re good, just because you’re a great consultant or a good writing coach or wonderful speaker, doesn’t necessarily mean that there are clients that are lining up ready to pay you to do your thing.

So I get that. I mean I love getting really specific, I read a few years ago, Michael Ports, *Book Yourself Solid* and just — he talks a lot about that and when people ask you, “What you do?” Don’t say, “I’m a management consultant,” say, “I help target market do such and such,” and if they want to hear more, you can tell them more about it. What you’re trying to get them say is not, “Oh.” What you’re trying to get them to say, as you said, “That’s interesting, tell me more about that.”

So I think that before somebody is able to answer that question of a client, they kind of have to know what they’re an expert at. How do you figure that out and how do you have confidence in that? Maybe that’s something that doesn’t concern you Dov, because you said you work with — you tend to work with people who are already confident and competent in what they do but I know a lot of people are listening to this, frankly myself included, struggle to dawn the title “expert” for certain areas of their life.

[0:27:33.3] DG: Certain areas, or the area that they want to build a business on?

[0:27:37.1] JG: The area that they want to build a business on. Let’s begin there.

[0:27:38.9] DG: Let's start there right? Because we all have that at some areas. So that's the focus. Here's how I think about it, and that's the only way I could share. They're definitely are the people, like you said, who really do need to get some more practice under their belt. If somebody — and that could be true for all of us. I'm constantly learning every single day and getting better and better at things I'm already teaching, right?

But one way of looking at it is, "Are you better than anybody else?" We tend to look up and compare ourselves to those who are ahead of us and then we think, "Well I'm not as good as they are, I'm not as good as they are." I spent years thinking that, "Oh, to really put myself out there as a coach or a consultant, I need to know this and I need to know that and I need to know that. I only know this little sliver over here."

I came to realize at some point, that that's really not true, you don't need to know everything. And what I came to realize is that I need to be good at something, and when you work backwards from this idea of problem they have and don't want, the result they want and don't have, that's the only thing that's interesting to people. You shift the focus off of yourself and you ask yourself the three main questions.

This could be practical exercise anybody listening can take, right? I want you to write down the answers to these three questions and where the answers overlap that you have an opportunity to build a business on your expertise, okay? Number one is, "What problems can I help solve, what results can I enable? What outcomes can I enable, what experiences can I enable?" It's all the same thing. Let the answers be specific, just like the examples I gave right? They should be a very specific problems and results.

The second thing is, "Who has those problems, who wants those results?" And kind of come up with any way you can group people together and don't worry about getting any of this answers right, just get out your first thoughts and mull it over and add some things the next day. The third question is, "What are the qualities and characteristics of my ideal client? What are the qualities of the people that I would most enjoy working with?" It's where the answers start to overlap, that's where you have an opportunity.

Everybody can solve a problem, get a result for somebody else who doesn't know how. Everybody can. It's when you start looking at it from that point of view and stop looking up and around and focusing on all the skills you don't yet have but instead you focus on the problem that you could solve today, that's where you start to build your business.

[0:30:03.6] JG: Yeah, that's a great point. I mean I think most of us who are trying to do something like this are worried about ourselves and whether or not people will like us or take us seriously or whatever, but I think you're absolutely right in that most people aren't worried about you, they're worried about themselves. "My problem, my situation," and of course you said, they need to know, are you for real? Like, "Can I trust you?" Which is your second question.

Let's assume you can figure out a way to make something interesting through the methodology you just shared. How do you help them answer yes to the second question which is, "Are you for real?"

[0:30:37.4] DG: Right, so there are two parts to this. The first part is, some kind of taste, we have these online all the time, you've got an eBook that people can download, right? When you open up your program so you give away some free training, right? It's this free taste, this hand raising free offer as we call it, or lead magnet as others call it. The challenge is that so many people, they over complicate that or they miss the boat. They don't create it properly.

But the ideas that you want to have something simple that enables your ideal client to say, "Hey, you got my attention and interest, but can I trust you? Are you for real? Okay, I'm interested, I'm on your landing page, I'm going to sign up for your free thing or the title of your talk got me interested so I'm going to attend your break out session at the conference," right? Whatever tactic you're using.

And that's your chance to — you help people begin to solve their problem, begin to get their result, right? That's what helps them answer the question of, "Yeah, oh I see I can trust you, I see you know your stuff and I can tell from the way you're talking and presenting yourself that, or writing, that you actually care. You're not just looking to make a buck, you're not just looking to sell me something and disappear."

So it's some kind of taste, some kind of — and this whole idea also about helping them begin to solve their problem, begin to get the result, it's as much about opening their eyes to an idea as anything else. If you can help people see their situation more clearly, even if it's seeing why they're stuck more clearly, you're helping them begin to solve their problem, begin to get their result. When you can help somebody see their situation, their life more clearly, they want to be around you more because they realize you're somebody who can help them get from where they are to where they want to be.

[0:32:19.0] JG: So do you think if somebody has a blog, as I encourage folks to do, and have a website, be on social media, use these as tools to build trust and loyalty over time and then you've got like a new product, like a new book or a course or what have you. Do you go through all three of these questions again, or do you just kind of assume, do I assume in a year when the next book comes out, "Yeah, people trust me that they'll buy it." Or do you have to intentionally walk them through this process with each new offering?

