



## MAXIMIZE BUSINESS VALUE PODCAST - EPISODE 25 Transcript

Announcer: 0:04

Welcome to the maximize business value podcast. This podcast is brought to you by mastery partners, where our mission is to equip business owners, to maximize business value so they can transition their business on their terms. Our mission was born from the lessons we've learned from over 100 business transactions, which fuels our desire to share our experiences and wisdom. So you can succeed. Now, here's your host CEO of mastery partners. Tom Bronson, welcome

Tom Bronson: 0:36

Maximize business value, a podcast for business owners who are passionate about building longterm , sustainable value in their businesses. In this episode, I'd like to welcome our guests , Jim Ronny , author of the walk-on method to career and business success. I've known Jim for many years, probably close to 20 years. We've had the opportunity to share the stage at many events and more importantly to become good friends. I have always admired Jim's business wisdom, his willingness to share and teach. And his quick wit is hopefully you'll learn today. Uh, we're in for a lot of fun today, a fun ride, so buckle up and let's get started. Welcome to maximize business value. Jim, tell us about yourself before we get started.

Jim Roddy: 1:23

Thank you, Tom. It's great to be here with you and just, you know, we've only known each other for only two years. It just feels like 20, you know, cause time flies when you're having fun, when you're not, it just feels elongated. So , um, what , no, thanks for having me here. So , uh , my role that I have, my main job is I work as a vice president of sales and marketing and a business coach for the retail solution providers association. Uh , it's the largest collection in North America of value-added reseller, software developers, distributors, and vendors who have served the technology needs of retailers, restaurants, grocery stores, and also convenience stores as well. Um, my background to go back a little bit further when I was 23 years old, it's when I first became a self-employed, uh, at published a sports magazine for Northwest Pennsylvania, which is

where I still reside today. I've been , I moved into tech technology magazine publishing. I did that for 18 years at a publisher based here in Northwest PA at the last 11 years. I was president of that organization again, as a multimillion dollar organization, we had a lot of different tech titles , uh , under our umbrella. I also currently have a podcast called the trusted advisor. It's under the RSPA umbrella and then where you and I have met, I serve as a moderator at a lot of tech conferences as a speaker. And then also I'm an author as well. And really the, the main area that I tend to speak about and I write on is about business and leadership best practices.

Tom Bronson: 2:54

Yeah. Yeah. I'm glad you mentioned the RSPA. That is a wonderful organization. If you to be in , Uh , the technology side of restaurants and retails retailers, you need to , uh, to be a part of that organization, a wonderful organization, and both of us have many opportunities. What you have a real opportunity to work there cause you actually do work there. Yes. So , uh, so the walk-on method to career in business success is your third book. Uh, I admire that quite a bit as I'm trying to finish up my second book, what was your inspiration and why did you decide to write this book?

Jim Roddy: 3:30

Yeah, I will say anybody who's written a book before knows it's not like some breezy fun process. Like it is not just running through mud. It's like running a marathon through mud. Oftentimes like as good as the book is, you know, as your stories are that you come across and, and your goal, it it's a , it's a long road. So it wasn't my desire to like, Ooh , I have to do a , a third book, but it really started as an attempt to clarify a misunderstanding. So an event that you and I have attended the RSPA PA inspire winter conference and executive friend of mine had learned that I was a cancer survivor because I published a book about eight years ago on hiring best practices called hire , like you just beat cancer. That was my first book. So just as an aside, I was diagnosed with colon cancer 2002, but as of October 1st, I'm going to be cancer-free for 18 years. So I always have to tell that so people don't think is it is still an ongoing thing. So thank goodness for me, it's it's in the rear view mirror. So when this friend learned that I was a cancer survivor, he said, Oh, well, now that I know that you had cancer, I understand why you're so driven. I understand why you do everything with a purpose. But the reality was I didn't wake up every day thinking about myself as a cancer survivor. And so it made me think what really drives me. And I realized that I attack cancer and my professional career, the same way that I approach my role as a basketball walk on in the late eighties and early nineties at where I went to college Gannon university here in Erie, Pennsylvania. Now I'm guessing most people are like Gannon . What , like I never heard of that school before. But back in the day it was a small college basketball powerhouse.

And so, you know, for me to even try out for that team where they had guys six foot seven, six foot nine out of the army recruited by UNL V right, like powerhouse guys for me to even think that I should walk on that team or be a member of, it was kind of crazy in its own. But the behavior pattern that I established, I established as a walk on through the four years of commitment and hard work, perseverance and resiliency, I realized like that is the blueprint for professional success, not just mine, but anyone's professional success. So I started thinking about it more. I wrote down the formula and then shaped it over time into five steps. And I was like, I want to share this with everybody, but who wants to hear my personal stories about work and being a benchwarmer right? No, one's going to be like, please, Jim, do go on about that game against Queens college. Tell me more. Right. There had to be more than that. So I didn't think my story alone and motivate anybody to change. So I'm like, well, let me test my hypothesis. What if I tracked down an interview 10 or 20 or 30 former fellow walk-ons about their college experience and their professional path. What I learned that the walk-on method produced uncommon, extraordinary results for them too. And I can tell you Tom, after more than five years of internet searches and hundreds of emails and phone calls and interviews with dozens of former, walk-ons the answer to my question. Wasn't just, yes. It was an overwhelming screaming at the top of the lungs. Yes. And so each walk on his path was unique. So some of them play football or basketball or they did rowing or track, but then they all achieve success as a business owner, an engineer, a coach, a lawyer, financial adviser, filmmaker insurance broker, right? So different sports, different lines of work, but the mindset, the skills and the behaviors that they developed and then the outcomes that they achieved after college, they were all similarly remarkable. And so that's kind of the gist of this book is ordinary people, even underdogs and maybe especially underdogs, they're the ones who accomplish extraordinary feats when their energy is, is properly channeled. So the way that these walk-ons behave is now second nature to them because they were forced to behave that way as a walk on. And so the book profiles, 31 underdogs who became extraordinary and kind of the walk on formula is they show you one story at a time how you can become extraordinary to how you can take your business to the next

