

LeaderImpact Podcast Ep. 3 Howard Olsen

00:00.00

Lisa Peters

Welcome to the LeaderImpact Podcast. We are a community of leaders dedicated to optimizing our personal, professional, and spiritual lives to have impact. This show is where we have a chance to listen and engage with leaders from around the world who are living this out. We love talking with leaders. So if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions to make this show even better, please let us know. The best way to stay connected is through our newsletter at LeaderImpact.ca or on social media at LeaderImpact. I'm your host Lisa Peters and our guest today is Howard Olsen. As the founder of High Output Sales Training, Howard is driven to inspire and empower small- to medium enterprises with purposeful vision and practical roadmaps. They can easily learn and immediately apply to generate predictable revenue, friction free with truth, trust, and integrity. Having closed more than 1 billion in personal sales to companies like HP, Motorola, Dell, and Airbus, while leading the global sales, team Howard discovered he was just as good at coaching sales as he was at negotiating them. He has empowered tens of thousands of entrepreneurs and corporate sales teams to amplify their message, bolster their confidence, and solidify their sales and leadership results. Howard now leverages his expertise as a leading sales trainer, master communicator, and professional sales professional speaker to help business owners and sales professionals equip themselves with the skills they need to shorten their sales cycles and raise their revenues through proven, natural, and repeatable communication processes ultimately taking the stress out of making it happen. So join us now for a conversation with Howard Olsen about the power of words in your personal, professional, and spiritual lives. Welcome to the show Howard.

01:50.74

Howard Olsen

It's great. Thank you for having me Lisa you know I we always have animated conversations. So I've been looking forward to this one.

01:56.61

Lisa Peters

I am too! It has been and it's funny because COVID sort of blanks out 2 years in my life. But I think it's been five years since we've actually been in the same room together.

02:00.50

Howard Olsen

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, it's about that easily.

02:14.17

Lisa Peters

I was very privileged to take sales, well actually speaker training from you for a weekend in Winnipeg and it was a good weekend just a lot of self-discovery let's say that.

02:16.19

Howard Olsen

For all of us I think it was it was a powerful weekend. Yeah for sure.

02:23.28

Lisa Peters

It was awesome. So thank you again for joining us I'm looking forward to the next minutes, hour however long we have. But for our listeners you know I've told them a little bit about you of what I know but you tell us a little bit about your personal life, yourself.

02:39.72

Howard Olsen

Oh well, you know so well, you know my name I'm Howard Olsen I live here in Vancouver. I haven't always been here but this is the longest I've lived anywhere. I started my journey as a little toddler in Toronto and moved down to Fort Lauderdale, actually grew up in Miami. Went to high school down there came back. Got a business degree at University of Western Ontario And from there took off, started traveling the world, worked with a little company called DHL. Worked with their parent company and that's how I got into the sales game and that literally took me all over the world. I started as a rep in Toronto and after a few years there. I got a phone call from the headquarters in Switzerland basically saying you know hey look we need somebody to spearhead North American activities. I'll throw greater China so three weeks later I kissed my girlfriend goodbye. Sold my car to my neighbor and I was living in Hong Kong. And you know that started an incredible journey where I really and I like to say that I got to dance on some of the biggest boardroom tables on this planet. Shortly into that part of my career I got recruited to an even larger organization and became their global account director ultimately vice president of sales. And from there found myself woven back here into Vancouver. So I've been studying sales and leadership and the power of influence. Really, it's really the science of influence, positive influence. Not manipulated influence but social fluency really and so that's been kind of the highlight in the story of my career. You know communication is where it's at and that's how we ended up getting together and working on speaker training. You know I've just discovered that I can help people craft their words whether in sales negotiations or even addressing an audience from the podium.

04:13.31

Lisa Peters

Yeah. I love that part of your introduction just you know you realize you're great at sales. But you're even better at teaching people how to make the sales. And to transition that to such a successful career because I have followed you and it's amazing. So congratulations on that transition. It's really good.

04:31.22

Howard Olsen

No thank you.

04:33.16

Lisa Peters

So anything more about your personal life you want to share. Let's get right into your professional.

04:38.25

Howard Olsen

Well I'm a pretty open book I mean I tell everybody I'm pretty transparent I mean if I got a secret or a head in the genius because I don't know where it is. So I'm not sure what you might want to know you know. One of the things that I do I also MC events and so I always interview whoever the speaker is going to be and I always throw a curveball question at him at the pre-event interview. I say so what's one thing about you that very few people know that you'd be comfortable sharing. And I put that into my introduction and so I've heard all kinds of crazy things over the years but you know one of the things about me I actually ran the Harley Club of Hong Kong and I sang in a rock band in Hong Kong for a number of years. So there's a little tidbit that you may not have known about me. And three summers ago before all this COVID stuff came I got a couple of Harleys and I rode one all the way from Vancouver we started the Pacific Ocean. Took it all the way across to the East Coast. Around the Great Lakes down the St. Lawrence River basin. Ended up around PEI around Nova Scotia and back again. Eighteen Thousand kilometers in four weeks and man what a great way to see this magnificent country that we live in.

