

- You're listening to the "HR Mixtape," your podcast with the perfect mix of practical advice, thought-provoking interviews, and stories that just hit different so that work doesn't have to feel, well, like work. Now your host, Shari Simpson.

- Joining me today is Bob Goodwin, the president of Career Club, a unique service that uses proven sales and marketing methods to help clients land a career that matters to them. The inspiration for Career Club was born from his experience leading the client engagements for global brands like Coca-Cola, Samsung, and P&G. He saw the opportunity to bring marketing principles, coupled with sales DiSCiplines to conduct more effective job search campaigns. Bob, thanks so much for joining me today.

- Shari, thank you so much for having me, it's great to be here.

- Yeah, you know it was exciting we get to meet in person at SHRM this year.

- Yeah.

- And we finally were able to line up a date to talk and I'm just, I'm really excited about our conversation going into this, I think you've got a really cool background. You know you have this sales marketing kind of background and when I think about job hunting, right? That really isn't the first thing that pops to mind. I'm curious how you made that global connection between brand strategies like those of Coca-Cola and Samsung to an individual's job search.

- Yeah, so you know, with the background of, I come from a sales and marketing background and have been in the consumer insights market data space for a pretty long time and led the engagements, as you said, at places like Procter and Gamble and Coke and Samsung and so you're working with world class marketers and so that's kind of what I know a lot about. But I also love to network and connect with people and so when you're a networker, you end up meeting a lot of people in job search. And what was almost immediately apparent to me is how people struggled to articulate what they do, how they add value, what they're looking for. And so I'm like, well this is a huge sales and marketing exercise that people don't recognize it for what it is. And so just really briefly on the brand side it's like what's my unique value proposition? What problems do I solve? What opportunities do I help give someone take advantage of? How can I communicate that in a pretty concise and compelling way? Who's the target audience for this and how do I reach them? Well, those are things marketers think about all day long. And then on the sales side of it, well you have a quota, you've got a quota of one, you need exactly one new job, but you need a pipeline of opportunities. And so you need to have a lot of stuff working at various levels of development. You know I might be screen interviewing at one company and negotiating with another company and

everything in between. And then there's how you conduct a sales call, like, so that you can drive it to the conclusion that you want. Well, most people aren't in sales and marketing, and ironically, even the ones that are fail to see the relationship. And so I just saw just a really big opportunity to help people hone their message, identify where they're really trying to go, and then how to create the activities to get them there faster and in a better way.

- Do you think there's any one marketing tactic that you think is pretty underrated or overlooked by HR professionals as they kinda go to market?

- Well, yeah. Yeah and it's not just HR people, but I think HR people are very representative of this, which is not knowing your value proposition and not being able and therefore not being able to communicate in a clear way. How is it you contribute? So many people, and again, I think HR people fall in this pretty well, is they think about their job description. Well so I was responsible, I was the business partner for this unit and we had 2,000 employees and I looked after total benefits and recruiting and blah, blah, blah. Okay, that's kind of helpful in terms of scope, but people get fired for not doing their job description. So just because that's what you're responsible for doesn't mean you're actually good at it or how you brought betterness to all of that. And so we spend a lot of time with clients helping them really kind of unpack how they help a company make money, save money, or mitigate risk 'cause those are really the value levers. And most people just don't think of it that way and you really have to spend some time unpacking how did I actually contribute? Sometimes it might be a little bit more indirect so you can't, salespeople can draw a very short, straight, fat line to I sold a million dollars worth of stuff. In HR, it might be a little squishier, but even try to get as far as you can get down that road usually looks like improvement to people, so the main thing that HR people and candidates in general can do is really understand their unique value proposition and how to communicate it.

- And you know there's definitely a lot HR can talk about from correlation to business goals and the work that we do from talent management to budgeting and workforce planning and all those kinds of things, those all affect the bottom line.