Tom Bronson: 7:34

And every level. Wow. Wow. Right. So, so I have to back up here, you were, you were walking on against some guys after I put my glasses on. So I can actually see this walking on against some guys that were six, seven and six nine. You were kind of then the, uh, the Muggsy Bogues of Gannon is I know we're sitting during that, but if you can't say, you know, Jim's only four foot tall, so

Jim Roddy: 7:59

Good Muggsy Bogues reference. I appreciate that. Actually got to see him play in high school. And he was, he was super quick. I was not. So the thing is Tom. So, and this is something I learned the hard way firsthand . So I was only five, 145 pounds. And so those guys who are not just taller than you, like everybody outweighed me by more than 30 pounds, right? Like everybody was one 70 something to one 80 something. And I realized when you take a bump from one of those guys, like, you really feel it we're in high school, you know , you kind of brushed it off. So it was the height disadvantage, but it was really the weight and the strength so much that kept me on the end of the bench for four years, As much as I tried.

Tom Bronson: 8:35

Wow. You did get some playing time though. Right?

Jim Roddy: 8:38

Uh , very, very minimal. And I tell people, I average 14 points for my career. Not 14 points, a game over four years, I scored 14 points. So I did get, did get some playing time, really lived out a lifelong dream for me, just being a member of the team and , uh , and seeing some, some mop up time as well.

Tom Bronson: 8:57

That is, that is awesome. You know, I often find that , uh , the great business lessons are found in very unusual places. You know, we typically, when we want to learn something, we'll turn to business experts or books or blogs when we want to learn new things. But in your book, you explain those five steps that you mentioned here of the walk-on method and how you can apply these lessons to your career and business. You know, just from your, from the introduction to the book, I wanted to read a snippet there. Most people don't realize that they're in control of their career trajectory. We're advised by family and friends to play it safe, follow a well worn path, or choose the most financially prudent option. We're encouraged to seek immediate rewards for our efforts and look out for number one. But ordinary people will accomplish extraordinary feats when their energy is properly channeled. So let's jump in here. Let's talk about these steps. Step one is take, take a big shot. Tell us about that.

Jim Roddy: 10:00

Yeah. So step number one, take a big shot and all the steps have a step, but then some details underneath. So take a big shot. Anybody can make a layup, right? So don't sell yourself short when you're setting your next goal, whether it's your professional goal or whether it's a goal for your organization. I know a lot of folks here are , are business owners. And when you're working with your team, don't let them take just a short goal

as well. So you don't want to contemplate what you really want and then aim for something far less just to play it safe. Cause anybody can do that, right? Like you want to hit 2% of your sales goal. Well, anybody can do that accidentally. Why don't you go for a hundred, 10%. So instead of that mindset take a big shot. And so a great example of that is isn't chapter 10 of the book. So Colleen Haley, so she's a Connecticut native from a small town in Connecticut. And so she was a very good high school athlete in both basketball and softball. She accepted a scholarship to play basketball division two new Haven, right? So she you're thinking, wait a second, walk on book, she's got a scholarship. I don't get it. But she was the first in a very middle class family to attend college. And the way that she explains it is new Haven was more of a default versus a decision. It was the only one who really had an interest in her. She didn't know anything about college and she wasn't a great student. And so she's like, okay, I'll take the first opportunity. And you know, there's sometimes you think people are going to encourage you. She had an employee in her high school say she's never going to pass a class in college. I don't even know why she's trying to do that. So she goes to new Haven. She has a productive start as a freshman. She's leading her team in minutes, played and she second in points, but she's restless. She's saying I can do better than this. So at the semester break, she packs up all her belongings. She drives home through a blizzard, but she doesn't make it home because her car catches on fire. She gets picked up as a hitchhiker to stop somewhere, to get a little bit closer to home and get dropped off at some friends. Once she gets her a friend, she says, mom, dad, I'm dropping out of school. In fact, I already did. And I know I'm giving up the scholarship owned by the way, the car broke down. It's on fire on the highway. And she said, I want to play for division one power Yukon. She said, I don't want to be 30 years old and wonder if I was good enough. And so her dad said, that's all I need. I'm supporting you whatever we can do now. But it wasn't an easy road for her. She wasn't on Yukon's map at all from a, you know, she wasn't that great of a high school athlete. So what she did was she worked as a camp counselor that summer at Yukon. And then she reached out to Gino Ari, Emma, who's now a legendary, you know, hall of fame coach on her rotary phone, right. Dial them up. And she said, I'd like to be a member of the team. And he said, well, you can be a manager for a year and then you can try out, but no guarantee whatsoever. And she said, I'll take it. So she goes from a scholarship athlete playing a ton of minutes to sweeping floors, filling water bottles, turning on the lights for the team. Well, long story short, she ends up making the team. She was a score in high school. She worked on her defense and her hustle rededicate herself in the classroom as well. And she became a reserve guard for three NCAA tournament qualifying teams. This is when Yukon was really just, just getting started and she has a great highlight. They were at Georgetown one time down, one 38 seconds left Jen Rosati. If anybody's a women's basketball fan knows she was like a legendary, you know, national player of the year. She fouls out