05:41.82

Lisa Peters

Yeah, now did you do that with a group of Harley Davidson people?

05:45.32

Howard Olsen

No, it was just it was my wife and I. We were invited to a wedding in Winnipeg and so we decided to ride the Harley out there. We shipped our wedding clothes out to Winnipeg to meet us and we could just you know hang out in t-shirts and jeans. And then as we were planning that trip I actually realized that Winnipeg is almost dead center between Vancouver and Ottawa where I have 2 brothers. And I said well if we're going to go to Winnipeg let's go see my brothers. And then I looked at Mikayla, who's German, and I said you've never actually seen the rest of this country. She goes no. I said well as long as we're gonna go to Ottawa we might as well go to PEI and let's go. So on day 21 I dropped her off at Halifax airport, put her in a plane and then I boogied back. I said I dropped her off on Sunday morning at noon and I said I'll see a Friday for dinner. She said no way and I said I'll be home for dinner Friday night and there I was yeah was awesome.

06:31.89

Lisa Peters

Ride the open road. Yeah, it's a good story. I've been thinking about a bike is it my age I'm not sure anyway. So we're going to switch a little over to your professional life. I don't know if there's anything more you want to share. About your career move once you move back to

Canada and what you've been doing lately because I have lots of questions about what you do because I have followed you and but you know since moving back to Canada what are you doing? What are you doing now?

06:55.85

Howard Olsen

Well I'm doing lots of things. I mean I've got my fingers into lots of different pies. Obviously I've still got my training and consulting business. So I still run training programs. And a little slowly but surely the live kind of events in boardrooms and in hotels that's starting to come back. But the majority of it is online now. But I've spent a lot of time figuring out how to pivot and how to transition to make things that used to work in a hotel room when you're live, pressing flesh, how to make that work through a camera. And so I spent a lot of time really focusing on that. In the meantime I'm doing consulting with a number of companies, helping them work out their strategic planning. And the latest thing since the last time I talked to you, I think when we even when we set this up, since then we've actually planted a brand new church and now they call me Pastor Howard in addition to all those other things. And I would you know if somebody would have told me six months ago they'd be calling me pastor I would have thought I'm crazy and now I'm actually even hosting a national daily prayer call over this nation called Decree for Canada and I've got at least, I mean there's hundreds of people that show up, at least a dozen pastors who now call me their pastor. And that to me is just mind blowing. So I've got my fingers into all kinds of things. I'm plenty busy. I'm a senior pastor at a church and I'm still doing consulting and interviews like this and I'm having more fun than I've ever had.

08:20.31

Lisa Peters

Oh it's funny. Yeah, so you know we talk about how we transitioned and I know that you're a pretty big personality. I have seen you in action in person. And you know all that action that comes across in person right that body language. How do you do it? Did you take a lesson you know to transition to video? It's not the same Howard right? Or is it.

08:46.47

Howard Olsen

Well I mean working in a room and working with an audience I think people either have a natural aptitude to those things or they don't you know. So listen I'll go back to the speaker training that we did together. I remember when we launched the first LeaderImpact speaker training program. Several of us together with Nathan Hilderbrandt went into Kenya to run a pilot program. And I remember sitting in the restaurant one night, the night before the opening night, and there was a local Kenyan guy very well-dressed. Obviously he was either a political figure or a business figure. He was somebody of significance in that community was clear. And so he asked what we were doing there and I said well I'm running a speaker training program for some of your governmental leaders. He says do you think you can teach anyone to speak? And I said some people have natural aptitudes toward these things and some people will naturally be good communicators with an audience. But one thing for sure when you teach the intentionality and you can focus on the things that make a good speech I can

take a poor speaker and give them some competency and I can take a competent speaker and raise them. And so I've just always had an awareness of the things that I'm doing and then I've kind of learned how to backward plan things. So that I can transfer them to someone else whether that's in sales or in leadership issues or communications. You know, even a thing like this just look at how we're communicating now I mean I should be making eye contact with you the majority of the time even though you know we're on a camera. I think about these things. Like I've got my camera sitting on a tripod at eye level. So that even though we're in different rooms I can give the appearance that I'm making. I'm not faking anything I'm genuinely concerned with this because I understand that it creates an environment whether you're standing live in an audience. If you're having a conversation across a table at Starbucks you want to look them in the eye. Well if you're on a camera think about this. You want to be able to look them in the eye. I think I've always had a natural gravitation to paying attention to these sorts of things and sharing what I've been conscious of with others. I think that's probably the best way to say it.

10:48.58

Lisa Peters

Well obviously you have because in my research, or whatever call stalking your website, I found a video of you. Actually it wasn't a video. It was, people saying how much they loved your course. And there was a woman on there, she got emotional at what she had learned and what she was taking away and how it had helped her or she had already made a phone call it. It was I got verklempt. It was really good. It was just a video was put on her and it was like what do you think? How did you think of the seminar? So that was really good and it was a good post so made me feel good. Thanks Howard.

11:28.93

Howard Olsen

Oh , I'm delighted that carried through. Yeah, it's pretty real. It's pretty genuine. You know so.

