

TIFFANY: Hey there and welcome to this episode of The Legacy Lounge. I am so excited to introduce you to a really amazing guest today, somebody who's near and dear to me, the incredible Nikki Rausch. Nikki is the CEO of Sales Maven, and she has the unique ability to transform the misunderstood process of selling. With 25 plus years of selling experience, entrepreneurs and small business owners now hire Nikki to show them how to sell successfully and authentically. Nikki has written three books, all available on Amazon, and she has a podcast called Sales Maven, which you can find on your favorite podcast platform. So Nikki, welcome. Thank you so much for being here today.

NIKKI: Thanks for having me. I'm so excited to have this conversation with you.

TIFFANY: Same. So Nikki and I met in a mastermind and just became fast friends. And we could talk so much about selling today. But before we get into that, I just wanted to talk about this episode is airing in the summer months and I've really found the summer months provide the best opportunity to slow down in your business a little bit. At least me personally, it's sunny outside, I don't take on as many clients, but it's the time to really look at some of the foundational pieces of your business. So I've asked Nikki to join us to talk all about sales and discover how you can shift your mindset around sales before your next launch, or maybe just do your next discovery call. So I've learned from Nikki, I know she's really brilliant at what she does. So to start out, I would just love to hear your take on you teach what's called relationship selling. So how does that differ from, say, a traditional sales method that somebody may learn?

NIKKI: So I think the difference is when I talk about sales, I'm teaching people that sales is something you do with them, not to them. And I think traditional sales can come across aggressive, sometimes it feels manipulative, and most of us don't want things done to us. That doesn't feel very good. Relationship selling is more of a collaborative approach to sales. It's learning how to have real, genuine conversations with people, understand do they have a problem, a need or a want? Do I have a solution that meets that need or want? And do I even have permission to put an offer in front of them? So the relationship piece is such an important piece. Everything I teach is the foundation of it is built on rapport.

And if you don't have rapport with somebody, you really shouldn't be trying to sell to them. This whole idea of, it's your job to convince people and it's your job to hit their pain points. And all of that feels, I think it's what holds most of us back from growing our business because that doesn't feel good to have to hammer somebody's pain points all the time.

And so for me, it's just, let's build relationships, let's build real connections. And from that, the sales process gets a lot easier. There is strategy behind it to be effective, and you can do it whether they buy from you or not, you both leave feeling really good about the conversation.

TIFFANY: Yes, so good. And that's why I really wanted to have this conversation with you because I talk about how to create a conscious brand, how to let go of "bro marketing". And I've seen that with so many clients is they tend to hold themselves back, like you said, because they're afraid of coming off as salesy or pushy, or they've been taught these tactics. I remember the first Mastermind I was in, probably I don't

know, four years ago, and that was what I was taught. You have to hit the pain points and you have to use this script. And I tried it one time and I was like, this feels horrible.

So for any of you listening and you feel that way right now, just know that there is a better way. So what would you say, Nikki, from the way that you teach, what are the steps of an effective sales process? Because like you said, there is a way to do that. Now for me, I tend to just show up. So I probably could even improve my own sales. I just show up and invite somebody in if I have rapport. But what are those steps that you teach people?

NIKKI: So I have a signature framework for a sales conversation. I call it the selling staircase. The reason it's a staircase as a framework is because most people understand that when you're going up a staircase, you go one step at a time. So the objective is when you're in a sales conversation, you're not supposed to just meet somebody and go right in for the hard sale. That's skipping steps. I teach this five step process. And the objective is that you're not putting so much pressure on yourself and you're not confusing and overwhelming and frankly, sometimes annoying people when you're going in for the hard sell because you know what step you're on and you know what to do and say next. And then by breaking it down, it allows for your authentic personality to come through, your authentic, genuine concern and care and servant's heart to show up in a conversation because the pressure is off because you're like, Well, we're just on step one or step two, and we're not even into the part where I'm going to try to sell anybody on anything because I know where we are right now, so I know what to do, say next.

So it's about building your confidence and making it easier, frankly, for people to buy from you.

TIFFANY: Yeah, that makes so much sense. I love the analogy of the staircase as well because so often I think it's just like, what do I need to do to get this sale? And it's not about that. I've learned over the years that people are ready or they're not, and it could be the right timing or it's not. So why force it?