Coleen gets in the game, steals the ball gets a layup. It gives them a lead causes. A turnover hits two free throws, gets a headline in the paper, walk on rescues Huskies. And so you think like your head would be big after that. And so Gino said to her after the game , uh , just, you're not going to be an offensive target kid. You know, just, just so you know. So she takes that experience and talks about what that meant for her. And after graduation, she said, if I can do that, if I can go from a , you know, no one's expecting me to survive college. No one's expecting me to be able to make the team at Yukon, to be a player for them and to do well in the classroom. I can do anything. She ended up moving South, pursuing a career in medical sales, advanced at a senior positions at two multibillion dollar companies over 22 years and always looking to take a bigger shot. She left the medical field to become a consultant. She co founded a leadership organization and she speaks to corporations at student athletes across the United States. And she tells them, you never know when your day is going to come. And if you're going to get the goal that you want, you've actually got to go for it. You've got to take that big shot. So again, that's step number one. Don't set short goals, really go for it . Take, take that big .

Tom Bronson: 14:26

That's awesome. That is awesome. You know , and all that adage of mine and then many people I'm sure you've heard this, you know, you miss a hundred percent of the shots you never take. Right. That's right. And so boy, she really took a huge shot here. You know, not only having a , having made this up in our own mind, but it's so important to have kind of those support mechanisms that, you know, once she determined this, that our parents, you know, supported our a hundred percent boy, that is great to have kind of that , uh , that support behind her, what a great lesson to learn. So tell us about , uh , making a passion statement, which is step two, prepare with passion practice with passion, and then play with passion.

Jim Roddy: 15:07

Yeah. And I'm glad you glad you gave the sublime, the sub headline to that. So a lot of times people think, you know, you see somebody playing really hard in a game, man, that person plays with passion. I want to do that. But the reality is you got to go all the way back and prepare and practice just as hard, if not harder than the games. And so too many people, they have a dream and then he just wished it will come true. Right. They , Oh, please let this thing happen. I hope cross my fingers. And or they say, you know, when that moment comes, I'm going to jump at it, but you can't be wishing you can't be waiting. And so the recommendation in the book is to walk on to your dream, right? Not just, again, not just play with passion, but also prepare and practice. And a great example of this is Dave Martin and just a little spoiler alert. It's now dr. Dave

Martin, he's a physician. He runs a successful , uh , clinic today. And so , uh , this is going all the way across the country, Cal state, Chico , uh , and track. And so he was a decent track athlete in high school. Um, but he said he wasn't also, you know, like a lot of walk-ins you think on a , as like Rudy from the movie, Rudy, like uncommonly industrious, super high commitment. And dr. Martin said, I just kind of showed up in school cause I didn't have a place to live anymore. Why judo , Cal state Chico? Well, I had a really good party school reputation, right? He said, I was just kind of floating through life. Now he liked running and he decided I might want to run track here. So he literally walked onto the track, found one of the coaches and the coach like, well, I guess you can try. Now the good news for him was the coach was again named Larry Burleson , a former green Bay packer who was under Vince Lombardi, right? Like the old school of old school guys. And dr. Martin describes coach Burleson is he says a combination of mean and grumpy and old though. He wasn't very old at that point. But he said, you know, after coach Burleson kept pushing and pushing him, he said maybe for once in my life, I should really try to be the best I should sacrifice. I should sleep. I should train. And he said, boy, this is what was missing. I thought I was giving an effort, but I was not giving maximum effort. So he was one of the few walk-ons in our book. A lot of them just made the team and, you know , did everything they could to keep the roster spot. Uh , Dave Martin actually ended up being a three time division two, all American school record holder inducted to the school's athletics hall of fame. But he applied himself in the classroom as well. He was an exercise science major and he said, maybe I should become a physician. He said, but I looked at myself like, I'm not really doctor material, but you know what, what if I go out work everybody? What if I stay up longer than everybody instead of drinking and go and actually be studying, right? I'm going to do everything and overcome someone else's talent or their genius by outworking them. And so again, long story short he's now the owner of embrace is a medical center , uh, for a women's wellness. And based in Bristol, Tennessee, he's also an associate professor at East Tennessee state. And he's also considered a pioneer in get this time. I don't know exactly what this is , but minimally invasive bioidentical hormone replacement solution . So I don't know where that is, but it's pretty impressive for a guy who was just floating before he developed that walk on attitude and really said, I've got to make sure I practice, prepare and play with passion.

Tom Bronson: 18:19

Yeah . You lost me after minimally invasive. I thought, okay, I got this. And then you kept going and, and uh, and I will , that is, that is awesome. All that passion, you know, we make decisions sometimes in our life that , uh, that we don't realize are lifelong decisions. Right? Well, he decided to go to, to , uh , to a school because it was a party school and, and that changed the direct , uh , the direction of his life. You know, it

changed his whole trajectory. Of course, you know, you add that with his work ethic and , and what an amazing story, you know, what's fun about this is, is hearing these great , uh, sports lessons that translate into business. Uh, I just, I love hearing these great stories. So , uh, you know, many times business owners kind of feel like they're on a treadmill. Uh, and when you're on a treadmill, you're not covering any ground. You're not covering any new ground. You're on more like a , more like a hamster wheel. So step three is run uphill , uh, uh, LA it takes longer and makes you stronger. I will tell you that personally, that's the hardest time I run every morning as you know that , uh , I'm running. If people ask me what I'm running from and I'm running from old age, unfortunately it keeps catching me. But the hardest time is that when you, when you have to commit to running uphill , why is that important in business?

