

Welcome to The Boomer Business Owner. My guest today is Janice Porter. Janice is a Baby Boomer and a seasoned training specialist focusing on how to authentically build relationships and communicate effectively online and offline. Her training programs empower business professionals, entrepreneurs, sales team, commission salespeople, and job seekers to leverage the power of LinkedIn to maximize sales and connect with the network they need.

Hey, Janice. Welcome to the show.

Thank you so much, Charlie, and thank you for inviting me on your podcast.

I barely could sleep last night just waiting for this visit. We talked about training and we talked about LinkedIn. Is all the training you do with respect to LinkedIn? Is it the primary way you train people, or is it just another arrow in your quiver, so to speak?

That's a good question. My background is training, and so when I found LinkedIn it was an opportunity for me to get back into training, and I'm sure we can talk about that a little bit more. Basically, between training on LinkedIn, coaching people how to network effectively (and that is face-to-face networking as well), and working another stream of income, that's pretty much what I do.

Okay. Let's just dive right into LinkedIn then. It's something that's near and dear to my heart. I have ways that I deal with LinkedIn, I've been talking with a lot of other people who've talked about other things to do with LinkedIn. So let's say that someone who's listening to this is working for someone else at this particular point in time, they're looking to do something entrepreneurial, or maybe they've already stuck their toe in the water of

entrepreneurship, but their purpose in using LinkedIn is not to further their job or their career, what they're doing now, but it's for more entrepreneurial purposes. At a very high level, if someone like that is engaging you or maybe you're just at a party talking with someone and you're offering just a couple of high-level tips or pieces of advice, what might they be?

First of all, I assume that they're on LinkedIn at this point and they probably just have it set up to speak to their job. That seems to be very common, that people don't understand that LinkedIn is more about you, especially your profile, your summary in particular, which is the most important piece of your LinkedIn profile, along with your headline. That summary has to talk about you as a person, and attract people that you want to connect with, so there's certainly things that they need to do to make sure that they're optimizing that profile, and leaning into the things that they're looking to do. I can go on and on, so I'm just going to take my cues from you because I don't want to overstep my bounds in terms of going on and on.

Okay, no worries. With respect to LinkedIn, I guess I always thought that my LinkedIn experience, I guess that part was essentially my resume. I was the Head of Sales at this company, and blah, blah, blah, increased sales 20%. I've had other LinkedIn professionals say: "No, Charlie, that's not really what it's about. If you want to send someone a resume, send a resume, but if you're the Head of Sales at this company, talk about other things than just making it a resume." What is your thought on that part of LinkedIn?

I think you hit on the third part. I talk about the headline, the summary, and the work experience being the key pieces. They all need to shape who you are as a person. I agree, it should not be your resume. If I'm looking at somebody perhaps that I want to hire as a trainer or I need a new bookkeeper, or maybe I want

a business coach, then I want to find out their personality and I want to find out if they think the way I do. I want to find parts of their summary that speak to me, so I break it down into three parts basically: Who are you, what makes you tick, what makes you passionate about what you do? Then talk to your audience as what the benefits of working with you would be, and then put in a call to action so you offer me the opportunity to call you or contact you easily and find more about you.

Your work experience piece, it can be more specific about the experience that you've had, but again, put it in terms that I can relate to, the benefits of working with you, or the accomplishments that you had or that you highlight as accomplishments in your career and so on. I just try to get a flavor of the person and what makes them tick. It's all about relationship building as far as I'm concerned, so I want to be able to find out a little bit about that person and see if I want to talk more to them.

You mentioned the summary, and a lot of the other folks I've talked to have talked about the importance of the summary. You brought up some good points. Perhaps somebody who's listening to this, and I probably would put myself into the category, don't fancy ourselves as good writers. So you know what you might want to see in there. I obviously have strengths, skills, and things like that that I could put in there, but I don't really fancy myself a writer. Is the service you provide counselling me on how to do it myself, or are you also offering to do it for me, writing the summary?

Great question. I would say all three. First of all, when I work one on one with clients I usually go by their preference in that we have a certain amount of time together, I know what I want to get through to make their profile optimized and fully magnetic as I call it. However, some people would prefer that I work with them right then and there to script or structure their summary

piece with them. Other people, I can explain the formula that I use, and they can go off and do it, and then send it to me and I'll edit it. Thirdly, if people say: "Can you do it for me?" that's a longer process because I have to interview them and have to get a sense of who they are, and yes, I can do that. I've done all of that. My favorite thing to do, though, is work with you and say: "Tell me about this or tell me about that," and then we craft it into a summary.