11:44.51

Lisa Peters

Yeah, it was so my first question for you was, you make a living talking to other people, sales training, and keynotes. And I'm sure you talk to people you like, you dislike, you agree, you disagree. I don't know on every level but you still have, I shouldn't say but, and you still have a positive conversation with them. So my question is what do you feel makes a great conversation?

12:02.92

Howard Olsen

I would I tell everybody I think it really means to go into a conversation with insatiable curiosity. Just go in with insatiable curiosity right? I think sometimes the conclusions we jump to begin with the assumptions we start with and as we all know assumptions are most of the time wrong. And everybody says that a coin has two sides actually a coin has three sides. It's got a head, a tail, and an edge. And most people miss the edge and don't even look at the other side of the thing. And so yeah, there's lots of people I'll talk to that I may not agree with

but you know at the end of the day, the minute you harness this and I'll talk to whoever's watching this video right now, is watching this interview between the two of us, you know I would say I would say this, go into every engagement understanding that everyone you're talking to is actually no different than you. Every human being on this planet, now get this, hungers to be heard but more than be heard, hunger is to be profoundly understood. Not just understood they want to be heard and they want to be understood they want to be profoundly understood. And when I got a revelation of this, be loved is wonderful, but to be understood is profound. That's you that's me. And when you'll just take the time, and just sometimes you got to bite your tongue and sit on your hands. Just ask a question and let them answer it because once they've heard that you've heard, once they understand that you understand, a lot of the friction in the conversation can now be mitigated because false assumptions on both sides of the thing have disappeared.

I'll give you this example, you ever had a conversation with someone knowing full well that you were just going to agree to disagree? We've all had them. But we've also had conversations somebody began disagreeing with what we were saying, or started giving advice on what we were beginning to say, and we hadn't even finished the thought yet. That leaves you with an angst and a discomfort. You said wait a minute. You're not in a position to begin disagreeing. If you disagree with me I'm okay with that. But at least let me finish the thought so that you know what it is that you're disagreeing with. Because if you just disagree before I finish my thought you're not qualified to disagree and that's what I'm feeling right? You understand what I'm saying. Well this is what's happening with pretty much every one of our stakeholders. So you go into a meeting with a bunch of assumptions, listen just shut up and listen to them. It's just that simple!

14:23.83

Lisa Peters

There you have it!

14:27.29

Howard Olsen

So but okay so to soften that language go in with an insatiable curiosity. Look at the head. Look at the tail and look at the entire side. Get a 360 on it and now you're in a position to have a decent conversation. And even if you two are disagreeing on a matter, the fact that you've heard each other out. Now we can come to a place [where] there's mutual respect in that and now it's not a friction filled conversation anymore, most of the time. Now there's exceptions to everything of course.

14:48.67

Lisa Peters

Yeah, it reminds me of an interview I did for another show. It was called Crucial Conversations in COVID. And having those COVID conversations with your family. And you are saying exactly what she said. You can't go in with your assumptions because you don't know. Whatever if you're vaccinated or not vaccinated and this is a big thing with families right now. So not only in the corporate world your advice just lands exactly what you know I need to hear as well.

15:19.92

Howard Olsen

Well, you know I always get put in the sales box. He's the sales guy. He's the sales trainer guy. But you know listen John Maxwell said that leadership is nothing more than positive influence with people. And I've always said that selling, really, is nothing more than positive influence with people. And people get this idea that selling is a transactional activity. No, we're selling ideas. We sell to our kids. We sell to our spouses. CEOs sell their strategic initiatives to their board of directors. Administrative assistants sell ideas on how to make an office environment more productive. That's not transactional. It's just the delivery and receipt of information. That's what selling at the end of the day is. And sometimes there's a dollar amount attached to it. But it's always about the transmission and receipt of information. It's just leadership.

16:03.67

Lisa Peters

Yeah. Well this might lead into my next question. There is a meet Howard Olsen video on your YouTube and it's a great video. And in 1 of your last statements it says I'm not in the sales and training business. I'm in the hope and encouragement business. So I ask you, how do you use hope and encouragement in sales training?

16:24.95

Howard Olsen

That's a great question. I never thought about that. I did say well I did say because it's true. Listen here's the thing there are four things today that they never teach in school anymore. They don't teach social fluency. They don't teach human interaction skills in school. They don't teach about money. More and more they're not even teaching the truth anymore. I mean but I'm not going to go down that rabbit hole here right? There's all kinds of things going on. And they certainly don't teach sales and leadership and communication and commerce skills. And so I've seen over the years, even people that have got and MBAs in business programs, entrepreneurs, the one thing that they always struggle with, they have great ideas, but they don't know how to commercialize them. And so the problem with traditional sales training and all kinds of other trainings is theory only leaves you with theory. But if I can get in there, understand where they are, get into their heart, get into their mind and then put some practical application underneath that. So give them a process that they can repeat and then put some coaching on that so they actually know how to harness the very thing that they just used, I can walk them out of a training environment, equipped not just understanding an idea, but having taken relevant practice and experience how to apply it in the real world so that they can carry it into their lives. And because they gained confidence in the midst of a training program and they were encouraged in that. So not just process not just skills. We give them the skills. We give them the mindset but you know we can give you what to, what to, why to. But more importantly, we got to give you how to and then when we can help you practice the how to you have the courage to go out and try it. And because you tried it, it works and because it works you try it again and we can begin to spin up a self-fulfilling cycle of success. And so that's what I say by hope and courage. I blow hope and courage all over them while overlaying it with skills and mindset. So it's a mindset. It's a skillset. And then the encouragement to go come on, go and then we literally get in behind them and I've seen

people, they've been struggling with revenue or struggling with client acquisition or whatever it is and turn literally on a dime because nobody ever taught them this. And that's all they really need what to, why to, and how to with a bit of encouragement to give and try it. And so you know with a bit of hope, with a bit of encouragement we can set them on the path to successfulness.