My next question is really along those lines, but obviously me and being a brand strategist, I'm thinking about the overarching brand as a whole. So how do you see sales fitting into a brand? We often think people think of brand as, okay, it's a logo, it's the font, it's the colors. But in my view, it's really all of the way that you're doing business. It's your onboarding, it's the client journey and those types of things. So how do you see sales fitting into that equation?

NIKKI: Well, I think you just really laid it out so beautifully. It's the exact same as to what you just said. If you have a website that is representative of your brand and it's soft, it's beautiful, it is welcoming, it's inviting, it inspires and encourages people, and they get on a phone call with you and you are like, "Let me hammer this home, I'm here to convince you why you need to hire me." That is such a mismatch with your brand. So what people are getting from your brand messaging, they should also be getting when they're experiencing you.

I don't know if you've had this happen yet. You probably have from having a podcast, but you have somebody who listens to your podcast and maybe they get on a strategy session with you and they're

like, I get this all the time. People are like, "Wow, you are just like how you are on the podcast." Yeah. Because it's me. This is really who I am. And I'm not putting on some type of a false brand on my podcast. And then you get on a call with me and it feels like a total mismatch. It should feel really congruent throughout. And the sales process is no different than I think your brand messaging. It should be congruent.

TIFFANY: Yes. So good. So a couple of other things. So you talk about your main focus is on sales, but you also do a lot of strategy work around helping people build offers and booking discovery calls and the ins and outs that weave around the edges of that. So I'd love to ask how, for people out there listening and they want to... So they've already had the sale, they're working with their clients, but you talked about rapport, right? And then we also talked about the client journey. How can you increase your influence in client conversations and really make sure that you're nurturing them along the process? Do you have any specific suggestions there? Because a lot of times what I've seen, too, is people will make the sale and they're like, Okay, I got money. And now, of course, if you're a conscious entrepreneur, this is not the case. But unfortunately, it happens. And then they just give the client the course and let them be, or give them a deliverable and let them be. So how do you keep increasing your influence? Because that's so important, the lifetime span of a client. For me, you want to keep those relationships and they could come into other opportunities.

NIKKI: Yeah, I truly believe part of selling, especially in the entrepreneurial world, is your job is to increase lifetime value of a client and also increase lifetime value of your offers. So I focus a lot on that with clients and making sure that that's happening.

So to give you more maybe of a concrete answer to your question, if you have a relationship with a client and you have been hired to deliver a certain amount of whatever that is, whether it's like you're going to deliver their whole brand strategy or whether it's you're going to do a one-off strategy session with them, chances are you have other things in your toolkit, your resources, your offers that they would benefit from. And you should never make assumptions that they know what it is that they could actually do with you. That's your job. I often give this analogy in a little bit of a different context than what I'm going to give it here. But I always say, think of all the resources that you have at your disposal, your knowledge, your years of experience, the offers that you have, just everything that makes up who you are and what your business is. And imagine that every single one of those resources is like a grain of sand and it sits behind you. It's like over your shoulder and all those grains of sand make up this really big, beautiful beach.

The thing is, your client, the person that you're in conversation with, whether it's a sales conversation or an existing client relationship, they don't know what's behind over your shoulder. They don't know what each grain of sand is and they don't know necessarily how that grain of sand will impact them or make some type of positive influence in their life. So it's your job to bring those things into a conversation. It's your job to, I call this planting seeds, to let people know what else is possible for them. So if you're working with an existing client and you get a sense like we're coming up towards the end of the program that they're in, for instance, you don't ever be afraid to say to somebody, It has been so exciting to work with you, and I just have really appreciated this. I do have some additional ideas of some ways that we

might continue to work together. And then you ask permission, Would you be open to talking about what those are? And see what they say. Most people are going to be like, "yes, please tell me what's next." One of the mistakes I think oftentimes people make in business is they think, "Oh, well, they know what my offers are, they know what's available, it's all on my website."

Well, chances are they hired you without looking at your website, probably. Or maybe they breeze through it, but they probably don't remember everything that was on it. So making that assumption that they know is a real misstep because they might leave that, conclude whatever that project is or that program is. And they might leave feeling a little bit unsatisfied of like, Well, I don't really know what to do next, so I guess I need to go find somebody else to work with. But actually, they should continue to work with you because you now know their business or you know something about them. You know something about their goals, their dreams, their hopes, their desires. And if you can bring something else into the mix that's going to help them achieve that next level, I personally think you owe it to them to at least pose the question and ask if they'd be interested to hear about additional ways. And this is how you start to increase lifetime value of your offers and for your clients.