[0:32:52.0] DG: Well, that's a great question. With each new process, depending on your relationship with somebody and if we're talking virtually, there's still a relationship. You probably will have to get their attention and interest, maybe they're on your list but you still have to get to open every email and then click through to your, to watch your video, or whatever it might be. So you have to get their attention interest, and they could very well trust you from previous interaction.

They could believe — but then there's that third question. "Is what you recommend right for me?" With a new product, that definitely come into play even with the first two are, you know, not every product is right for everybody but if you're developing a product or service properly then you're going to have an — it's going to be built on the back of this whole framework where it's designed to help a certain kind of person solve a very specific problem, get a very specific result.

[0:33:41.5] JG: Yeah.

[0:33:41.9] DG: When you do it that way, it's a lot easier for that person to then say, "Yes, this is, what you recommend is right for me."

[0:33:48.8] JG: Yeah, one time I did a book signing which I don't recommend any author ever do unless you're last name is like Grisham or King or Rowling or something. So I'm at this book store for two hours and the only two books I sign are two friends of mine who are staying at our house for the weekend and feel like this is the way that they can pay me back is come buy a book and have me sign it.

This lady comes up to me and she's really curious and she comes up, walks up to me and looks like — I'm like, "Great, she might buy the book, this is great." She looks at me and she goes, "Excuse me, I have a question." I go, "Yeah, absolutely, what do you need?" She's like, "Well, I have a daughter who is about to graduate high school, I'm just wondering, what would you recommend here for a graduate, any books that you'd recommend?"

I was like, "Yeah, go get that book down there." So I thought of that, I thought like, people really don't care about you, they care about their issues. I was like, she didn't care that I didn't work at the bookstore or that I'm here representing my book, I could have been like, "Oh, buy this book." But it actually probably wasn't the greatest fit. Yeah, so I think it's really interesting that kind of came to mind because I find that the people are always asking this question.

When we sell the Tribe Writer's course that I sell a few times a year. I feel like we've done a really good job of educating people and what this is, what it does for you, how it works and still on the last day, I will get hundreds of email saying, "Here's my situation, is this right for me?" It's so interesting because if you read the 2,500 word sales page and watch my 90 minute webinar, you should get an idea and yet — and I think people do have an idea but they still want, especially if they trust you, they want that validation, that affirmation, "Yeah, this works. Yeah, this works for you."

And what's interesting is, obviously I am biased, obviously I have a vested interest in you saying yes to this. Except that you can get a refund and that if you go through this and it doesn't work for you, that doesn't help my reputation, testimonials, anything. So I actually do have a vested interest in saying, "No, this doesn't work for you." In fact, I think it works for a lot of people but we will intentionally on the last day of a launch for example or even with a book sometimes go,

“Hey, just email me your situation and I’ll try to read through as many of those emails as possible and let you know if this is good for you or not.”

I’ve told people, “I don’t think it’s a good fit because I don’t want anybody to go through that training, I want the right people to do it.” To me, this seems to be what you’re saying right here. Once somebody trusts you, they trust your recommendation. That’s why when I go into my favorite restaurant I go, “I don’t want to look at the menu, you tell me what you like because in fact, I trust your pallet more than mine because you know this thing and I just want the best experience here.”

That doesn’t work in any setting right? You have to have trust first but I love that recommendation and I’m curious, practically, I sent an email saying, “Hey, send me your situation and I’ll do my best to point you in the right place.” How do you practically do that? How do you let people know that this works for them or not? Because it’s so curious to me, we all want to be assured that this is actually going to work, for me. You could read thousands of testimonials and be like, “Yeah, but I’m not those people. What about me?” And we want to feel like it’s personal.

[0:37:12.2] DG: Well, if you’re talking to somebody one on one then it’s something that comes across in the sales conversation, it’s how you lead what I call, how to elegantly control your sales conversation and sales is leadership. In the sales conversation, if we go a little more granular, people have a question that they’re going to ask themselves as well, they’re going to say, “Does this person understand me?”

If they feel, “You don’t really understand me,” then they’re not going to ever come to that question of, “Well what do you recommend?” Right? Because they feel, “Hey, you don’t really understand me, so I really can’t trust your recommendation.” In the sales conversation, you need to be following a structure, a process where we all have the tendency to talk too much, to jump in and reassure somebody. But that’s not what helps somebody feel, “Wow, you understand me.”

None of us are influenced to do anything, to believe anything, to buy anything, to vote in any way until we feel that the other person understands me. Then, “If you understand me then I’m

open to your influence, not after, then I'm open to your recommendation." It's giving the person that sense and this is why sales scripts are very weak. I think there is a place for sales scripts, but on top of an ability to see what's really going on, to see the underlying structure of a sales conversation right? That's what fits sales. If it's one to many — that's if it's one to one. If it's one to many, and that's what you're describing also, you can still see how people will often come back down to this, "Hey, I need a little bit of one on one reassurance."