18:40.95

Lisa Peters

That just takes me right back to that video of that woman. That's exactly what she was talking about was the hope and encouragement and that she felt that from you. So you're exactly on the mark on there. So what do you think is unique about you or your business?

18:58.76

Howard Olsen

Well, you know my wife says there's only one of me in the world is very thankful. So you know listen, we're all, we're all unique critters right? We're all very unique characters. But I mean when you look at it from a training business from a training perspective or a business perspective I think it comes right down to what I just previously said I think there's lots of training. Listen the last major corporation I worked for before taking off the golden handcuffs was a \$45 billion company and I was essentially a number three inside that company. When you're operating at that kind of capacity, dealing with the kind of clients that I was dealing with you know and thousands of sales reps across the planet, I've been through virtually every single training program you can imagine. I've seen the good, the bad, and the ugly of all of it. I've seen the stuff that I've rejected, the stuff that I accepted, and the things is okay that needs to be tweaked but I think I can weave that in, that makes sense. But at the end of the day, after all the training that I've seen, there's a lot of companies out there will tell you what to do and there's a lot of companies out there to tell you why you should do it. Very few excel at showing you how. And I think that is really the unique identifier for what we do. We are all about practical application and I'm firmly committed to this. I'll say this to anyone, if you don't know how to do something better by the time I'm done I don't want to begin. Everything I'm about is making sure that you can do. That I know and you know that you can do this. Now can and will are different things. But I know that by the time I finished my work with you, you are fully equipped mentally, physically, spiritually, and ready to go so that you can get out there and do it now. The only question is will you take that encouragement and now go and apply what you have learned but I make sure you know how. I know for sure that I will not quit speaking and whispering into your ear until I'm convinced that you know how to get this done. And I think that is that's a big differentiator.

20:52.50

Lisa Peters

Which takes me right to my next question because you are a man of words. Your words flow. They just they flow with passion and understanding and I just find myself drawn in. So my next question is about words with you. So that's funny how this happens. It's meant to happen. So there's a section on your High Output Training Systems website and you've written Content is king but delivery still matters. With Howard you get both. So let's talk about

content because the words you use matter, words matter. That's 2 words matter. What advice would you give to listeners about the words you speak?

21:35.60

Howard Olsen

Shatter every inkling toward using negative language patterns. Get rid of them all together. Let me give you an example all right? So I don't want to get all overly scriptural or anything here. But you know listen. Let's just go here. May I go here for a moment?

21:55.26

Lisa Peters

Yes, yes, you may Howard.

22:14.35

Howard Olsen

So listen if whoever is watching this podcast I don't know where you're coming from. I don't know where your spirituality is at. I don't know what you believe and I don't know what you don't believe but let's just go here for a second. You know if you go to the first book of the Bible that says in the beginning God said light be and he just spoke the whole thing into existence. Couple chapters later we learn that we're created in his image. Okay, which means that he's given us the same creative power. How do we create things? We create things through the power of the spoken word. I want you to just run a little exercise right now I want you to think a thought put your hand on your forehead and think a thought. Can you feel it?

22:31.90

Lisa Peters

I can feel how cold my hands are (laughs).

22:33.31

Howard Olsen

No, you can't feel it. Now thoughts are things. There is energy attached to a thought and as a man thinketh so he becomes but now speak it okay. Speak it. Light be! And you instantly feel the vibrational energy of what comes out of your mouth and so we literally create, the words that we speak, literally create what we go walking into. And you know I've seen it over the years people you there's disempowering words and empowering words you know Tony Robbins has done a lot of stuff on this but Harvard proves it. The Bible proves it. All of these things that when you literally speak into existence the very thing which comes forth. Like empowering words would be things like you know I can. I will. I choose to. Like I can. I'm going to go into this meeting and I'm gonna give my customer best shot. I'm going to go in there and I'm really going to see if I can turn this thing around. Where other people go Oh this is going nowhere. I can't do that. You know the subconscious mind is constantly recording what the conscious mind has just done and then anchors it. And this is one of the ways that we literally create our reality. So if you don't like the picture of what you got just start speaking different words. I'll give you another scripture that just supports this old thing. You know there's a word it says it says you know that life and death, now catch this, life and death are in the power of

the tongue. Those who love it will eat the fruit of it. So what is it? It's the power of the tongue. It doesn't distinguish between positive words or negative words. Okay, so we've all heard the expression I am what I eat all right? So you can eat healthy food and you're a healthy being. And you can eat unhealthy food and you're an unhealthy being. Well this scripture says you know the life and death are in the power of the tongue. And whoever loves it will eat the fruit of it. So if you start speaking negative words, you will eat the fruit of that if you start speaking positive words you'll eat the fruit of that. And so from this day forward here's what I encourage you to do I am what I eat and I will only speak what I want to eat. If I don't like what I got today I'm going to start speaking what I want to see tomorrow because quite literally what I speak today creates the tomorrow I walk into. You are in control of what you go into. Use your words wisely and I spend a lot of time actually in workshops and even with close personal friends correcting their language patterns. Because listen, you're creating it. You want a different kind of outcome speak a different kind of outcome.