TIFFANY: Absolutely. It's so true. And I think a lot of times, like I say, when branding, you can't see the label from inside the bottle. Well, it's similar in that case. You know your offers, but you don't realize that other people don't. And I also love the idea of asking them permission because it goes the same in sales conversations. It's, May I offer? Most people aren't going to be like, "No, I don't even want to just hear about it." But it does make it a lot softer and easier. And it actually, I would assume, provides them buy in where they're actually, in a sense, asking for it.

NIKKI: So that's really good. When they've agreed to hear about it, you have now prepped their brain to be open to listening. How great is that?

TIFFANY: Yeah, so good. So speaking of that, so we talked about the sales, that's like beforehand, but how do you even sometimes get to those? I think there's a lot of people out there and they're, Well, I'd like to talk about a few things, actually. So obviously, I like to do the invitation call personally. The sales call, whatever, the discovery call, whatever somebody wants to call that. If you back up, I think a lot of people's problems is actually getting people onto those calls. They're like, maybe they don't love social media, or they don't know how to talk to people on social media and/or other ways. So I have a few questions regarding this.

The first one is, say you have a speaking opportunity, or I speak in other people's masterminds all the time, or you're speaking in a stage or a podcast or what have you, what's the best way... I think that's the same thing. You're leaving a lot on the table if you don't give them an invitation. So what would be the best way to actually book discovery calls after you're speaking somewhere?

NIKKI: Well, one of the best ways... So this is going to be a little bit of a different answer, whether it's a live speaking engagement where people are physically in the room with you or if this is like a virtual. But in a live speaking engagement, one of the things you want to do is throughout your presentation, you

should be planting seeds. It's about different ways that somebody could work with you. So for instance, if you're going to deliver a tactic or a point or a strategy, there should be some type of a story to bring that strategy, that tactic, that point to life. And that story, you don't just tell the story, you would say, One of my VIP clients recently in one of our sessions posed this question. And once we were able to lay out this strategy and they were able to implement it, here were the results that they received. This is why this strategy is so important for you to be implementing into your own business. I just planted the seed right there that people can do a strategy session with me. So you want to be planting those seeds throughout your presentation and it usually comes in the form of story.

Now, at the end of the presentation, I always recommend giving some type of free gift for people so they can essentially opt in to stay connected to you. So I do this at the end of the podcast.

Hint, I have one for your audience today if they would like it. And I do it whenever I go and speak. And I do this virtually as well. Then usually, if I come off of a stage, people oftentimes are coming up and they've got questions or they've got comments and they have things they want to say to me. Usually during those conversations, people are giving me buying signals. Buying signals are verbal and nonverbal queues that people give that indicate interest. I wrote my second book about buying signals because it's super important to learn how to recognize these. So when I'm speaking and I come off a stage and somebody gives me a buying signal, I immediately invite them to schedule a time for us to chat outside of the event. And I don't just say, "Here's my card, call me." I say, "What do you think about scheduling a time to chat about this further?"

And I pull out my phone and I say, "I carry my calendar right here on my phone, we could schedule a time now." And I schedule those appointments. And then when I get back to my office, I'm not trying to search them down on LinkedIn or find their business card that I put in my bag. It's none of that because they're already on my schedule. I'm on theirs. So we actually have what you call an invitation call. I call it discovery call. So that's ready to go. So it's super important that you do that.

Now, I just spoke to a group virtually yesterday, and at the end of the presentation, I offered a, "Ready for more? Let's chat!" With a link that they could... It's my calendar link. They can go grab a time to chat. And that was in addition to the gift that I offered to the group yesterday. And immediately somebody took me up on it. And I have a call with her tomorrow afternoon as a result of that. So super important that you're making those opportunities available. Don't assume that people know how to get on your schedule. It's always your job to earn somebody's business, and it's always your job to make it as easy as possible for somebody to have that call with you. And that usually means you have to initiate it and do it right then in the moment.

TIFFANY: Absolutely. I love that. And I love the idea. I do that virtually a lot, but in person, I have not actually said, Let's just book that right now. And that's so brilliant because why not? Like you said, or you leave it up to them. I usually say, Go to my website, you could book a call. By the time they've seen other speakers and been around the block and doing other things, most often they may forget or they just don't have time.