Jim Roddy: 19:44

Good question. So, you know, a lot of folks know we're taught to avoid obstacles and find the path of least resistance. And then when things get difficult, our human tendency is to shrink or close our eyes, or just hope that it goes away or get apprehensive. And so this goes back to, you talked about you running the run up Hill comes from something that I actually did. This is before I became a walk on. When I was younger, I ran a lot of road races. And I did cross country when people would hit a Hill, they would slow down. And so what I started doing was I would see a Hill and I would attack it. I would run up it, I would charge up and I would sprint. Now there's one thing about passing somebody in a race, and then there's passing somebody on a Hill. They're looking over at you. Like, are you nuts? Like, why are you sprinting uphill? Like, that's totally crazy. But again, that's part from my life. I realized walk-ons , don't avoid the obstacles, right? It had been easy to play for the intramural team or go to a lower level college. And some of these folks were profiled on our book. What they did is when there were difficulties, instead of shrinking from them, they leaned into them. They embraced the obstacles. If you've ever read the book, the obstacle is the way that's very much how these walk-ons view , uh , how they viewed it, not just when they were in school, but also in their professional life. Cause they know on the other end of the experience, they're going to end up being battle-tested . So when you encounter a career challenge, a professional challenge, you see everyone around you like wishing the moment would pass. Like, Ooh , there's a recession. This is terrible. Right. You know , like I don't want to participate in it. I'm just nervous. Hopefully this single pass show, courage, jump headlong into solving the problem and convert it into an opportunity , uh , or , uh , you know, converted into a victory. So a great example. This is a guy named Chris Doring. So he's a walk on and a business owner as well. So stellar three, por , a three sport athlete in high school in Gainesville, Florida. He had awards in football, basketball, and baseball. He was also the lead in the musical theater production. He calls it the greatest senior year in the history



of senior years. He had a long list of college options, but none of them was a football scholarship from the university of Florida, his hometown dream team. And he said, that's what I want to do. And that's what I'm going to go do it. So he chose to pursue a walk on role. Now this is the early nineties. Steve Spurrier just started getting all American talent. So it was during his, on the sidelines. He's getting fewer reps, but he's still putting in extra work, working his way up the depth chart. We ended up earning that scholarship his junior year. And he said, I felt like I needed to run upstairs and sign the scholarship paperwork before they took it away from me. So he goes from a walk on to a scholarship guy to a starter and then playing. This is 1993. They're playing at Kentucky. They're down by three , uh , with just eight seconds left in the game. They're just beyond midfield. Danny Wuerffel finds Chris Doring down the middle, catches it for the game, winning touchdown. He's like, how do I go from a walk onto a hero? Like in the matter of a , you know, just a few years. And so he ended up improving so much. He was selected in the 1996. NFL draft actually played in the NFL for 10 years as well. He said, one of the moments that made him realize that he needed to retire is when he looked across the field on a kickoff. He's like that guy is three inches and 40 pounds heavier than me. And he's going to run right through me and sure enough, he did. So once he got done with his NFL career, what he did was he joined the mortgage industry. Now that was right around 2008, just in time for the great recession. Right? And so in , you know , talk about running up a Hill. This is like climbing a mountain in your bare feet. So he could have bailed. Cause he was just very new in that industry. But he said, I'm going to fight through this. And he did that. He got through the financial crisis, established his own business and he said, you have to block out the distractions and all the periphery. And I needed to focus on what I actually wanted. And then the next phase of what he wanted to do was he wanted to get into broadcasting. So he built up his company and delegated, delegated it as time went by. And now he pursued a sideline career in television, broadcasting got rejection, rejection rejection, but again, long Story short, he now works as a TV analyst in the studio for the sec network. So all these organizations that turned them down before they now get to see him on TV and a lot of them have , have pursued him as well. So again, that's Chris, Doring just a great example of running uphill, not avoiding the heart situation and really leaning into it.

Tom Bronson: 24:05

I love that. You know , imagine if you will, all of the success stories that we would have in the world today, if, if people didn't give up on their dreams so easily, right? I mean, we it's, you make a bet with yourself and it's easy to , uh, to let yourself off the hook so to speak. Uh, I always say that it gets the very hardest right before that breakthrough moment. Uh right. And, and for him to have many options to go , other places I would argue that I had probably arguably the best senior year ever, but know , I'll just say, you

know , let's get Chris on the next podcast and we can go ahead ahead about that . Uh , but , uh, but um, a lot of people when they don't get what they want, initially they just give up right . Or right . Or they'll try half-heartedly before they get that breakthrough moment. And it's , and it's pushing through that feeling. That's when the breakthrough happens. So these are, these are great stories. We're talking with Jim Roddy and having more fun than we should be having, but let's take a quick break.

Announcer: 25:13

Every business will eventually transition some intermediate to employees and managers and some externally to third party buyers, mastery partners, equips business owners to maximize business value so they can transition their businesses on their terms. Using our four step process. We start with a snapshot of where your business is today. Then we help you understand the way you want to be and design a custom strategy to get you there. Next, we help you execute that strategy with your systems of our amazing resource network. And ultimately you'll be able to transition your business on your terms. What are you waiting for more time, more revenue. If you want to maximize your business value, it takes time. Now it's that time get started today by checking us out at [www.masterypartners.com](http://www.masterypartners.com) or email us at [info@masterypartners.com](mailto:info@masterypartners.com),

Tom Bronson: 26:07

We are back with Jim Roddy, author of Walk-On Method to Career and business success. Jim, talk about step four, no fuss all must maximize unique strengths.

