

The Legacy Lounge Podcast with Tiffany Neuman
Season 1, Episode 31
Legacy Leader on Thought Leadership: Lynya Floyd

INTRO: Hi, I'm Tiffany and you are listening to The Legacy Lounge podcast. If you are a high achieving, mission-driven entrepreneur who wants to elevate your income, impact, and influence, you're in the right place.

I left my corporate career as a creative director for Fortune 500 brands to create a legacy with my work and to support entrepreneurs to do the same. I'm not talking about having your name on a building or statues in your image. I'm talking about leaving behind a positive impact and creating something enduring that can be passed on. You pour your time, energy and passion into your business, so let's make sure your efforts will create a ripple effect that reaches far into the future.

Each monthly series will guide you through the business leadership and life skills you need to successfully leave a legacy that stands the test of time, and each episode is totally valuable on its own. We are here to provide you with the tools and ideas to make massive shifts and quantum leaps in your business, transforming you from entrepreneur into legacy brand.

TIFFANY: Hello. Today I'm so thrilled to interview a Legacy Leader who is a true expert in her field, Ms. Lynya Floyd.

Lynya is an award winning journalist, experienced ghost writer, and sought-after media coach for both corporate clients and entrepreneurs. She and her work have been featured in countless high profile media outlets, including the Today Show, *Glamour*, *Money*, *Health*, and so many more.

The theme this week and month in the Legacy Lounge is thought leadership. If you haven't listened yet, the last few weeks, I've been talking all about how important it is to have a thought leadership brand versus just a personal brand if you truly want to create more income and impact.

I've asked Lynya to join us to talk about her own career, as well as have a discussion about what it takes to build a true thought leader brand and stand out online and in the media.

Lynya, you so much for being with me today.

LYNYA: Tiffany, I have been looking forward to this all week. Thank you so much for having me. And thank you to your brilliant listeners for tuning in.

TIFFANY: Absolutely. All right, so we talked a little bit about who you are and what you do, but I'd love for the audience to learn more about yourself, your work in the world, and really what the journey has been to get to the expert status that you're at now.

LYNYA: It has been such a fun ride. I started my career working in magazines, specifically women's magazines, and all the names that you could imagine that were so much fun *Glamour*, *Essence*, really incredible places, meeting and getting to interview amazing celebrities.

But I did get to a place in my career, and I feel like this happens with entrepreneurs all the time as well before they get to that entrepreneurial status—where I was looking for something more. One of my favorite words is wistful. I was filled with some unfulfilled desire. And you might be thinking, how could you be filled with unfulfilled desire if you're getting to travel all across the US and abroad for work and interview celebrities and go to these amazing parties?

But I was really aware that there was something more that I wanted to do and there was a bigger impact that I wanted to have. And, yes, it was incredible writing and editing stories for these publications that had reaches in the millions or tens of millions every single month. But there was also a part of me that wanted to be able to work one-on-one with people and not just give them the information, but walk them through the process of actually implementing change within their lives.

At that time and still today, I'm very, very passionate about health. So the content that I was getting out there was very driven towards not just changing people's lives, but also having the possibility to save people's lives with the information that was shared whether it was mental health, physical health, emotional health, the whole nine yards. And so I looked into how I could have more of a one-on-one impact. And that got me into the wonderful world of coaching.

I got nationally certified as a health and wellness coach. I went to Duke and went through all this coursework, met amazing people there, got tons of inspiration. And I started doing that one-on-one coaching with individuals, which was incredibly fulfilling.

But what I realized after a year or so of doing that is I really should be combining this media angle and this coaching angle. And rather than walk people through this health coaching process, really help more entrepreneurs put a megaphone to their message and be able to get their thought leadership out there and into the world, and to be able to magnify my impact that way.

So that is how I've been doing that for the past several years.

I've had an incredible opportunity to work with hundreds of entrepreneurs at all stages of their business, in addition to individuals in the corporate world as well sharing their thought leadership, sharing their messaging, and really being able to have a really deep impact.

And it's just that beauty of helping people figure out how to go from kind of a quiet, small voice. Whether it's because they're only talking to or sharing that thought leadership with a friend. Or they're only sharing it with a room full of people. To be able to share it with literally millions of people through the power of the media. Just by even dipping a toe into that media spotlight. To have that ripple effect and to be able to

share that thought leadership. So I've been really honored to work with some incredibly brilliant entrepreneurs.

I've also been really honored to work with some incredibly brilliant medical experts. I also ghost write books for medical experts because you cannot wear all hats at once. So they're off in surgery, they're off meeting with patients, I'm off interviewing them and then writing up content for them so that they can use books as an incredible platform to share their thought leadership as well and help have a really deep impact on people's lives.