25:01.51

Lisa Peters

ow I My heart just feels lightened and I don't know what it was you said I could just feel this you know the I will just the language we're using because sometimes I fall back and I may not use the positive language I should. And I'm eating my words.

25:17.70

Howard Olsen

Can we stay here for a moment? Yeah, okay so like I hear people saying all the time I can't. I can't do this. I can't do that. I can't play guitar. I can't find this. Cut it out. I haven't found it yet. You know I can't negotiate a goods. I can't negotiate with that. I have so far not been able to negotiate with those guys but I'm gonna give it my best try. So listen I can. I will. I am. I choose. Those are empowering words. Those are words that put you in a driver's seat and I'm not talking about manipulative driver's seat. I'm talking about giving you the self-confidence to move forward and actually cause something to happen. And the language itself actually takes you there because your brain is recording it and you're creating an energetic field on yourself. And if you're talking negative word patterns and you don't even recognize it, you're actually creating that cloud of negativity around you. So I'll hear people saying like well I should. I'll try to. I'll try. I should. I need to. Those are disempowering words because you've just given yourself an excuse not to go. Well I should. Quit shoulding on me. Cut the should. Cut the should okay listen I will. I can. I'm able. you know. Just shift it around. Like I had a conversation with a good buddy of my named Steve Dinas in yesterday and he says and he wants to play guitar. He says I can't play guitar. I said all right, do you want to play the guitar. He says I absolutely want to play the guitar. Okay, so far I'm unable to play the guitar but I'm working on it. You know, just change get that can't out of your vernacular. I've worked with executives. I've worked with entrepreneurs. And I've worked with sales teams and I'll go out and I'll actually go ride shotgun with them in a car. And I'll hear him say things like you know this is gonna go nowhere. I said no this is going somewhere. Go in and give them your best shot. Change the language because if you tell yourself before you even go there, they're just going to go nowhere you have just convinced your mind to make that thing go nowhere. Change your language. Change your world. It sounds cliché but there's a tremendous amount

of truth to it. There's creative energy in every single word we speak. Speak the words that create the future you want to walk into.

27:25.65

Lisa Peters

So I have to ask you when the pandemic hit, you know a while ago and, you had to transition. What were the words you used to yourself? You know what happened to you? How did you transition? And what has been your COVID bonus? What have you learned from the pandemic?

27:46.71

Howard Olsen

Yeah, that's it wow that's a great question. That's a multifaceted question. There's lots of pieces. There's lots of moving parts on that question.

27:51.00

Lisa Peters

I don't even know what I asked!

28:02.31

Howard Olsen

Well I know what you asked. I'll piece it together. So when what were you thinking? What were you speaking when the pandemic hit? Well I tell you I'm just like you. I mean, I know that you have an events business also. And so I don't have an events planning business but I'm the subject matter that events planners like you hire to fill their events and bring content and you know and value to the audience. And I'll tell you what, I work with companies. I work with associations and all that kind of stuff. And I speak on stages all over the world. I tell you with one snap of a finger eighteen months of calendar got wiped out. My entire business got zero balanced in a day. That was like oh man. Oh man what am I gonna do now? Wow right?

28:35.53

Lisa Peters

Right there with you.

28:39.72

Howard Olsen

And so I just began thinking about that. It's okay. It wasn't instant but I began reflecting on it. And I had always said that I wanted to do more online events to leverage the power of technology. The only reason I'm capable of speaking and teaching people about the power of words is because I'm constantly teaching myself. For years I've been talking about going online and creating online content and I always had an excuse not to do it. I was busy with this or busy with that. And you know the onslaught of this COVID this C-19 thing just really forced my hand and so I basically I locked myself into a room for a couple of months and just said okay I'm going to reverse engineer this. And I really thought about the live environments that I go into. Okay, what of what I do live will work on a camera and what will not work through a camera? What will work in a Zoom room and not work in a Zoom room?

And so I basically I dissected it. I reassembled it and I thought okay I need to I need to test this out on some clients. So I took a couple of the clients that had actually canceled because all the events had been canceled and I said listen I've retweaked all of this. I actually believe that I can pull this off online and make it just as good if not better than if we were live, would you like to be a Beta tester? So I gave them heavily discounted rates so that I could try. And the first one it was good. I had thought about a lot of the combinations and permutations of things that I needed to consider but I discovered some things that didn't quite work well. So I said great and you know and they got a great deal and they got great value for what happened. Everybody walked away tooled up you know, but I learned how to make the program better. So I called another client hey I've just tweaked it again. You want to try it? And so I took them through it. And by the time I got through 3 passes of this, I really had a very well dialed in program and I actually believe my online program is actually better than my than my live program now. Well when I say live they're all live. They're not recorded but they're spontaneous like this.

