



Episode 19 with Lisa Sasevich

Lisa: Welcome to episode 19 of "Boost Your Sales and Lifestyle." This is your host, Lisa Sasevich, the Queen of Sales Conversion and the proud founder of the Sales Authenticity and Success Mastermind, which is a yearlong training program for heart centered entrepreneurs. On today's show, we're going to be talking with Kerry Ann Rockquemore, and learning how she has taken a model focusing on one service offering, and built a multimillion dollar, Inc. 500, winning business around it. As Kerry Ann will share, it's because of mentoring, community, support, and accountability that she was able to accomplish all of this. This training is important. If you are looking to package, price, and sell your expertise, high ticket, and you want to hear from someone that's done it in one of the most unlikely settings we can think of, academia. Are you ready to get sassy with us? Let's dive in.

Speaker 2: Welcome to the "Boost Your Sales and Lifestyle" show, with Lisa Sasevich, the Queen of Sales Conversion. Lisa teaches experts who are making a difference how to get their message out, and enjoy massive results, without being salesy. Lisa is here to lift you up, show you a new perspective, and open your world to what's possible for you, helping way more people, making way more money, and making the difference you were born to make.

Lisa: Welcome, everybody. I'm excited to have you hear, and congratulations on doing whatever it took for you to be here, listening in today, participating, because this symbolizes your commitment, your investment in yourself, and those people that need you, those that you serve. Now, this season's theme is give yourself a raise, how to package, price, and sell your expertise, high ticket. Each of my guests on the show this season have been hand selected so that you can stand on the shoulders of giants and learn the shortcuts from the people who've gone before you, and experienced great success. Now, today it's my honor to introduce you to Kerry Ann Rockquemore. Kerry Ann Rockquemore, PhD, is the CEO of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity. She launched FacultyDiversity.org in 2010, after quitting her job as a tenured professor.

Fed up with campus politics, and fighting the old boys club, she created a training company to help minority professors navigate the publish or perish world of academia. Over the past 6 years, Dr. Rockquemore has grown the National Center for Faculty Diversity and Development from a campus based mentoring program to a multimillion dollar business, serving over 85,000 professors at more than 450 colleges and universities in the United States. Hello Dr. Kerry Ann Rockquemore. We are thrilled to have you with us today.

Kerry Ann: Great. I'm thrilled to be here.

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- Lisa: You know, when we were talking about who could I interview that could really pack a punch on this seasons theme about giving yourself a raise, packaging, pricing, and selling your expertise, high ticket, you were one of the first people that not only jumped into my mind, because of everything that you've accomplished, but also my team, and we'll tell everybody how we know each other so well pretty soon here, but it's just been so awesome to, everything that we say that we're about, making a big difference, and big money, doing what you love and what you were made for. I mean, you are my poster child. Whenever I do exercises where they say, "Okay, I want you to picture your avatar," you are standing there, because it has been such a pleasure to work with you all these years. In fact, it sort of seems like maybe we just need to go there first. Would you let our listeners know how did we come together and a little bit about our past?
- Kerry Ann: Sure. I was a tenured professor and decided to leave my tenured professorship to start a business, and was really very passionate about helping minority professors and women in science, or in tenure. I left my tenured professorship, I started a business, and of course, I had no idea what I was doing. I knew how to help people, but I didn't know how to run a business. We met right at the backend of my first year in business, because I realized what I need more than anything is mentoring, community, support, accountability, and we started working together. I joined your MasterMind and had a really great experience. In that first year, my revenue went from 175,000 to 475,000, so that was awesome.
- Lisa: Yay. We like that.
- Kerry Ann: Yeah, and it became very clear that mentoring, community, support, accountability, are really what I needed to not just grow the business, but more than anything, to grow as a leader, and also we have a big mission, right? We want to really diversify the academy, so in order for us to really live into that big mission, it's really important for me to let you get your hands directly in my business, and to stay really supported by a community of women entrepreneurs, and if I fast forward to today, we just finished 2015, and we did 4.4 million dollars in revenue. That's not because we have been doing a lot of different programs and different this and different that. The same business that I started with, the same program that I started with, is still really what we do today. I would not have learned how to really take one program and build an entire business out of it if we hadn't worked together, so thank you.
- Lisa: Oh, my gosh. My pleasure. I mean, the years that we spent together and what was really fun about you is you traversed all of our levels of our MasterMind. You went from our platinum level, and then I got to work with you as a private client in our diamond level, and then you came back, and came back. I want to say that something that I think is really sassy about you is you ask the best questions, and I bet for everybody listening here, if you think about the favorite clients that