[0:38:51.7] JG: Yeah. It's really interesting, I've always been sort of skeptical of when people say, "People only act in their own self-interest, they only do what's best for them." But you were listing to all these choices that we make voting choices, what I'm going to eat choices, where I'm going to spend my money, all these things and you're right that we don't always know what is in our best interest.

So at a certain point we go, "I've got to trust the influence of this person whom I trust. If I don't trust them, I'm not going to listen to them." But it seems to me that we make decisions all the time not based on what we know is in our best self-interest but based on the recommendations of others if we feel, as you said, they understand us.

I'm constantly doing that. I was texting a friend the other night about my current obsession which is how to make the world's best cup of coffee at home, I was like, "Which scale should I get to measure my coffee grounds? Because this \$30 one looks pretty good." He's like, "No, you need the \$120 one." I was like, "All right, I trust you." I would rather listen to him because he understands me and understands my situation, which is I need to have the best coffee possible, and I just trust him. We're friends...

[0:40:06.7] DG: And he understands coffee, you see him as having somewhat — that goes back also, are you an expert right? Maybe he's not the biggest expert in the world but he knows more than you.

[0:40:18.1] JG: No, that's exactly right and I weigh the cost in my mind of time, I can go do all the research and spend all the money and try these different things that he's already done or I can just go, "No, I'm just going to listen to you and trust it." Then if my experience doesn't align

with my expectations, that's obviously going to diminish the trust that I have in him. But that frankly has never happened.

So I like that because it sounds to me a level deeper than what I find a lot of people say, which is, "People just care about themselves and act out of self-interest." There is obviously truth to that but it seems to me that there are deeper interactions going on all the time and what I hear you talking about Dov, is empathy. Can you the "sales person" put yourself in my position and describe my situation in some ways better than I can, and anytime somebody does that I go, "Whoa."

[0:41:14.0] DG: You just said it...

[0:41:14.5] JG: Pull out my credit card.

[0:41:16.2] DG: Yeah, "You understand me better than I understand me. You articulated my situation more clearly than I could." What I think you're describing is, the reason why I think of sales is leadership. Sales is not trying to get somebody to buy something. There are definitely people who do that. That's why sales is a bad rep.

You sell, I sell, sales is leadership and I think leadership is helping somebody make the right decision for themselves and it's about overlapping interest where my interests and your interests overlap. We both can move further and become more of who we're meant to be and make a bigger contribution by making this sale. Where that's true, that's what we should do. Where it's not true, I'm not the right person to lead you today, or to solve. But maybe someone else can help you with that problem to get that result.

[0:42:08.3] JG: Yeah. So I feel like we can talk about this forever but I want to respect your time. I'm looking at your website, Dovgordon.net, and you say, "Tired of doing and doing and still not attracting a steady, consistent, predictable flow of your clients?" and then you've got these "Five Steps to a Consistent Flow of Clients." If you're listening to this and maybe like I was a few years ago, you're wondering, "I feel like I have something to share, I have no idea how to package it in a way that people actually want to pay me for my expertise, which is just the fact

that I know something more than a lot of people I know, know — what was a lot of “know’s” — what do I do?”

So you’ve got this free resource on your website Dov, I’d love to point people do that as we wrap up here. You can get this free recording that talks about the “Five Steps to a Consistent Flow of Clients” at Dovgordon.net. Anything else that we need to know about Dov in terms of, “Okay, we’re just sort of wetting the pallets of those who want to not sell but lead and lead the people that they influence or could influence towards something that could help them.”

I love that, I love sales as leadership. I used to say sales is serving, it’s not trying to coerce somebody, it’s really just helping them make the decision that’s best for them. If you keep doing that, you’re going to continue to have people that want to pay you and if you don’t do that, you’re going to burn a lot of bridges. Thanks so much for your time, anything else that we forgot to mention or is there anything else you want to mention before we wrap up?

[0:43:48.2] DG: I’ll just say that the Five Steps for Consistent Flow of Clients maps out the process part. We had a conversation, we were a little bit around here and there and so on. That free seminar recording spells out a step by step process so people can take the rather disjointed ideas that we’ve thrown back and forth and they could take that and really implement and follow it.

[0:44:10.3] JG: Cool. I love those three questions that you shared with us, I’m probably going to steal this and use this in the next thing that I do. “Is this interesting? Are you for real? And is this right for me?” I think that’s perfect. I thank you for that Dov and if you’re listening to this and want to find out more about what Dov does and get that free resource that he mentioned, go to Dovgordon.net. Thanks for your time Dov.

[0:44:34.7] DG: Thank you Jeff, I appreciate it.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:44:36.6] AT: We'd like to thank Dov Gordon for being on the show today, for sharing his unique journey to building his business and in doing so, helping the world. You can find Dov at Dovgordon.net. Thank you for taking time to listen to the conversation.

Every show now has an episode number so it's easier for you to find and share the show with others or leave a comment. We invite you to add your thoughts on today's episode at Goinswriter.com/106.

I'm Andy Traub and on behalf of Jeff Goins, thanks for spending some time with us. Now, go build your portfolio!

[END]