NIKKI: So that's really a great thing. That's the thing is they don't have time and they do forget. So when you say to somebody, go to my website and book a call, and I mean this with love to you and anybody who listens, who's doing the same thing because you're in good company because most people do that. You're essentially saying to somebody, "hey, go ahead and add me to your to do list." But how many people get through their to do list in a day? Most, not anybody. It's so slim.

TIFFANY: So true. That's so good. Amazing. So the other question I wanted to ask then around that is social media. So there are speaking engagements you may have, and then there's also social media. And what I find there is a lot of times are people are just throwing out content, throwing spaghetti at the wall. So you have this way where you say that you can talk with people instead of at them. So can you talk a little bit about that? Because I think, again, a lot of times people are struggling with the actual discovery call and those conversations. But then sometimes people are like, How do we even get people on those calls?

NIKKI: Well, the way that you learn how to talk with people instead of at them is you ask questions.

Most people talk at us. We get talked at all day long. And I can be guilty of this as well in social media. So we make statements, we don't ask questions. Making statements doesn't encourage any type of a response. If you ask questions, people are more inclined to respond and want to answer them because our brains are like Google. If you go to Google right now and you type in anything, Google wants to try to give you an answer. So if you ask a question on social media, people are more likely to answer it. So instead of saying to somebody, for instance, look at this great thing that a client said to me this week. Isn't this amazing? Hey, you need help with this too? Let's book a call with me. I can help you. That's talking at. But if you say, what is the most exciting thing that's happened to you this week? Here's what a client had to say to me. What a delight. Would you benefit from help like this? Let's jump on a quick call. Here's how to do it. Ask some questions if you want people to engage with you. If you want people to just keep scrolling through your stuff, just keep making statements because that's what everybody does.

And if you want to differentiate yourself, start asking questions.

TIFFANY: Such a good reminder. I know I tend to ask questions, and then sometimes if I... This is just me being very transparent. I've done that sometimes, and then nobody responds. And I'm like, I guess people don't want to answer the questions, but I think it was just the timing or the questions. I mean, we all get that, right? There's some posts that I never expect, and they almost go viral. And I'm like, What was that about? And then sometimes they don't. But I think that's such a good reframe because even if they don't respond literally on the thread or on the post, they're answering it in their heads.

Well, to wrap it up today, time goes so fast I could talk to you all day. But I have to ask about legacy because that's what I'm all about. So I would love to ask you the question, what does legacy mean to you and why is it so important?

NIKKI: Legacy to me is about impact, long lasting impact. And the reason it's important is because I truly feel like that is my purpose of being here, getting to show up each day and work with the people. I strive to always make a positive impact in the lives of people I come into contact with. And specifically with my clients, I want to make an impact in a way that they can then take whatever it is that we worked on together and make an impact in their clients lives because that translates into revenue and profit for them, which then means that's good for their business, it's good for them personally, it's good for their families and it's good for their communities, which to me is this whole compact effect around impact. So to me, that's what legacy is. It's about creating impact.

TIFFANY: Love it. So beautiful. Well, thank you so much, Nikki. And as you mentioned, you have something that you want to offer to the audience. And also what's the best way for them if they just want to book a call with you? Since we talked so much about that today, what's the best way that they can reach you? And we'll make sure to add all of this information into the show notes.

NIKKI: Well, the easiest way to answer both of those things is to grab this gift that I'm going to give you. So it's an eBook. It's called *Closing the Sale*. It's all about boosting your confidence. It talks through the last three steps of the sales conversation and give some language suggestions. So not that I'm telling you speak like me or have a script like me. It's just to get you prepped for it so that when you get in those conversations, you feel more confident about your own language and what to say and how to say it. So you can grab that by going to your sales manven dot com forward slash I I [salesmaven.com/LL]. And then you'll grab the eBook, we'll be connected. There'll be a link there. You can schedule a call. We can talk about working together and see how I can best support you.

TIFFANY: All right, perfect. Well, thank you for that. That is a super valuable piece. People, make sure that you take Nikki up on that because I think oftentimes too, especially those last steps of the conversation, it's so easy to fumble for words. So thank you for that. And remember, if you're not consciously building a legacy, you're simply building a brand unconsciously. I hope this chat with Nikki really helped inspire 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. Thank you again, Nikki, for coming today and sharing your brilliance and cheers to your legacy.