- They do and yet, the irony is, that a forever problem for HR is the, if we're on video you'd watch me make air quotes, of having a seat at the table. Well, why don't you have a seat at the table? Because you don't always speak the language of business. You might skew more towards speaking the language of compliance, policies, procedures, but those aren't KPIs, key performance indicators, of the business in the same language that the CEO and the CFO might be speaking.

- Yeah, you know one of the other things that I think is really

interesting as an HR professional is often we are on the side of the table when a candidate is negotiating salary, but when it's reversed and now we're the one asking for salary negotiations, I think sometimes we can get in our own head about kind of the stuff we know about pay grades and that kind of stuff and what's your advice for us to be more savvy negotiating for ourselves, for our own salaries?

- Yeah, that is such a great question, Shari, most people are squeamish about negotiating. So, you know the way that you just even framed the question, you know around salary negotiation, I would zoom out a little bit and think about total comp total rewards first. And there's just so many factors that go into this. If I answered your question really, really directly I would say be data-driven, like be objective, bring data to the table, so it's not just I want, but here's the market for my skills. But again, zooming out just a little bit to total rewards, you know PTO, I think coming outta the pandemic people value their time as much as anything, thankfully, I think that's a good choice. So can you negotiate more PTO. But do you really understand the value of the benefits that are being offered? I know we're gonna talk about my podcast, hopefully here in a minute, but we just launched a new one where I'm doing this with Johnny Taylor, the CEO of SHRM, and we just did one on negotiating and compensation and one of the things that even I'm learning is that people don't fully appreciate the value of the benefits package that's being involved, it's just little checkbox stuff of medical, dental, whatever. And it's like, yeah, but this program that they've got is worth another \$20,000 to you, that one's worth \$8,000 to you, and having a better scorecard so that you can compare benefits, one to the other, obviously retirement plans, vesting periods, match rates, things like that. But there's some things people can do too that are maybe non-traditional, but very high value. For example, look I understand you can't go any higher on the pay because of levels and constraints on that, what would be really valuable to me is to have an executive mentor. So I would like, if we could negotiate, that I get paired up with the CMO and agreed to have at least four meetings during the course of a year. Seriously? Like how great would that be? And it's free, it's a hundred percent free for them to be able to give that to you. Something that might be of value to you is, you were talking before we went on going to conferences, can we agree that I get to go to the SHRM conference or HR Tech or whatever it is that would be great for me to go to. Could we agree that I get to speak on behalf of the company on HR issues twice a year? There's all kinds of things that would be highly valuable to somebody if they thought to just back up from just salary a little bit.

- Well and it lends itself to how are you motivated as an HR person? You know, for me, all those things you talked about are really important for me. You know I kind of describe my why as helping people reach aha moments, so I need to be in a role where I can do that.

- Yes.

- And so knowing going into those conversations if I'm not hearing that in the job description or the work I'm gonna be doing, I gotta ask for it, right? And make sure that that's clear. So I think that comes down to really knowing yourself. You know with Career Club and some of the things you've talked about, you've talked about emotional intelligence and coaching and how you think about that and sharpening those areas. How as you raise your emotional intelligence is that gonna help you in these negotiations?