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you've had that have really excelled, because there's each of our work, and I'm so honored that mine got to contribute to your great mission, but so much of the success also came from your hunger, and the questions that you ask, and I have so many ezines that all of you have enjoyed that came from a question that Kerry Ann asked that I answered and went, "Wow, I'm more brilliant than I think. I'm going to put that in an ezine." You have pulled so much good content out of me over the last 5 years.

You have no idea. I also want to say what I think is really notable that you do, is you acknowledge the ground that you've taken, you acknowledge your own success, and you've always been a really big stand on our campus for everybody to do that. All the years that you were here, you held a Friday morning roundup on our Facebook page for everybody to acknowledge their wins, and I think it was just last year that you got a really big win by being honored in the Inc. 500. Is that right? The Inc. 500 [crosstalk 00:08:20]?

Kerry Ann: Yeah.

Lisa: With the fastest growing privately held companies in the United States?

Kerry Ann: Yes, and even more importantly, we were the number 7 education company and ...

Lisa: Wow.

Kerry Ann: ... Ed tech is a very hot sector right now so to be that high up in that segment felt really awesome.

Lisa: That is awesome. I think just to tease people a little bit more with your lifestyles of the rich and famous, boost your sales and lifestyle, don't worry, we're going to get into the pricing, the packaging, all of that, but you've had a really huge life shift from the work that you've done to really develop your company to this level, and develop your team to the level of a 4.4 million dollar business that is growing still very rapidly. Tell us about the impact on your life, what it looked like, I don't know, is it 18 months ago versus now, I'm thinking?

Kerry Ann: Yeah. I mean, 18 months ago, I had a team in place, but the reality is that I was still deeply embedded in the service delivery, and in my daily operations, so let me be more specific. I was traveling 180,000 miles per year domestic.

Lisa: Wow.

Kerry Ann: I was going to different campuses every single week to teach our on campus workshops, and that's a lot of traveling, and it's exhausting, and it shapes your entire life. I was also teaching every week in our boot camp. What became very clear to me is that 5 years of that much travel really is quite a grind, so I just

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wanted my life back, and I also wanted to elevate the rising stars and the leaders in my community. We trained a group of people to go out and give the campus workshops instead of me. They're all faculty members, they're phenomenal speakers, they love what we do, they've been through our programs, and they now are doing the traveling while I'm at home.

Lisa: But oh, you are not at home. But wait, there's more. [inaudible 00:10:47] quote. Home is Detroit, right?

Kerry Ann: Yeah. We're based in Detroit, but if you've ever been in Detroit in Winter, you know it's not the most pleasant place, so we spend the Winter in Venice Beach, and it's been wonderful this year to be here and not just traveling in and out of the airport at LAX, but to really enjoy this beautiful, beautiful location and just to be able to walk on the beach every day. It's really, for somebody from Detroit, it's like heaven.

Lisa: Yeah, you can lay on the beach, or walking at the beach, looking at all those planes taking off from LAX, leaving at your people that are out there doing your, we'll call it your speak yourself task at all those campuses.

Kerry Ann: Absolutely.

Lisa: Including one of your newest clients, Princeton.

Kerry Ann: That's right.

Lisa: Yeah, just to make sure you guys are clear, Kerry Ann has these memberships with the top universities, universities from all levels all over the country and is really a big piece of helping to train their faculty and with this huge commitment for minority professors to win tenure, and to be more productive. What I love about having you here on the show and everything that you've accomplished is that you have one of those industries that easily you could say, "Look, I'm in academia. We offer our work." We wouldn't sell we sell. You'd say, "Our work is offered in institutions." I mean, even offer would probably be a charged up word. You know, we're just going to put out our catalog and that's it. There's a lot of companies out there that do take that approach and it's really common in health and wellness and financial services, and for sure in the academic sphere. You didn't do that. You did something different, and you shared it earlier in the interview.