Okay. We've got to a point where we have a good headline, we have a good summary, and we have the experience. You're good with my profile. I say: "Okay, Janice, now I want to meet because I want to do business with human resource people at corporations. I have a product or service to offer human resource people at corporations." I'm sure, again, this could be a long, drawn out conversation. I don't want it to be a long, drawn out conversation. At a very high level, 10,000-foot view, are there things you would counsel me to do? I'm Charlie, I have a great profile now, and I want to reach out to and interact with human resources people at larger companies. How would I go about doing that?

Yes, there are some things I would do to help you with that, and it would first start by looking at teaching you how to do advanced searches to find the right people that you're talking about. So we would zone in on the area and the country that you want to do this in, the types of corporations, whether it's by vertical market or whether it's specific companies that you want to target, and perhaps then also HR people in specifics. Then I would teach you how to approach those people and put in a messaging strategy to approach them, and then to track it.

I get a lot of requests for connections that are just blind requests. I don't know this person, I've never heard from them, and there's no customized message. It's just like they've clicked a button that says "Connect with Charlie."

I get something that says: “Hi. I’d like to add you to my LinkedIn profile.” My sense is you don’t suggest people do that. There should be some personalization there. Is that correct?

I do definitely teach my clients to personalize those requests to connect, definitely. However, I’m a curious person and LinkedIn is a social network of sorts, and if you want to broaden your spectrum, it doesn’t hurt to go see who that person is and seeing if it’s worth connecting with them. I know you don’t totally agree with that because we’ve had a conversation about who you connect with and the types of connections that you want to have. I just think it depends on what to do, because it’s really important when you’re building your network on LinkedIn to find a way to make it grow quickly at a broader scope if you want to use LinkedIn to grow your business.

Using the age-old issue of: “Does size matter?” does the size of my LinkedIn connections list matter? Is it more quantity over quality, or a combination therein?

I think it’s a combination. I think that’s a difficult question to answer for everybody because some people, they don’t need a lot of people to connect with and they do just need a few good referral partners or to hone in on two or three different companies that they want to work with. Generally speaking, they say on LinkedIn the magic number is 501 because once you get over 500 connections, that’s all that shows on your profile. You could have thousands and thousands of connections, and people wouldn’t see that.

There’s something that happens after that initial 500+ where people with larger networks ask you to connect. In the end, that’s a good thing if you want to be seen out there globally or even nationally, because unless you have a premium account, you’re only seen by the people on your first, second, third level, and any people in any groups that you’re jointly connected to.

And vice versa, if people are searching on LinkedIn, they will only find you if you are in the first, second, third, or member of the same groups. That's why you need to grow your numbers.

Tell me if this is cool or not. Let's say I have 1,000 LinkedIn connections or a normal person has 1,000 LinkedIn connections. I know you can export your contacts from LinkedIn, so let's say you have a client who has 1,000 connections, you export them, they look through it and they say: "Janice, I probably know, have spoken with in the recent past, or have some acquaintanceship with 300 of these people," so essentially several hundred people they don't have relationships with. Is it cool to send an email to these people? I'm sure there are programs where you can send a bulk, but personalized email saying: "Hey, dear (first name), I have a new book coming out. I'd like to tell you about it and offer you some deal with it." Is it cool to do that or is that something you wouldn't suggest people do?

I don't think it's cool because that feels like spam to me.

Okay. Is that because you might not have a good relationship with someone? What if it is someone you knew fairly well on LinkedIn?

If it's someone that I knew fairly well, I might do that, but I wouldn't do it... Yes, there are third-party tools that you can send bulk group messages out at the same time, but I personally don't like to do that because I do like to create a conversation with people. So if it's someone I knew that's in my LinkedIn contacts, I would say: "Reconnecting. It's been a while. I'd love to have a Skype call with you," or whatever, and offer them maybe a: "PS, by the way, here's an offer for my new book." I might do that if I knew them, but not if I didn't.

Okay. Who would be your ideal client, Janice? What kind of people do you like to work with? You mentioned a lot of different types of people in the intro, but who would be your ideal client?

I love working with entrepreneurs, solopreneurs, sales professionals, business owners, people who understand the value of building relationships. I believe that they can be built online as well as offline. I'm a huge networker, and I teach offline networking skills as well. I've just taken that approach online with LinkedIn. So, anyone who really sees the value of building relationships, and then turning those relationships into business.

Got it. Let's shift over to talk about just online stuff. So you have a business and we talked about what your business does, but how do you use online maybe to market your business? How do you get people to find out about these services that you offer?

I use LinkedIn and I network. I don't network face to face as much as I used to, because I found LinkedIn to be a valuable networking tool, but I do go to a couple of face-to-face networking events a month. I think that what I do is I brand myself, and so what I love to hear is when I go to a networking event, as soon as someone mentions LinkedIn I hear people say: "Oh, you should talk to Janice," so that I've done my job in making sure people know that I'm the person they should come to for LinkedIn.