TIFFANY: So good. So thank you for sharing that journey. And we were talking a little bit before we started, and I was like, oh, there are things in your bio that I didn't even know about, and you are such a prolific person, and I just feel even more confident about my choice when I was like "who am I going to feature for Thought Leadership Month?"

So I'm just so grateful again, and thank you for sharing all that. So, my first question, I've talked a lot about thought leadership already this month and other podcast episodes, but I'd love for the audience to hear it from you because you might share it a little bit differently from your perspective.

So what do you really feel like thought leadership means, is the first question, like what is that for those people listening? Maybe it's the first time listening and they didn't hear the last episode. They're like, Well, I don't really get it and then I have many more questions about it.

LYNYA: I love that. For me, thought leadership, I mean, I know there are many definitions, but for me, thought leadership goes back to that concept of being able to change people's lives or even being able to save people's lives. To be able to have that level of deep impact with the information that you are sharing and also packaging it in a way that is really easy for people to digest. Right.

You can be the most brilliant person on the planet, but unless you know how to communicate those thoughts in an effective way to others, no one is going to get your message. So for me, it has very much to do with impact and it also has very much to do with how that messaging is packaged.

TIFFANY: Yeah, that's so huge. The messaging package, in a general sense, in the branding sense, towards the media. Because when we do messaging for the brand and a website, that's going to be slightly different for how you position it for the media and then also leading back to the brand itself.

I think so many people we talk about personal branding and influencers, which is one thing, but thought leadership is literally not just being out there and making an impact or being known for one thing. I love that you said it's for changing and saving lives. That's amazing. And I think that if you walk away from the call today and you're in that space of like, maybe you're afraid of visibility. I know putting yourself out in the media can sometimes feel scary to a lot of people and being seen can feel scary. I always invite people to reposition that as how am I helping people? So I love your definition of thought leadership

because it really goes back to how can you show up and serve and then it doesn't feel like it's all about you, it's about who you're serving. So little off topic, but...

LYNYA: No, I think that's 100% on topic. And to build off of that, you're not just serving your audience, you are also serving people within the media. So you are the expert, right? You have the thought leadership. The editor or the segment producer or the host of the show doesn't have that expertise, doesn't have that experience that you have. And you're actually serving them by if you create a rock solid pitch, of course, right, by laying it all out on a silver platter for them so that they can share it with their audience.

So it's really two fold. It is the impact that you can have on other individuals and it is also the impact that you are able to have with these journalists with these segment bookers, with these producers, to be able to serve and help them help their audiences as well.

TIFFANY: That's such a good reframe as well, because I think so often people tend to think, "I'm going to bug them and I want to do that." But if you do it in the right way, it's also serving. So beautiful.

LYNYA: Yeah.

My next question is really, how do you feel that positioning yourself as a thought leader? Because yes, you have to work to get to that status, I suppose, and it takes time and effort, but it's also a choice. It's a choice that you want to be known as a thought leader, and there are different levels that you can be at in that journey, and that's totally fine. But how do you feel that can help someone's brand and business?

LYNYA: I think it's extraordinarily helpful to brands and to businesses. And I know that entrepreneurs are experiencing this every single day. There's a lot of competition out there. Even though we can niche down, even though we can get very specific about what it is we do and who we serve, there's still going to be other people, as with anything in life, there's still going to be other people who are doing something somewhat similar to what you're doing.

And the goal here is to be able to stand out from the crowd. The goal here is to be the name that people think of when they are looking for help in a particular area. And so by establishing yourself as a thought leader in your areas of expertise, you are going to be that name that people think of. You're going to be that name that comes up when somebody posts a question in a Facebook group. Does anybody know anybody who can help me with X, Y and Z? You're going to be the person that journalists and segment bookers reach out to when they're looking for someone to spotlight, when they're saying, "oh, who do we get to talk about XYZ topic?" Right?

You can be that person and then have that megaphone to your message. So I think it's really important. But the thing that a lot of people get wrong, and I work a lot with one-on-one clients and group work is, I often see people who want to be experts in many things, or they think that they have like 7, 8, 9, 10 expert topics. And you have to remember that the average person isn't going to remember. No one really is going to remember you for a dozen different things. So it really does pay to hone down into maybe those

two things that you really want people thinking about you when it comes to your areas of expertise. And when you think about celebrities, when you think about even your favorite actors, even outside of the world of entrepreneurship, they're not known for being able to do ten different things. But there's probably like two kinds of roles that they knock out of the park. And so when somebody says, we need an action star, we need a strong romantically, any of those things, right? They think of specific individuals. You want to be that type of player within your field so that you stand out from the crowd so good.