Jim Roddy: 26:20

Yeah, I think some , there are two parts to this step. So no fuss means control your emotions, especially the negative ones. As you seek to advance your career, as you seek to build your organization. So if you need to have a difficult conversation with a coworker or a client, you've got ignore the pit in your stomach, you've got to initiate that conversation. If you're frustrated that you're working late while friends and other people are going out, you just Got to get over yourself, right? Any amount of energy that you spend ruin your lot in life is energy wasted. Okay. So no fuss control those emotions. And then all must means. So it's capital M capital U capital. Yes. Maximize your unique strengths. So most of the walk-ons we profile were shorter skinnier and or slower than many of their , uh , more gifted scholarship athletes. And so they figured out what was their special ability or attitude that they brought to the team. And then they maximize that to benefit the whole. And a great example of that is another entrepreneur. We feature them in chapter seven, Brandon Landry. And so it's really easy to tie his walk on experience to his professional success. Cause he's the cofounder and the co owner and the CEO of walk-ons sports beach . So it's a fast growing restaurant. Yeah . Starting the

Southeast, continuing to grow throughout the United States. Drew Brees is actually a part owner of walk-ons. Now he joined the ownership group a couple of years ago. And so I would , Brandon says is everything that they talk about at the company. It all goes back to the days of him being a walk on and being a member of a team. So he went to Baton Rouge, Catholic high school. He was all district 14 points a game, had some small college options. But again, decided to take a big shot and walk on at LSU. Now the first step of doing that is like, you have to work up the nerve to tell the coaches that you want to try out for the team. So he goes in like 18 years old knocks on the door to the men's basketball office . They're like, what are you doing here? Like you don't, we don't know you. And so he's got to walk into the head coach's office and you know, work up the courage to say, I'd like to try out for the team. So this is October, 1997 , uh , of 60 kids try out and he gets cut. And so instead of him crying about it, I'm not fair. I did better than so-and-so right. Like complaining and pointing fingers. I'm quitting, I'm giving up, he's took it on himself. And he said, I need to work harder. I've got to play more. I've got to get stronger. I have to do the things that I need to make this team next year. Now it turns out one month later he gets a call back. Now it's only to be a practice player, not to have a roster spot, but just to show up at practice. And so he says he got that call. He was actually home for the weekend. His dad's a sugar cane farmer. And that's when he got the call . He's like, I'm jumping up and down next to the tractor . You're like guy get to be a practice player, right . For LSU. Well, they said, guess what? Practice is at 6:30 AM. So instead of whining, that's too early. He got there at five 30 in the morning, right? He was the first one outside the building. Now he said he was excited, but he was scared to death. You know, a five 11 kid going up against six foot eight, all Americans, you said it was hard to get around them. Like I'm getting manhandled by these guys. They try to play me. One-on-one after practice and they're just beat me up. So again, he didn't cry. He committed to get better. So in the off season, he worked on his strength. He ended up making the actual active roster the next year. Now it didn't come easy for him. He didn't have his name on his uniform. The first several games and the coaches were like, don't worry, you're shooting shirts. Not going to come off. Right. Nobody's going to know who you are. In fact, his head coach, John didn't even know his name. He just referred to him the whole time as Hey, walk on to him. But he developed a relentless attitude to stay on that team. And there was another walk on the team, Jack Warner. And so when they were on the road together, they went to a bunch of top rate restaurants and they said, you know what? Baton Rouge doesn't have one of these. So on a flight home from a game at the university of Tennessee, they started sketching out the concept for walk-ons right on, literally on the back of a napkin, right? Were all great ideas start. And then three years later after graduation, they open up the first one. And so, and they also got turned out by, turned down by a ton of banks too. So he really had to push through to do that. And so the walk on culture was infused from day one. Their

tagline is everyone deserves a little playing time, right? And it's got a double meeting. Everybody's part of a team. And even though Brandon only played 10 minutes the entire year, they made it to the sweet 16. He felt like it was a big part of that team, keeping the energy level up. And that's his mentality as well with the team that he has today. Like the dishwasher is important as the person on the front lines because they need to keep everything really clean. And so one story I love to share what I'm telling about Brandon. He didn't share, he didn't learn this firsthand, but he learned it second hand through Jack Warner. So Dale Brown, the first day of practice, Lester Earl was the number one recruit in the country. He was a freshmen, but Dale Brown starts off the practice. The head coach legend and says, Lester I'll stand up. Anybody who knew this is. And everyone's like, yeah, it's Lester Earl. He tells Jack Warner the other walk on, Hey Jack, stand up. Does anybody know who this is? They're like, I have no idea. And he said, let me just make it clear Jackson, walk-on, Lester's a number one, recruit in the country. If I see you treating Jack any less than you treat Leicester, your scholarship goes to Jack, is it clear? We are all part of this team. Right? And so that was a precedent. Everybody's a part of it. Everybody makes a contribution that makes a team better. And again, so Brandon learned this, but it all started off with, he had unique strengths and he had to fight through the negative emotion to make sure he's able to, to realize that dream of his,

Tom Bronson: 31:41

That, you know, getting up the courage to actually have that conversation at the beginning. You know, you, you wouldn't, you wouldn't be there if you didn't have that conversation at the beginning. I hadn't read that story yet about the, the encouragement from the coach. But that is awesome. What, again, another great area where you get encouragement to continue and play on. Uh, but one of the things that you mentioned earlier there is that really, it goes to emotional intelligence. I don't know why they call that EQ shouldn't it be like, EI,

Jim Roddy: 32:14

Yeah, I think that's like emotional IQ or emotional quotient or something. Yeah.