But because I got very intentional getting formulaic about what to take out and what to put in that will work through a camera I've got this thing dialed into the perfect formula now that I can deliver in bite-sized chunks. So you know with a training session once a week and a coaching and follow-up session once a week until we run through the entire program. And so you know I would say what the pandemic has actually been an incredible blessing to me because it forced me to do the thing that I had consistently found reason not to and now that I've done it, my business is bigger. My reach is wider. And all of the logistics constraints because a lot of times people want to hire you but then you got hotels. And you got planes. And you got you know venues and catering. All of that has been taken out of the equation now. So that when we start talking fee I don't have those discussions anymore.

31:18.10

Lisa Peters

Yeah, my job! But I found the COVID bonus you know as you did. I love the fact of the reach. Like you can speak to how many people in how many countries tomorrow. Like you could be in Germany tomorrow and you could be... It's amazing.

31:35.27

Howard Olsen

Yeah, absolutely and Australia and Indonesia all at the same time. And we've done it. We've done it. It's incredible. There's a blessing in everything if you're willing to look for it.

31:37.66

Lisa Peters

Yes! Oh wonderful that's great comment because you have to look for it. You have to work hard for it. So we're going to switch a little bit now to your spiritual side and your journey. So why don't you tell our listeners a little bit about your spiritual journey. Where did it start or tell us about it. Maybe you maybe always been.

32:11.60

Howard Olsen

Wow, that's a loaded question. Yeah well I say that only because like you like you mentioned earlier that video that's on YouTube called Meet the Howard Olsen that You Didn't Know. And you know if I tell if I tell this story I could probably crank 45 minutes out of it. I won't do that here. But and you can go watch that video on YouTube which we got down to about 7 minutes. Actually filmed at a LeaderImpact event in Toronto. Unscripted. Unplanned. I was teaching. I was doing a training program and something else and the film creatures came up and said hey you open to doing an interview? And I went sure. I had no idea what they're going to ask me and that video was what came out and it's totally spontaneous. None of it scripted.

But yeah listen, I would say that I grew up in a very conservative home but we didn't go to church. I believed that there was a God there was something bigger than me that figured out how to make it rain and purify water and birds and bees and sperm and eggs and okay, there's something smarter than us that created all of this. Okay, so that but that was the extent of my spiritual awakening and journey. But you know I had had a pretty good life I went up the corporate ladder pretty quick. I would actually say by the time I was in my early thirty's I'd probably done more, seen more, traveled more countries, and made more money than most people will in an entire lifetime. And then we moved here to Vancouver and I was brought back with the company I'd been with for years. Went through a merger. The CEO got fired. I landed I basically packed up 2 containers in Australia. One full of cars and motorcycles, the other one full of household stuff. Put them on the ocean hopped in a plane came to Vancouver and landed on a Saturday. I mean I had dinner with a friend Saturday night. I bought a car on Sunday I bought a house on Monday and on Tuesday I got fired. I hadn't even me to the office yet.

And I go wow, wow welcome to Vancouver! And I didn't care. You know I mean to say I didn't care would be inaccurate but I was I was unconcerned. I had a pretty good career, had a pretty good track record, and I had a pretty good reputation in the industry. But what I didn't realize that all the years that I'd been in Asia nobody in North America knew I who I was anymore and they didn't care. And Vancouver, actually even though it's pretty much regarded as a big city, it's not. It's a village. This is not a headquarter town and what I didn't realize is I had a headquarter type resume. I couldn't find any work and you know we went through the process of losing everything. We lost everything. 2 years of tomorrows. Okay I'll find a job tomorrow. I'll find a job tomorrow. I'll find something tomorrow. And after 2 years of tomorrows with a big house and garage full of cars and motorcycles and lifestyle. It doesn't take long till you lose everything. And you know and I'm not going to go through that whole journey.

But I ended up finding some work and I got severely mistreated by 3 companies in succession and I went to a place of depression. I just I wanted to end my life. I began to believe that the age of 35 I was a washed up has been that had seen his best years. And you know again the subconscious mind is constantly recording what the conscious mind is doing. And I began speaking you're a loser. You're a has been. You're broke. You're going nowhere. Your life.. I

began speaking those things and by speaking those things I created those things and slipped into a catatonic depression. I don't remember at least six months of 2002.

I literally had a series of supernatural encounters where a God that I didn't know and wasn't looking for, basically said I got plans and I got purposes for you. And this is where hope and courage comes from. God himself said to me I want you to give hope and courage to those that have lost it and don't know where to find it. But you'll never touch their hurting hearts if you've never felt their kind of pain which is why I let you go through what I let you go through. I want you to use all of that to reach the hurting ones now and give them a hand up and give them a lift out. And the last twenty years of my life have been all about that.

35:56.10

Lisa Peters

Wow! That is a lot to unpack.