You realized that getting another certification, get another degree, I don't even know how much further there is to go, if there's any more to send there, that you needed to actually start educating yourself in another place which was really the realm of business, and specifically, the realm of sales and speaking and making offers, and all those things that you now do, I'll say second nature. I know you may not say that. I'd love to hear a little bit more about the unique transformation

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you guys offer and really your experience with package pricing and we'll say the word, "selling." Your work, high ticket, into this non-sales space.

Kerry Ann: Yeah, and I cannot emphasize enough how sales is not the culture of the academy. I cannot emphasize that strongly enough, and yet, the reality is that we have a great track record of teaching people really two things. How to become highly productive in their research, and how to have a life off campus, right? We're really interested in helping people not just to win tenure, that's step one, but to really thrive in the academy. The reality is that for us, when you're in a space that is not designed for an offer, you taught me, when you can't sell, give, so when we go to a workshop, we train in a specific skill and we give. We often give people an individual membership. They can have access to our online resources for an entire year, and of course, what we teach is extremely valuable to people, so when we say, "Hey, if you want more, here's how to get it," and of course, everybody raises their hand. People want more. That's really clear. Everybody wants to learn how to have explosive productivity and have a life. That sounds really delicious.

Lisa: In the sales world, we call that an opt in. That's when they're giving you their name and their email address, and ...

Kerry Ann: And permission.

Lisa: ... They now have moved from the audience member to a follower, a subscriber, a community member that is saying, "I want more. Here's my permission to serve me, market to me," right?

Kerry Ann: Exactly, and of course, we do what we do because we want to serve these people. Yay, they've given us permission to serve them for a year, that's wonderful, and we really watch the metrics of their engagement with our online site and when we find a high level of engagement, we set an appointment with their provost, or their dean, or whoever is in charge of faculty on their campus, and we say, "Hey, we've noticed that X number of people are actively engaged in our resources, and for a flat fee, you could have this available for all your faculty, so can we have a conversation?" We do it this way, because the primary objection would be that nobody's going to use the services.

Lisa: If they're already using it ...

Kerry Ann: We get them [crosstalk 00:16:12]. That's right, and loving it, and you know what? That's great. That's how we get that foot in the door. That's how we use an opportunity that's really set up for teaching, to invite people into our community, and once we have a certain number, it's actually cheaper for the institution to buy a flat fee and have it available to everyone than for those people to pay individually.

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- Lisa: Awesome. Basically, I think you have 3 offers, is that right?
- Kerry Ann: Yep.
- Lisa: You've got the offer to the institution that you're talking about which is a 5 figure investment, right?
- Kerry Ann: Mm-hmm (affirmative), yep.
- Lisa: Then, tell us about the other 2 offers, and this is really it, for this 4 million dollar plus business, 3 things. They do 3 things.
- Kerry Ann: Yeah. May I say it just a little bit differently?
- Lisa: Yes, please. I'm sure you can say it so much better.
- Kerry Ann: We have one transformation which is we're going to help you thrive, and by thriving, we mean you're going to have more productivity and you're going to have a life.
- Lisa: Got it.
- Kerry Ann: In order to get that, there's really 10 skills that you need, and you know what? We can either come to your campus and teach one, that's one mode of delivery, you can join our annual membership and that way you learn the skills one per month online, or you can join our boot camp and we'll teach them to you in 12 weeks, one per week with a coach who will kick your ass and make sure you do them.
- Lisa: Love it.
- Kerry Ann: I say it that way because I just can't make the point strongly enough. We really have one thing. We have one thing we're trying to do. There's 10 skills that are required to do that thing, but we can deliver them in 3 different ways. We can come to your campus and do one, you can get all 10 once a month through our annual membership, or it's those same skills, but we'll hit them once a week in our boot camp.
- Lisa: This is so important, the point that Kerry Ann is making here. When we talk about package pricing and selling your work high ticket, is that if you look at it, it's all centered around one transformation, and then she's got, on our campus we call her a unique branded system. She's got these 10 things, and it's not like she is going to say, "Oh, I want to sell something else. Let me make up another different 10 things." The 10 things are really what makes up the content for all of these different levels, whether you're buying a 3 to \$5000 12 week course, or a 10 or 20 or \$30,000 membership. It's same content, and it's leading to the same transformation, and I think if you and I could join forces to the world of

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entrepreneurs to give one message, it's like, keep it simple. Get clear on that outcome. How would you say it? What would you say to the world of entrepreneurs about that?