- Yeah, so we see this a lot in our outplacement side of our business. So the B2B side of the business where we call it next placement, not outplacement 'cause that sounds out, your out, versus what's next and being more forward looking and hopeful. But it feeds into the thing that you're talking about which is emotional intelligence and mental wellness, so, but just speaking specifically to emotional intelligence, we use both StrengthsFinder and DiSC to help people. We find that people, and I would raise my hand at the front of the line, tend to not be self-aware and to the extent that we are we often lack the vocabulary to talk about it. One of the things that most of our clients struggle with is they don't wanna sound braggy, so say that like one of your strengths was being strategic. Well that sounds really kind of self, well you know I'm a strategic thinker Shari. You know, like really? But you know Shari I'm not sure if you're familiar with StrengthsFinders, but one of the things that's identified as one of my top five strengths is strategic thinking. And the way that's played out in my career is and the kinds of roles where I really thrive is. So it brings a self-awareness, but it's credentialized by a third party resource that people know and respect, but it also gives you the words to describe it. I talked about DiSC, and I think this is very much in the emotional intelligence camp, which is DiSC teaches me my preferred communication style, it doesn't teach me, it identifies for me, what my preferred communication style is, but it also helps me identify the preferred communication style of the person I'm talking to. So you ask the question in the context of like, interviewing, this is a life skill, my wife and I do this. But so for example, you know when you're interviewing, there's a lot of tell me about a time when, and so you've got a catalog of stories that you're prepared to tell. We talk about remixing those stories and this is an emotional intelligence tool where how, I'm gonna generalize a little bit, how I might tell a story to the CFO might differ how I tell it to the CEO, might differ how I tell it to the CHRO. The CFO, it might emphasize profitability. CEO, it might emphasize the strategic importance and how that allowed us to further our strategic goal, gain a competitive advantage. To the CHRO, it might be about how it's cross-functional, very collaborative and how some of our company values really came to the fore on the, it's all the exact same story. We call it remixing because the melody is the same, but it might have a more hip-hop, country, rock and roll beat to it depending on who the audience, how

do they want to receive the story, not how am I most used to telling the story. So those would be a couple examples. Last one I'll give you just on emotional intelligence and mental wellness is resilience. So I believe that's gonna be the superpower for the next foreseeable future. So much change is happening and so zooming into job search, there's a lot of rejection that's associated, right? The way I say it is, the road to yes is littered with no. And so you've got to be able to deal with that and deal with it in a healthy way 'cause we can get beat down pretty quickly and really start to question our own value. With resilience, you draw on your personal values, your network, times when you've been resilient before, and how can you reapply that, how can you benefit find and find the good in this? So in job search, being able to say, well, even though this one didn't work out, that's okay, I got further in the interview process, I answered that question better than I've ever answered it before, I may have actually gained an ally along the way at that company. So maybe it wasn't that role, but maybe something will pop in the future. So there's so much you can tell wrapped up in emotional intelligence and mental wellbeing that applies to job seekers and I think particularly for HR folks.

- You know it's funny you mentioned that rejection, when I was earlier in my career and I'm dating myself a little bit, you'd apply for a job and you'd get a snail mail, right? You'd get a letter, a rejection letter, and I used to call those, you suck letters because that's just how you felt. And it obviously as you go in your career, like you said, you develop a little emotional resiliency and you go, okay, that role wasn't for me, clearly. But it's a real thing to have to deal with as you think about switching careers and putting yourself out there in the best light. I do wanna switch gears a little bit. I wanna talk about your podcast, I love a good podcast.

- Thank you.

- Career Club Live, you have great guests and interesting episodes. Is there any episode that really sticks out to you that you're like, man, this really was a great episode and it talked about somebody kinda navigating the job market?

- Yeah, so I mean, you're right, we have been very blessed and thank you for mentioning that. I mean, we've just had some really amazing, very senior level people, global thought leaders in the wacky world of the future of work. One though that stands out to me and it wasn't too long ago was with John Ferguson, who's the CHRO for NASCAR and I love that episode, I love John. He just brings so much energy and charisma, but there's a lot of substance in there. And you know we talked a lot about being fluid in your career and being open to change and this is his expression, so I'll give all credit where it's due, to John, but is sometimes you have to go to grow. Sometimes you have to go to grow. And I'm like, "Wow, that's pithy and really, really true." But related to that is, and we see this a ton, is the boomerang effect. So you

left, you learned some new skills, you built your network, you operated in a different business context, business environment, and you get recruited back, you decide you want to go back, whatever it is that draws you back to someplace that you were before and just, careers are not linear anymore. And I mean this is trite, but you don't stay at the same company for 35 years and get the gold watch and all that stuff. And just being open to leaving and also being open to coming back and, of course, that works on the same side is letting people go and not holding animosity towards 'em like, you're disloyal, I can't believe you left us. And then also like, no, you're part of the family, like our relationship is for your career, not just the time that your paycheck's coming from us. And yeah, the door's always open and you already understand our culture, you're gonna bring a new perspective to us. And John did such a great job of articulating, both from the employee and the employer side, of just being flexible and open.