TIFFANY: And I get so many people who come in and they're like, "Well, I want a brand, but I'm multi-passionate, I'm so confused on how to bring all of these together." So whether it's in the brand, in the media, all of those pieces go together. I think that's really key to pick one or two things and or find the common thread that does align with what you have and talk about that. I could talk about this. And this so huge. You kind of answered my next question. I was going to say, what do you feel like is the number one thing people can do to really...I'm going to ask later some things that people overlook. So I feel like that was already one really good job.

So flipping that over, what do you feel is one of the number one thing that people can do to really start to be seen as a thought leader? Because it is taking time. I always say when we're doing the branding process, you want to create this vision. Where do you want to be? And then reverse engineer it, and then you will evolve into it. And so what could be that first step? Or if somebody's like, "well, yeah, that sounds amazing, I want to be known as an expert." But they feel like that sense of like, I'm nobody. Like, how is this even going to get started?

LYNYA: Okay, there are three things that I want to recommend that everyone does. Kind of three steps that you should take.

One really has to do with mindset. And I say this for every level of entrepreneur, there are even one on one clients that I've worked with where I have written out the pitch. And I'm like, all you have to do is click send. And there can still be—not because I think I did a bad job, I write great pitches—but there's still that hesitation that they'll have around clicking Send. Right? So number one is just getting into the mindset of and we talked about this before coming from a place of service, who are you going to be helping by clicking send? Who are the multitude of individuals who you could enhance their life, you could change their life, you could save their life by clicking send.

The second thing that I want to encourage people to do is to ask for some help, right? You do not have to reinvent the wheel when it comes to getting yourself out into the media. There are experts out there who can help you do that. You don't have to go alone, so ask for some help to facilitate that process.

And then the third thing that I would say in terms of getting yourself, like, these little baby steps out and this is another thing that I recommend all the time when I'm working with people and they'll say to me, like, "I'm not getting around to it, I know how important media is, I know the value that it has, I know it's going to increase my number of followers, I know it's going to get me those clients, but I just don't get around to it." And I very simply tell people, put it into your calendar and put it into your calendar. No

matter how small the pocket of time is, even if someone tells me, "I only have 15 minutes, Lynya, I'm moving in a million different directions, there's so much I'm doing for my business, I'm the only person doing this..."

You still have 15 minutes, right? And there's so much you can do in just a 15 minute pocket of time. You can do some networking. You can figure out who, you know, who knows somebody within the media who might be able to get you a little bit of an introduction. You can figure out what those two expert topics are going to be. You can start working on a pitch. You can look at story ideas that are really popular on a site that you would like to be on and figure out, "well, what do I have to add to this conversation? What could I write for them that could be interesting or what could I say on this podcast that could be of interest?"

15 minutes doesn't sound like a lot of time, but if you start regularly giving that to yourself and I'm not even saying every single day, I mean, it's great if you can do it every day, but even if you can't, just getting it on the calendar so it doesn't fall off.

So it's not this thing that you think about three months later and you wish you had gotten started 90 days ago, but you didn't. And you could have had 3 hours of media work done by then, right?

So it's a matter of just getting that on the calendar, even if it's a tiny piece of time and just doing what you can in those minutes. And as we all know, right, sometimes you get on a roll, right? Sometimes that email that you send or the voicemail that you send to somebody can lead to a back and forth conversation, and maybe something happened in that 15 minutes, or in that if you extended 30 minutes, right, and all of a sudden now you're booked on something but just getting started, I feel like that kind of takes the weight off of people.

So clients that I've worked with, they don't feel like, "oh, I don't have 3 hours to devote to this." That's okay. 15 minutes can make a difference in your outreach.

TIFFANY: Oh, so good. Especially if somebody's really excited or maybe you have been doing the work, maybe you do have some media wins like myself. It's so true. I'm like, "oh, what am I going to find time to do this?" So even the 15 minutes, like you said, could be researching. And that's one thing I learned from you is like, looking where you want to be featured. You have to be mindful in your pitches and not just pitch them out of the blue, but like, research, find out what's timely, all of those good things.

LYNYA: Absolutely. And sometimes I do this with clients, but you can also do this yourself, listening to that podcast episode that you are on. I don't know about everybody, actually, I will say this. I know lots of people who look at my sizzle reel, they'll see all the places where I've been on television, the podcast, and they're like, "oh my gosh, LynYa, she's so great at this, it must be so easy." And the first time I had to do television, of course I was terrified. I was working for *Seventeen* magazine at the time and we had a PR director who was going out and booking segments for people. She would constantly ask me to go out and do television. I would constantly come up with reasons not to do it. And it was really just because I didn't have the experience. And I had never worked with a media coach before, so I didn't know what to

expect. I didn't know what I didn't know. And it was terrifying. I didn't want to go out there and embarrass myself, embarrass my family, embarrass my job. I wanted to be flawless.