Kerry Ann: I would say just do one thing, and quite frankly, the difference between a 6 figure and a 7 figure business for us was just getting more people into one program. 6 figure business was when we had 50 people in our boot camp and a handful of people in our annual membership, and the 7 figure business, today we have 248 people in a boot camp that costs \$3950 per person. It's paid for by ...

Lisa: \$3950, right?

Kerry Ann: Yeah. We do it 3 times a year. It's the same boot camp that it was 6 years ago when we started. It's the same 10 modules, it's the same structure, it's just when we started, we had 12 people in it, and we charged \$1400 per person.

Lisa: What do you think was the hinge for you to go from \$1400 to it's almost 4000 per person now? If somebody's looking at their own business saying, "Great. I have this speak to sell boot camp. Same thing for us. It started with a couple people. We'll have over 1000 people in the next course." Actually, sorry, I jumped track on the question. Let me go back. What was the hinge for you on the pricing piece? There's 2 conversations going on here. Sorry. There's the have one thing and put more people in it, right?

Kerry Ann: Yeah.

Lisa: Actually, let's stay there for a minute, and then I'll jump to pricing. Have one program, put more people in it. That's the big message, right?

Kerry Ann: Yeah.

Lisa: Get better at what you do, have one thing. Anything you can say about that piece?

Kerry Ann: Well, yeah. I mean, for us, we know what the outcomes are of that one thing. I know that if you give me 12 weeks of your life and you are a professor, I absolutely, with certainty, if you go to our boot camp, I know that you will come out the other side more productive, and that you'll have a life. I know this, because we measure our outcomes. We measure them every session, and every session, over 90% of people become more productive. If you have confidence in what you do, and I know if people go through it, and actually do it, and we'll drive them through it in a boot camp. If you do it, you are in fact going to get the outcome. The probability is extremely high, so if I have that level of confidence and I know that my mission is to help people really thrive in the academy, then it's not even about the money, it's not even about the sales.

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I am absolutely maniacal about getting as many people to have this experience as possible, not because I want our business to keep growing, but because I know if you do this, your life is going to change, and I know it's going to change, not just from my data, but because I get things like, I get calls and letters from people's partners saying, "Thank you so much. I got my husband back." "Thank you so much. My partner is a better parent." "Oh, my gosh. We have our weekends back and it's like our marriage is completely transformed. Oh, and by the way, he also got this giant grant," and, "Thank you. I got tenure."

Lisa: Wow.

Kerry Ann: I feel like if you get yourself ... I'm saying this because it's scary as hell when you raise your prices. It's scary to really push. I have sweat through my clothes many times. I've lost sleep, but the reality is, I just keep myself grounded in my mission. I don't ask about return on investment, I ask about return on mission. If you have a big mission, and you really want to make change, and in my case, I just want to alleviate the pain that I experienced, by helping other people not have to go through what I went through. By doing it, we not only end up with a really large number of people who are thriving, but it's also the case that I experience my own healing in being able to provide for other people. The thing that I desperately needed, and didn't have. As long as I can keep my feet grounded in that, I have the strength to make the hard choices and do the scary things.

Lisa: So true. I mean, I skipped over it a little bit here, but you went through the process of following the path you were told as a professor, right?

Kerry Ann: Yeah.

Lisa: I understand it was fairly painful experience.

Kerry Ann: Yeah, unnecessarily painful. Everybody would tell me what to do, but nobody would tell me how to do it, and it felt like there was this just this secret knowledge that I was constantly trying to beg out of people and it's just not necessary. Really brilliant people get lost because nobody mentors them. Nobody tells them the secret knowledge. There's no community, it's just all isolation. For me to be able to provide that for other people, it feels wonderful for me, and I love to see people just become rock stars.