Tom Bronson: 32:18

Yeah. Emotional intelligence is, is, you know, being able to be in control of your emotions, even though you're scared to do something and control that and go do it. Uh, I find often in business situations that, uh, that sometimes emotions get out of control. Uh, and, and when emotions get out of control, you never actually come up with a good final solution on either side and the way I've always put it with our team is the first person to lose their cool is probably going to lose.

Jim Roddy: 32:51

Go ahead and tell them , I call it the freak out factor. So I learned that when I did a lot of coaching where I would coach youth basketball players. And so we would say, if we keep our composure, we talk composure a lot. If we keep our composure, the other team is going to end up losing theirs. And so we , we embedded that in the kids. We taught that to them and they would start pointing it out. Oh my gosh, they're starting to freak out like the freak out factor. And they almost felt like they had this secret to it, but that's true in business as well. Nobody's ever written a book or told a story of, and then I got really, really frustrated. I lost my mind and then everything started falling into place, right? Like once you start doing that, everything just goes sideways. So you've got to make sure, and you can lose emotional control, whether you're an 18 year old kid walking in to see this head coach or whether you've been running your business for 50 years, you've got to make sure you keep those in check no matter what.

Tom Bronson: 33:38

Absolutely. Absolutely. So let's get on to step five. You know , we've been through the first four steps. Finally, you say they get a drink of water here. You're choking me up. So the founder continues. Yeah , exactly. So you say that a then step five is make them throw you out of the gym. Never, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever quit. I love that. So tell us more about that.

Jim Roddy: 34:07

Yeah. Six Evers, five isn't enough. Seven's too many. Six Evers is , is the right amount, but too many times. So I ran into this personally, when I played basketball at Gannon, I would also go and play at the rec center afterwards and do some, some pickup games. I played against a lot of other students at Gannon who were taller than me, who were better than me, that weren't on the team. And they were like, I just figured I wouldn't make the team. Right. And my thing was, I'm going to try, I'm gonna make them throw me out of the gym. And that's what a lot of these walk-ons do as well. And so Allen Williams is an example of that. This is chapter 26. So he walked onto the wake forest basketball team. So it's a very good, you know, ACC school, Dave Odom was the coach. Um, and so when he ended up walking on, he said he was overwhelmed physically. And coach Odom tells at the end of the freshman year, we're not going to have you on the team next year. So again, instead of saying like, well, I guess that's a no. And instead of transferring or hanging up his sneakers, he just kept showing up at the weight room. He kept showing up at the track for cardio work and then kept showing up at the gym and playing the coaches actually said, stop it. These are official off season workouts. You're not on the team. Don't come around anymore. So then coach Odom ends up leaving

wake for South Carolina. And so what does Allen do? He's like hot dang. I'm back in the gym, right? I'm going to go and do all this stuff again. Well then skip Prosser gets named the head coach. And so Alan ends up showing up for preseason workouts and the coaches say, yeah, you can join us. Oh, but you're going to be the designated passer . So they essentially treated him as a manager. So, but after showing up early and all that stuff, coach Prosser calls him into his office. And Alan is like, this is it. He's going to tell me I'm on the team. He runs across campus. And coach Prosser says, you know, we are going to have a walk on, but it's going to be somebody who's six, six or six, seven. We need somebody to bang with the big guys. We have too many guards and Allen's only, you know, six foot two. And so Allen again, instead of just saying, well , this is it. They told me to go home. This is the message I was looking for. He said, you told me that Jim's at base best place to be. I'm not going to give that up. Let me work out with the team. And the coach says, nice persistence, but no, they don't even tell him about walk-on tryouts. Okay. That's how dedicated they were to not having Alan on the team. We sees a poster for, it shows up at tryouts shows up earlier 43 other kids. Most of them taller. And his relentless effort ended up being recognized by the coaches at that point. And they're like, we can't keep this kid off of the team. And so he ended up being on the roster. The next three seasons played only 59 minutes and his entire four year career. But what a great experience he had and he keeps seizing opportunities today. He's got a lot going on co president of a food products company, founder of a leadership organization. He's a two time author and a motivational speaker. And he talks a lot about his walk on experience and the importance of teammates and , and fighting through things. And when you ask him, like, why do you do all this? Like, why can't you just be president of a , of a company and then just relax and play some golf. And he said, once you get that high commitment level, and once you determine not to get thrown out of the gym, that's something that never goes away. So again, all these steps might be reminders to business owners, but to me, they're great accessible lessons for anybody on your team in terms of this is the blueprint to success. This is a formula you need to go forward. Nothing of this is like scientific or crazy or wild, or who could possibly do that. It was folks are making these determinations at these commitments. And again, Allen is a great example of somebody who said, you know, no matter what, I'm not going to let them throw me out of the gym, I'm going to make them pick me up and throw me out over and over and over until they don't Let me back in again.

Tom Bronson: 37:37

Wow. So as you went and found these folks to interview, there's 31 different stories right . In the book. Um, and as you went and found these folks , um, you had already kind of formulated in your mind or had you already formulated in your mind these five steps

and you, and you validated it with them or, or did you formulate the five steps as you were talking with them?