35:59.61

Howard Olsen

Yeah, there's a big story in there. But that's the Coles notes version of it and it's been a journey. You know and there's been hills and valleys and I've been learning things and you know, but at the end of the day I've got pastors now calling me their pastor and that to me is just mind blowing I've never been to seminary.

But you know I'm not into religion. Okay I want to be very clear about this. Religion to me and this is my definition I don't want to impose this on anyone. But when I think of religion I think of a set of man-made dogmas created by men used to control other men in the name of God and doing nothing more than making God look bad. Okay, but I've had a series of encounters over the last twenty years with a real loving God who's not into religion. He's into relationship and if you'll talk to him he'll talk to you. The Bible puts it this way if you'll draw near to me I'll draw near to you. Let's just keep it really simple. If you'll talk to me I'll talk to you. In fact, I'm talking to you. You're just so busy you're not hearing me. Slow down. Give me your ear. Tell me you want to know me and I'll show myself to you. That's the real God.

37:02.54

Lisa Peters

And that is the truth. We don't slow down enough. We don't stop talking. We don't stop doing. We don't stop nothing.

37:10.41

Howard Olsen

Well I put it like this like, we spent a lot of time, especially COVID now, we're spending so much time in front of our computers right. If you got if you got too many apps open. So you got Word open. You got your email open. You got about 10 browsers in Firefox or Chrome or whatever you're using. Your computer just grinds to a halt right? It gets really slow. Close the files and the whole thing speeds up. And so what God is saying today is, close a few files and let me talk to you.

37:32.80

Lisa Peters

So you have been, I'll say, very vocal about your faith and bold. You have shared on many platforms as you had discussed a few of them earlier. Do you bring that boldness of your faith into your workplace, like your conferences? Do you drip on people slowly? You know what I mean, like just slight mentions. Because you are very you tell that story right away off people go whoa right? I find I drip on people. It's like you'll know I'm a Christian. But you're very bold. So I ask you the question, do you bring that into your workplace or do you just slowly drip on people?

38:21.80

Howard Olsen

All of the above. All of the above. Listen, everything has a context attached to it. Like I wouldn't walk into a chamber of commerce meeting and say yeah you know you got to believe so I wouldn't say that to anybody anyway. But you know conversations unfold and people look at you say well, that's an interesting thing that you just said. And so what did you find interesting? Why you used this word and I said well you want to know what it means.

Like I'll give you an example. Okay so I was over at the grocery store a couple days ago and I just make sure they see me smiling and I really make sure they see me smiling right? Everybody's all banged up. You want to make a difference in this world. Just be the one that everybody sees smiling when everybody else is all busy in their head oppressed and all the other things. You know you want to be salt and light why don't you just start with a smile man. Let them see it. And so anyway the cashier said something like Wow It's nice to see someone smiling and I said yeah. She goes So how are you I said I'm dynamite she goes Wow I never heard something like that before. And I go Well do you know what it means and she goes. Yeah, it means you're explosive. I go Well, that's one definition I said but you want you where that explosive really comes from. She goes sure. I said it actually comes from the original word dynamis which means being filled with the power of God so that you can do things you'd never be able to do on your own. She goes man I want that. I said you can have it.

So I yes I carry this everywhere I go but it's not like I'm going to push it in their face right? Go back to Newton's third law of physics. Every action has an equal and opposite reaction. So if I you start pushing stuff on people that they're not ready for, they're just gonna push back. So I'm not out there pushing it. But I'm looking for little opportunities to drop things.

So I'll say things like in our in our training program. I'll say you know one of my favorite books it says that the truth you know will set you free. I said but you know when it comes to selling there are 3 truths that will absolutely set you on the path to profitability. Let me share them with you. You know on the break What was that whole thing about truth and free and I said oh you want to know what I mean. So they'll come. They'll ask. So I drop seeds and then if they come but they got to pull it from me. I don't push it on them. Now obviously if I've been asked to come to a conference and speak on the subject of how I came to faith I will tell that story because that's what I've been asked to do. Or I'll drop a seed and then somebody will plant a

question or seed a question into it I said what do you really want the answer to that and they go Yeah I do and then so I allowed them to allow me the opportunity to bring it to them. So I'm bold about what I believe but I'm not forceful with it, if that makes sense.

40:53.14

Lisa Peters

Yeah, there's a book I'm reading right now with our group and it's called Workplace Grace and it's exactly what you're saying. You know it's just you have to meet them where they are. You know if they're not ready then you just you back up and they'll come to you when they're ready. So that's a great comment.

41:06.81

Howard Olsen

Yeah, for those of us that are of a Christian faith here and believers, let's use that word. Okay for anybody listening in that you know.

41:17.28

Lisa Peters

Or seekers.