And the fact of the matter is, one, we all need some instruction. Even the most amazing presenters that you've seen who have done it hundreds of times before, I guarantee you they have brush up sessions with media coaches, with stage coaches. So no matter where you are on the spectrum, getting some help is definitely going to help you take your appearance to the next level, whether you're writing, whether you're speaking, whether you're going to be on video. So that's a really important thing to remember and it builds your confidence.

But the thing is, you also have to read that story that you wrote after the fact, even after you click Send. Listen to that podcast appearance to think about what might have been done a little differently, because often I find it painful, but I'll do it, right? I'll watch that TV clip that I was on and I'll think, "oh, how might I have done this a little differently?" Or I might say, "hey, that was awesome, knocked it out of the park, good job, Lynya." But either way, you can celebrate yourself. You can give yourself a couple of upgrades and then move on so that you are building off of each opportunity.

TIFFANY: So good. Yeah, I think that's one thing that's scary sometimes is going back and listening. I know when I started doing, this is not Media, but Facebook Lives, at first I just forced myself and I would refuse to go back. And look, I know I said like 30,000 times, I don't want to go back and listen to that, but then eventually I did. And it's amazing. I'm sure I still say more than I'd like to, but being mindful of it and watching it and then thinking it through and really sitting with those questions is huge.

LYNYA: Yes. And your friends are going to do their job. They're going to be cheerleaders, and they're going to tell you that you were great and it was flawless and you probably were great, right? But no one is perfect and each of these media wins, whether it's a small outlet that has a small following, whether it's huge and you're reaching millions, each of them is an opportunity for you to up level so you're still doing the good work.

You are still impacting and changing and even possibly saving people's lives. And you have an opportunity to take things to the next level. And so I always encourage people, you have to listen to every single one. But you really should be checking in with yourself every once in a while and seeing how you can upgrade.

TIFFANY: Yeah. So good. Okay, a few more questions for you. Is there anything else that people overlook or maybe hold people back around? Really making well, you kind of just already talked about this, but making their thought leadership a priority because I think so many people have on their vision board featured in this place, featured in that place, or having a brand that actually represents them as a thought leader.

But then again, those 15 minutes don't come through. So is there anything else that you would think of that people just be like, oh, I'm doing that. Let's shift a little bit.

LYNYA: Yeah, absolutely. The number one thing is asking for help, right? There are people out there that will allow you to stay in your particular zone of genius, no matter what that is, as an entrepreneur or as an expert or as a coach. And then they can sit in their level of expertise and they can help you with your PR outreach. They can help you craft the content for your book. They can help you figure out what the table of contents is going to be and what the outline would be. They can help you figure out the best outlets for you to appear. And they can help you craft those pitches so that you can just copy and paste them into your own email and click send. So I would definitely say reaching out for help.

There's only 24 hours in a day, right? Yeah, that's it. There's never going to be more than that, no matter how much we want it to be the case. Right. So definitely reaching out for help.

The second thing that I would say is don't hesitate, don't wait. There are a lot of entrepreneurs that I've worked with over the past and I still do, who think, "well, I have to be at a certain place in my career or my website has to be totally done or I have to have this many number of followers or shouldn't I have already established this number of programs..." Or something like that.

And you do not have to wait to establish thought leadership. There are people who get out there and start spreading their message and establishing their thought leadership with just like a Wix page, right? Like a simple one off website or who are directing people to their Instagram or to their Tik tok or what have you. So don't wait to get that message out there. Don't hold yourself back. Really keep coming back to thinking about not have I done enough? But think like, what is this impact that I'm going to be able to have? How will I be able to create a ripple effect by just putting myself out there and getting that messaging out there?

TIFFANY: Yes, so true. Mark those 15 minutes out and don't wait. You know, I have to ask about legacy because we are in the Legacy Lounge podcast. Really, I think it comes to everybody, but especially with thought leadership. I'm just curious, what does legacy mean to you and why do you feel it's so important?

LYNYA: So I'm going to try not to get emotional as I share the story with you. But when I think about legacy, I am very deeply rooted in this concept of what are the doors that you are not only opening up but leaving open behind you after you pass through. I've felt this way probably for my entire life because as you can probably imagine, there are lots of things that I've done over the course of my career where I was the only African American in the room, where I was one of the first Black people to kind of go to the school or have this position or do these things.