Jim Roddy: 38:02

A good question. So I formulated the five steps prior to it, and then I started thinking through my own story. And that was my original idea was could I write a book because tracking all these people took a long time and it's not like they're easy. Like there's a , you know , just do a Google search for successful walk ons and professional life. Right. So I had to go through a lot. I originally thought, could I write one about my own story, but that's when I realized, I don't think anybody wants to read just my own story and it's better for me to test the hypothesis. So what I did was I just had folks tell open-ended like, tell me about your story. Did you have challenges? Did you think about quitting? And a lot of these people did, they had, you know, the thought had crossed your mind, but they ended up either talking themselves out of it or having somebody else, you know , give them some encouragement as, as you've alluded to before. So I had the theory and the background, but once they told their open ended, you know , I just open ended questions and their messages sure enough, they followed a very, very similar pattern of what we found in the, in the five steps of the walk on method .

Tom Bronson: 39:00

So, so at the end of that, I love that. That's what real journalism is. Right. I ask open ended questions. I wish we had lots more of that in the world today. But , um, the , uh, but at the end of it, did you actually walk through, here are the five things that I'm going to write about and get their reaction to it. And if so, were there any, Oh yeah, you're right. That's it, you know , uh , that, or had they already been very self aware of, of the lessons that they had learned?

Jim Roddy: 39:27

So a lot of them were not self-aware like, they were almost, [inaudible] great to talk to somebody who thinks the way, the same way I do, because other people don't like a lot of other people don't and I don't get it. And then once we said, well, do you think this experience actually, you know, forged through fire made a difference. And a lot of them were like, yeah, like Alan Williams , who I just mentioned, he said part way through a very successful business person who had been a walk on said, this is the hardest thing you'll ever have to go through in your life. And Alan's like, really, like, this doesn't seem that hard, like compared to what all those different things could be in your life. But he realized because you have to put yourself out there, you have so many avenues to quit. And so many easier paths to take that most other college kids take. So most of them did not realize it. One other thing was some, a big fan of the concept of servant

leadership. And so after doing several of these interviews, somebody did say to me, you know, this was my first experience with servant leadership because you are leading by following. Like, you are no doubt being a follower. You are not getting the playing time. You're sacrificing everything for the good of the team. And once I started bringing that up to people in the interviews, they were like, I never thought of it that way, but you are a hundred percent correct. So while this book has the unique five step walk on method, servant leadership really runs throughout almost every single individual story.

Tom Bronson: 40:45

I love that. I love that. So, so I can see behind your , behind you, there you're a voracious reader. Like I am, you know, in fact you made a comment to me one time that reading business books is like getting an MBA for 15 or \$20. I couldn't agree more. I love that. So in your own words, what sets this book apart from other business books?

Jim Roddy: 41:09

Yeah. And for those who are watching the bookshelf behind me, that is not wallpaper. Those are actual books. If you need me to pull it off the shelf or knock one down, I'm happy to do that. So yeah, there are a lot of books and you know, you and I have read so many, sometimes you think to yourself, why do I really need to re need to read another one? Like, what is this going to teach me? So I think what makes the walk on method a special is a it's simplicity, right? It's not some float charts , something or other . I really can't grasp these concept or new language that you have to learn. It's very simple practical application, right? You can see how you can apply this to your work life. In fact, I have in the back of the book, there's an appendix it's 43 walk on dues and walk on don'ts and it shows 43 actions that you can take in your workplace in order to act more like a walk on and get your career goals. I also think it's special because it can be a teaching tool. Like I alluded to earlier, in terms of this is something that you can give to any of your employees, especially somebody who's a sports fan and it's very accessible, right? Everybody loves walk-on stories when a walk on gets a scholarship or something like that. And so it can be very engaging from that standpoint. Also, the stories like we have 31 chapters in there, you can essentially read one story a day for a month, right? You don't have to be like, where do I pick up? Like, you can jump from one walk on to the next. You can hop and skip around the book. If you want. You only want to read about the basketball players. Go ahead. You only want to read about the football players. Great. If you only want to read about the rowers while you're only have two chapters, you're going to read, but you can do that if you want. So, you know, and I guess a question for the business owners is would you like a team of people who would take a big shot, who would prepare with passion, who lean into obstacles, who would have emotional control, who would be relentless? Is that the kind of lessons you want taught



in your team? And so, as you alluded to earlier, ordinary, people can do this. You read this and say, I can do that. Like, why can't I do that? And you can really become extraordinary by following these steps.

Tom Bronson: 43:06

That is awesome. The , uh , it's, it's a great book and I highly recommend it to everyone. You know, one of the, one of the last paragraphs in your, in your introduction to the book , uh , just want to read another quick section here. The beauty of the walk-on method is the only person who can stop you from taking any one of the five steps is you, it takes no special skills or knowledge to take the big shot or prepare with passion. No advanced degree is required to control your emotions and or maximize your unique strengths. If you want to increase your knowledge, skills, and competence. And if you want to change the trajectory of your career, then start thinking like a walk on. And so , uh , so I would recommend that you go and get this book , uh , just out fresh out on Amazon , uh , and we'll have a link to it on our website as well. So, so , uh, you know, Jim , uh, the more I talked to you, it's incredible how smart and handsome you are. You know, what's your secret.

Jim Roddy: 44:08

It's about time. Somebody knows. So you know what? I'm not that handsome. I just do video interviews with people who aren't handsome and it makes me appear, Oh my gosh, that was probably too personal.

Tom Bronson: 44:19

Hey, I'm cheap shots. They're easy. So, Hey , you , you promise quick wit and that everybody would enjoy it. So I might as well do it

Jim Roddy: 44:25

Exactly. So seriously, before we go, tell us a little bit about your first book. You told us a little bit at the higher, like

Tom Bronson: 44:32

You just beat cancer. Just give us a quick snippet on that. Cause I want our folks to go read that as well.