41:20.41

Howard Olsen

One of the greatest things that I've discovered is you know especially today people we're always surrounded by people that have some channel my mother-in-law's got this or my wife's dealing with that or my son's doing this or my son's doing that and you can hear that they're in a place of distress. Now I just use natural language and I just say something like oh man I wish I could take that from you. You use language that's natural. So for me, it would be a very natural thing for me to look somebody and say hey would you be cool if I prayed for you because that's kind of my language. Hey would you be cool if I prayed for you? And I don't make it religious and I use it I use a soft inviting tone hey would you be cool if I prayed for you. And they go you'd do that?! And I said of course I'd do that. And then you pray for him and then you're and then because the Holy Spirit's involved in this, all of a sudden they feel touched and they're blown away by what just happened. Not because not because I got religious about it. Remember we how did this conversation between you and I start? What is the key to a conversation whether you agree? Just go in with insatiable curiosity and just suspend your assumptions. So suspend the assumption that they don't want you to pray for them. If you say hey can I pray for you! And you get all religious, they don't want that. {If you say} I wish I could take that away from you would you be cool if I prayed for you and they go, You would do that? And I go, of course I would do that. And now they've invited you into their world and so these are just little ways that we can bring our faith without being obnoxious about it.

42:44.80

Lisa Peters

You really are the word guy. That is great. So we're going to talk a little bit about LeaderImpact. LeaderImpact is dedicated to leaders having a lasting impact and I can see that in you that when people meet you I believe you have an impact. You have an impact on me. So as you continue to move through your journey have you considered what you want your faith legacy to be when you leave this world. That's a pretty loaded question if you've ever thought of when you leave. What do you want?

43:12.62

Howard Olsen

Well faith legacy... Legacy... I've always you know, listen at the end of the day, the only thing that I got left when I leave this planet is the reputation I leave behind. You know at the end of the day I mean the clothes will all rot. I'll be in a box or burnt up or whatever happens. That on the day of that final breath and then the spirit goes off right? There's a guy that lived his life with truth trust and integrity. There's a guy that lived his life with... he was never for sale. He didn't compromise on what he believed. It didn't mean he was always right. But if he believed he was right, he wouldn't compromise on it but he was always open to being, you know, to learn if he was incorrect. And I would say the same thing. I think that's what I would want my faith legacy to be.

And that's what I'm discovering now in this role as a pastor of a church now which we've planted. It's we're not into religion in there. We're really about teaching people how to live a victorious life. I mean if Jesus said you can tell that disease to go let's learn how to do that. And so it's just like in my sales training business. I want to make sure that people know how to do the things that they're able to do. Give them the coaching. Give them the training so that they can empower themselves with these fundamental truths and principles. I apply that to leadership. I apply that to sales. But I also apply that to faith. Either the word is true or the word is not true. I've chosen to believe that it's true and because I've chosen to believe that it's true I speak that it's true and because I speak that it's true I now see that it's true. I've actually seen the fruit of it to go back to that earlier comment. And so on my last day if there's a bunch of people still around that I would manage to have some kind of interaction with them, that guy helped me rise up and live a better life. That's what I want to be known for.

44:58.96

Lisa Peters

Oh that's amazing. Thank you Howard for sharing that. I usually end with my one of my last questions is what brings you the greatest joy in life today.

45:13.50

Howard Olsen

It's exactly that. It is honestly it's exactly that. Knowing that somebody was profoundly and positively impacted because we were fortunate enough to intersect each other's circles. That's honestly, and I'm not being trite or anything about that, that's the thing that gives me the greatest joy. I've got I've got email folders full of things and I go back and I read them sometimes and it brings me to tears that I've been able to. You know we have fun I have fun wherever I go. If it's not fun I don't want to do it but along the way just knowing that I've been

able to have a positive impact on another human being's life that is really the thing that gives me the greatest joy. I love riding that motorcycle. I love hanging out with the dog. I love cooking with my wife. I love all of those things but the one thing that trumps it all is knowing that someone's life is better because we had a few moments to spend together.

45:59.72

Lisa Peters

Yeah, you as a leader made an impact. How awesome is that to end on that note! Howard, we pulled that off. Thank you for spending the last over 45 minutes with us Howard. You've inspired me, you've made an impact on me I will leave enlightened and I'm sure our listeners and some of our viewers if you're watching us video or audio file. Thank you. It was just so nice to have this time with you and I know you're busy. .

46:23.50

Howard Olsen

Thank you. It's first of all, it's been an honor to come and hang out with you too and to do this podcast with you. I mean I love you personally. I Love you professionally and I love you through a camera. So thank you for inviting me onto the show.

46:37.59

Lisa Peters

All right! Oh thank you Howard you just made my day! All right, well, we're gonna close here I'll give a couple messages but here we go so LeaderImpact is a global movement dedicated to leaders having a lasting impact and we believe that true impact occurs when your personal, professional, and spiritual life is fully engaged. We have a network in over 350 cities around the globe. We host live and virtual events throughout the year and have a growing network of peer groups that meet weekly across these cities. Our podcast is just one of the ways to help you accelerate your growth as a leader. We hope you enjoyed meeting Howard Olsen of High Output Sales Training as much as I did and you can find him at <http://www.high-output.com>. Now if you're part of LeaderImpact you can always discuss or share this wisdom with your group and if you are not yet in a LeaderImpact group, we would love to have you. So check out our groups available in your area at leaderimpact.ca or get in touch with us and we will connect you. Stay in touch with our newsletter at LeaderImpact.ca or on social media and remember impact starts with you.