Online I basically just build relationships with people, and show an interest in what I have to offer and what they do, and then offer my support if there's any way I might be able to help them. Hopefully by doing that, they go and look at what I do, and then they may ask me a question or say they want to talk about LinkedIn, and then I'll take it offline and talk to them.

Got it. You train/coach people on things like LinkedIn. Do you currently or have you ever in the past availed yourself of the services of a coach, a mentor, or a mastermind group to help you grow your business?

Yes I have actually. I haven't worked for long periods of time with the same coach, but I have worked with coaches on and off, and definitely love mastermind groups. I do belong to an organization in which part of our smaller networking events have a built-in mastermind piece to them and I find myself a lot of the time actually supporting the newer members with business challenges they have and becoming that mentor myself. I definitely love collaborating and getting different perspectives from other peers, and mostly women that I'm associated with. Right now I'm in an accountability program with my other business with a business coach. I guess I do different things at different times.

Got it. Do you know what just popped into my mind? We met I guess a few months ago, and we spoke via Skype or Zoom, and afterwards I got in the mail a card from you and I think it had my logo on it, it had your picture on it, and there was a nice inscription there: "Hey, Charlie, it was nice meeting and talking with you. Let's keep in touch. Signed Janice." What's that all about? Do you do that with lots of folks?

I do. That's kind of my other business, really, and it's all about follow up, it's all about client appreciation, and it's also about spreading kindness. I'm affiliated with a company called SendOutCards, and that makes it easy for me to just go online on to my account, create a card or choose a card, and send it to somebody after I've worked with them, or just met them, or just thank them for something they've done for me. I'm glad you got it, that's great. Hopefully it put a smile on your face because that's what it's meant to do.

It did, and it really stands out. A thank you email is one thing, but you rarely get something physical in the mail, like even a card so yeah, it does stand out. Again, I didn't think about it until a moment ago, but I do remember very vividly getting it and looking at it, and seeing: "Gosh, this is a very thoughtful thing on Janice's part."

Thanks for bringing it up. I appreciate it because it's very close to my heart. Just basically what you said is most people will send an email, and we get so many of them today that sometimes they don't even get opened. But who doesn't open a card that comes in the mail?

Yeah, yeah. I got it. Janice, let's finish up with this question: You're a successful business owner, I'm your friend, I'm your neighbor, and I say: "Janice, I'm looking to do something entrepreneurial or I've kind of started to do something. I'm at the very early stages." Not specifically to do with LinkedIn, but as a successful entrepreneur, are there any high-level tips or pieces of advice you would give me to help ensure my success as I travel forward on my entrepreneurial journey?

That's a great question, very open-ended. I think the first thing I would suggest to you is that you be very clear on who your target market is. Who is your best prospect? It might be more than one kind of person. Sometimes they call them avatars. Who are you marketing to? Because until you know that, you can be all over the place. You can go to the wrong networking events, you can be on the wrong social media platform. Where is your target audience? Because that's where you want to be.

I think that anybody that you connect with along the way as you're building this new business, make sure that you follow up, make sure that you say thank you. I know this sounds really corny, but it's really the truth because people don't do that. Make it about the other person when you're talking to people,

when you're out there. As a new business owner what sometimes happens is when people ask you what you do, they throw up all over you and give you everything that you do, because they're excited about their new business. I tend to deflect that back to them, and find out more about them, and just give them enough to make them curious to ask them more later when I follow up with them.

Janice, this has been a great value-add. What is the best way for our listeners to reach out, connect with you, and find out more about the services that you offer?

Charlie, they can always go to my website, www.JanicePorter.com. I'm always open to an email or a phone call, and my contact info is on my website. Of course, if they're interested, they can connect with me on LinkedIn.

Today I actually would like to offer your listeners, if they are interested in knowing more about LinkedIn or whether what they have going is serving them properly, I have on my website under my LinkedIn training, it's called Spark, a strategy session. It's a one-hour session over the phone, Zoom, or Skype with me, and it's normally \$149. By the way, that's Canadian pricing, so it's cheaper for any Americans listening.

So it's like \$12 American.

Exactly. But I do have a coupon code for any of your listeners for a \$50 reduction of that price, so all they would have to do is put in the code "BBO", Boomer Business Owner, and I'm sure we'll put that in the show notes. I also have a free checklist on my website which they're all welcome to.

That is a very kind offer, Janice, really appreciate that. All of the great resources mentioned in today's episode, along with the coupon code and full transcript, will be available

**on the show notes page at
www.TheBoomerBusinessOwner.com.**

**Janice, thanks so much, on behalf of all of our listeners;
we really, really appreciate your help.**

Thank you, Charlie, for having me on your podcast. I look forward to listening to other business owners on your podcast again, too.