But in answering your question, I actually want to take it even further back because unfortunately my oldest grandmother passed away this year—101. And so I had to go back to her hometown. I was going through a lot of her belongings and sifting through all these pictures and newspaper clippings. Much of which she had shared with me. But a lot that I didn't know about. Things that she had done. Doors that she and my grandfather had opened. Going all the way back to my grandfather just being a part of the African American Great Migration from the south to the north in the 1940s.

When I think about legacy, I cannot imagine a deeper impact than being an African American in the south and deciding I want something better. Not just for me, right, but also for the people who come after me. And I think about my grandfather kind of telling me stories about how he hitchhiked from the south to the north, people shooting at him like dodging bullets, jumping box cars, he had a suitcase full of all this stuff and then the handle fell off the suitcase. So you have to hold the suitcase.

And so when I think about legacy, it really is that, it's like, what are we willing to do? What hardships are you willing to go through right now so that you can open doors now right? For yourself, absolutely. But you leave those behind, you leave those open, even after the fact, generations later.

So I'm really rooted in that concept. I think about it for myself, I think about it for those that are coming after me. Just what are you making possible and what will people remember you for and what are the stories..Like that long hitchhike? What are the stories that are going to be told after you are gone and what impact are they going to be able to have?

TIFFANY: Wow, thank you for sharing Linia. It's such an impactful story and I love too that it's generational coming from your grandparents, I'm sure through your parents

Those doors are going, I just know it, they're going to continue to be open and being a woman too, I mean, just all of that together and how prolific you have been is just so beautiful. So you're living the legacy, not just leaving the legacy.

LYNYA: Yes, I am definitely trying.

TIFFANY: So beautiful. So, last question for you and then we'll let everybody know where they can follow up with you and get connected with you.

What are you most excited and proud about creating? Because you've done so much that will stand the test of time.

LYNYA: So I wish that I could just name one thing, but I can't. So in trying to encompass that, I will say I am usually most proud of the last thing that I have written, the last piece of content that I have created. I really focus on stories that I'm very passionate about that I feel like are going to have a really deep impact or going to be able to help others.

And I'm very selective. I don't write every story that I have a chance to write, so it's usually the last thing that I've written or what I am currently working on which I can't talk about right now, but I assure you stay tuned for my byline. I'm in the midst of some really powerful pieces in the health and wellness space that are going to hopefully have a very deep impact on other sides. So that is what I'm most excited about, the content that I am creating right now and the ability to be able to do more of that in the future as I move forward.

TIFFANY: Yeah, absolutely. I love that too, because then it's always growing. You always have more and more things to be proud of. I love that perspective.

LYNYA: Yeah.

All right, Lynya, so where can people find you? I know you're on Instagram, LinkedIn, and then I think you have a free gift on your website, which is, if I'm not mistaken, lynya floyd dot com, right? So we'll have show notes for everybody, so it's easy to not have to worry about spelling.

LYNYA: Yes.

TIFFANY: But maybe talk a little bit about that gift that you have.

LYNYA: I would love to. So, as I had mentioned before, just one of the biggest hurdles that people have to getting publicity is around mindset and it is around clicking send on that pitch, just putting it into the email and getting it out there.

So I have created a very easy, very fast checklist of five things that you should do before clicking send. And it will make you feel confident enough to hit enter, it will make you feel excited to celebrate getting that pitch out the door. And it is obviously, since not sending, it gives you zero chance of getting a yes, it is going to increase your chances of getting a yes on that pitch. So people can go to my website in order to get that freebie and to get themselves a toe, at least, right? A little dip that toe into the media spotlight.

TIFFANY: So good. Thank you for sharing that. I'm sure everybody is really going to be heading over there now to get it, because I know what it's like. I've learned to hit send, but there's always that hesitation. Yeah, perfect. Well, remember, if you're not consciously building a legacy, you are simply building a brand unconsciously. I hope this discussion with linear inspired you to take action, even if it's simply moving the needle 1% towards the direction of your legacy. Because if we all focus on making an impact, the ripple effect we have together can truly make a difference. So linear. Thank you again. It's been such a valuable conversation. I really appreciate you being here.

LYNYA: Thank you so much for having me. It was an absolute thrill.

OUTRO: That's it for this episode. Thank you for listening to The Legacy Lounge Podcast. Connect with me on Instagram @tiffanyneumancreative I would also love to hear your feedback to see what resonates with you and what you'd like to hear in the future.

If you love this episode, please provide a review and we will be forever grateful. You can always find links and resources shared on the show by going to yourlegacybrand.com.

Remember what you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others. What are you doing today to pour into others and to leave your legacy?