Lisa: That's awesome, and you create rock stars. There's rock stars all around you. So much of why you have been able to step into a higher level of thinking in your business, and really become the CEO. What would you say, just to kind of wrap up on the pricing part, and maybe it relates to the packaging, that were sort of the moves that you made as you took your program from starting out at a \$1500 price point up to the \$4000 price point now? Your core program. Did you feel like even though the transformation is the same, and modules, you could say, your system is the same. Did you feel like the packaging of it shifted along the way?

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What were the factors? Was it just a decision? Were there other pieces?

Kerry Ann: I'm a little embarrassed to say this, but I'm just going to be honest. I think the big shift for me is that when I started, I just pulled a number out of thin air. You know, 12 people at \$1400 for then, it was a 15 week program, that felt like a lot of money to me. I was happy that I got to do that and got to help people and it was wonderful, but by about the 3rd time, I started to feel bitter, angry, and resentful.

Lisa: You? No.

Kerry Ann: I know, you can't imagine it.

Lisa: Hold on, I think I've got a problem with my line.

Kerry Ann: Yeah. The reality was that I was clear I was helping people, but the price point was so low that the only way that it was sustainable was if I was doing everything, and I was working 10-12 hours a day. Here, I am teaching people about how to have a life and I don't have a life.

Lisa: Right. Losing yours in the process. I think if we all pause and take a little bit of a breath on that one. Including myself, I mean, I go into gross modes and I'm like, "Oh, my God. Am I back to the beginning of my business when it was just Peggy and I?" I really admire what you have accomplished, and your generosity with sharing it, and while certainly not everybody listening here, in fact, there's probably a small percentage that can call themselves a professor, I love that you put some thought into actually a gift that you could offer to our listeners, that just love your vibe like I do, and would love to learn a little bit more.

I know you pulled something from a core curriculum that you have that you thought would really fit, having been a student on our campus. Once a sassy, always a sassy. For those of you that would like to learn more from Kerry Ann, she's going to tell you what it is. Let me tell you first where you'd go to get it. You go to BoostYourSalesShow.com/19, as in one, nine. BoostYourSalesShow.com/19. You're going to find show notes, transcripts, and this awesome gift from Kerry Ann, which I personally cannot wait to devour, so tell us what it is?

Kerry Ann: Sure. Well, it's just a, it's one of our modules. One of the skills that you need to thrive in the academy is to build a big, vibrant, pulsating mentoring network, instead of depending on one guru mentor. What this is is a sample of one of our modules, and even though it's designed for faculty, I think it might be very helpful to you if you're an entrepreneur, as you take a look at it, thinking about what are all the different things that I need, and how do I build out a mentoring network in all of those different areas, so I don't become overly reliant on any one person? The other things I put on there, just because it may be that you're just more curious about the model itself and what it looks like in an academic space, is

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some links to the various things that we do, so you can also just look at that as a model.

Lisa: Awesome. Awesome, and a beautiful model it is. Well, I just adore you, and I really, really appreciate your generosity in sharing your life and business lessons here, and just congratulations on all of your success, and thank you for your generosity in all ways, reaching out and sharing it, sharing your path. It's one of the things that you do so well, and for all of you listening, congratulations for taking this time in yourself today. Obviously there's a lot of things asking for your attention, and the fact that you took this time with myself and Dr. Kerry Ann Rockquemore to just dive into the model to be able to boost your sales and lifestyle. I should say a model, one that's worked really well for both of us in completely different ideal client markets. Hopefully it opens your mind to what's possible for you. To grab the show notes, the transcripts and Kerry Ann's awesome free gift, we'll call it "Mentoring 101," just go to BoostYourSalesShow.com/19, BoostYourSalesShow.com/19, as in one, nine, and Kerry Ann, thank you so much for being here and sharing, and it's always so fun for me to interact with you.

For everybody else, I look forward to getting sassy with you again next week. I hope you enjoyed this episode of Boost Your Sales and Lifestyle with Lisa Sasevich. If you did, be sure to visit BoostYourSalesShow.com and while you're there, download my free training "Seed and Grow Rich," to learn how to provide great value while simultaneously creating hunger and desire in your prospective clients without being salesy. I hope you'll also head over and leave us a raving review at iTunes. I hope you enjoyed the show as much as I enjoy providing it for you. Thank you so much for allowing me to be part of your entrepreneurial path, and until our next episode, live sassy.