- And that's a really good note for HR professionals as you think about those that leave your organization, how can you create that alumni network?

- Yes.

- Just because they no longer were the right fit at the right time for that role, doesn't mean that they can't be such a great advocate for you and your organization and what you're doing, so I love that, I love that he talks about that and that you leave that door open and don't burn bridges from either side of the equation.

- Yeah, I mean, I'll be super brief here, but another episode is with Steve Cadigan, I don't know if you know that name, but Steve was the first CHRO at LinkedIn and he wrote a fantastic book called "Workquake," back in 2021. And that's really the thesis of "Workquake," is we need to kind of open up our minds so we're not going back to pre pandemic work and I think in a lot of ways, thank goodness. But the idea of networks, of alumni networks and that you're part of our network for the rest of your career and we want to be part of yours and that really does turn out to be a win-win. If you can embrace that philosophy, they're gonna refer talent to you, they might be your customer on another day, they're leaving Glassdoor reviews, I mean there's so many benefits, and as we said a minute ago and they may come back and work for you again. Everybody wins.

- Yeah, you could not have teed up my next question better and it was around LinkedIn, so you know somebody who's an avid networker, I'm always looking for advice for HR pros and how we can harness the power of these kind of platforms to really maximize our impact and for our own brand and then once we do decide to seek a new job, what is some of your advice there in navigating LinkedIn?

- Yeah, so it's a great question, this also gets back to your personal brand in terms of your value proposition, you've got a great opportunity, literally to start today if you haven't done this before, to start to share some of your expertise, some of your experience on social media and we'll talk about LinkedIn in particular and HR people because they're dealing with folks with situations all the time, you've got this endless source of content. People are endlessly fascinating, doing weird, wacky stuff, and you've got all these stories to tell. Now, of course, they're gonna be anonymized, you're not going to name names and stuff like that, but being able to talk about situations at work, what people were dealing with, how you guys helped them, or navigated a certain situation and offering that to other people, like, oh my gosh we're dealing with the same thing, that was such a helpful post. But it's exhibiting your brand, it's not claiming your brand, it's actually demonstrating your brand online. So that's something somebody can start doing immediate, did you read an article and it struck you in a certain way? Did you listen to "HR Mixtape" and you heard something and it really resonated with you? Well, why? So kind of leads me to the second point. First point is creating your own unique content, and again, these don't have to be books, these are just kind of short, crisp LinkedIn posts. But the other part is following other people and commenting on other people's stuff, which has two main benefits. One is, hey, if you heard something on Shari's podcast that resonated with you, say why. And don't just go, like, great interview, exclamation point, but what, what struck you, and why did it strike you, and add value to the conversation. We both know as content creators, I know who's following my content, I know who's commenting on my content, and I feel a relationship with them. Which is the second point, you can now start to build relationships with people who have influence and who can be part of your network. So say that there's an HR thought leader out there who posts regularly on LinkedIn, well, follow them, start to like their content, start to comment on their content, repost something with a comment on why you're reposting it. I promise you that person knows who you are now and you started to build your network, especially before you need it. And that's the trick and we're gonna bridge over into networking for half of a second. But this is making deposits in an account and you may never make a withdrawal on that account, you may make a withdrawal, but you can't make withdrawals on an account you've never made deposits before. So whether it's your own content or building on somebody else's content to show thought leadership and your unique brand, but then also to build relationships with other people. There's so much power in that, I would really have a hard time over emphasizing that.

- I love that, Bob. Well thank you so much for taking a few minutes to chat with me today.

- No, Shari, thank you so much for having me. I love what you're doing, keep doing it, and again, thank you so much for allowing me to

come on.

- I hope you enjoy today's episode. You can find show notes and links at TheHRMixtape.com. Come back often and please subscribe, rate, and review.