Jim Roddy: 44:37

Sure. So when I was a young manager, you know, I thought I understood the importance of hiring top notch people, right? Yeah. People, you know, hugely important make your organization. But then when I was 32, I was diagnosed with colon cancer. And so being

forced to step away from my business for an extended period of time really made me realize, boy, the people who I hired are going to make or break this business, right? If they have gaps, I can't be the one who's jumping in there. They've got to be able to do things on their own. And so the book has a lot of examples and best practices that you can implement at your organization to improve the hiring process, to improve the assessment process. We have tools in there 258, tremendous interview questions. A lot of it is based on behavior based interviewing. So not what would you do, but what did you do? And so the lessons that I learned when cancer knocked me down really helped build me up as a hiring manager. And so I apply those lessons aggressively. Every time I interview a potential employee and the book really kind of talks through the system to make that happen.

Tom Bronson: 45:35

That's awesome. So go get that book as well, in addition to the, to the walk-on method . So of course this podcast is about maximizing business value. Uh , Jim, in your opinion, what is the one most important thing that you would recommend business owners do to build longterm sustainable value in their business?

Jim Roddy: 45:53

Yeah, I think it ties in with the books that I've written is invest in your people, right? Hold out to hire the best. Don't just hire the least worst person who applied for the job in the month that you had an open, right? And then once you hire those folks, spend time with them, educate them, right? Make sure you have the long version of the story, not just here's some tasks to do, go do them really teach them about the business, really learn from them, really expose them to other trainings, other books, other learnings. And then as you continue to build them up, you can delegate to them. That's hard to beat, you know, going back to the whole sports analogy. If you've got the players, right, you're gonna win a lot of games. So same thing applies to business. If you go out and get great people and you really invest them and make them better every single day and given the opportunity to do the job, that to me, is how you're going to have a very valuable business with a very valuable team.

Tom Bronson: 46:45

I think that's brilliant. Uh , always, always sharpen the saw, always sharpen the saw, get, get them the training that they need. And in my favorite nugget, maybe out of this entire interview was never settled too many times. I see business owners , uh, settling for, for , uh, how did you put it? The, the, the,

Jim Roddy: 47:05

The least worst person who applied for the job,

Tom Bronson: 47:08

The least worst person that applied for the job, never settle , uh , at all, always try and get the right people on the bus and, and , uh , and get them in the right seats and relentlessly train . Uh, so wonderful, wonderful advice. Of course , uh, for our listeners and, and viewers, they always know that I have to ask my bonus question and that is Jim. What personality trait has gotten you into the most trouble through the years?

Jim Roddy: 47:33

I was going to say my rugged, good looks, but obviously that would make people laugh out loud. So , um, honestly, it's the passion like you can see, I'm really passionate about these subjects. I'm really passionate about development, but I do have to watch myself sometimes when I'm communicating with people, they can feel steamrolled, right. They can feel like, well, he's clearly concluded already. Like he's not open to any sort of a discussion when I actually am, but I'm presenting so much, like I am totally committed and I've found out the answer. And so I realized sometimes I guess all the time I have to slow down and bring people with me. Right. So like you and I have talked about recurring revenue, right? That's a lot of what we speak about at these conferences. So if we just go and say to people, you got to do recurring revenue, but a free will to talk to them about their business and their business struggles and how recurring revenue has helped them, where they could go get more than they could be convinced of it, as well, as opposed to just shouting and pointing at that . But again, not that I do it in an angry way, but I'm just super passionate about it . I just have to make sure, in fact, I tell people upfront , like you might feel like I'm being steam rolled and I don't mean to do that. So even as much passionate as I speak with, as long as I speak, I'm open to your ideas, I'm going to try to control that better. If you see me a way that I can do better, slow me down, but actually have notes up on my , uh, uh , bulletin board over here. And it says, don't talk so fast and don't talk so long because oftentimes that's where the passion comes out. So I remind myself to keep that in check .

Tom Bronson: 49:00

Yeah , that's awesome. That is awesome. I, I would , uh , uh, if I had a guest , I probably would have been the rugged good luck we did this interview, but , uh, but that is great . Your check is in the mail. My , my passion gets me in trouble every now and then as well. So, so how can our viewers and listeners get in touch with you? And more importantly, where can they find the book?

Jim Roddy: 49:21

Yeah, thank you. You can find the book on Amazon. Um , so available in early October is when it's a first out and it can also keep track and keep in touch with me , uh, at , uh , Twitter, just you can search. My name is Jim underscore Roddy . You can find me on LinkedIn as well. Uh , we also have a podcast that we , uh , uh, produce through the RSPA. It's called the trusted advisor. We also have the artists pay YouTube channel and you can track it on there as well. And if you want to see some of my business writings again, especially on the tech sector, but it's not so much technology as it is small business, best practices. You just go to the RSP website@gorspa.org , just click on blog and you can scribe to it from there. But again, back full circle, the book is available on Amazon, just search for the walk on method.

Tom Bronson: 50:06

Awesome. This has been great fun as I predicted. Thank you for sharing your wisdom with our listeners and viewers, Jim,

Jim Roddy: 50:14

Thank you, Tom. Always great to be with you.

Tom Bronson: 50:16

You can find Jim Roddy on LinkedIn. You can reach out to us. We'll be happy to connect you with Jim. And don't forget that his book is on Amazon now, and you can get a link at our website, which mastery partners.com. And of course, I'll put a link in the blog post this week so that you can find it very easily. This is the maximize business value podcast, where we give practical advice to business owners on how to build longterm sustainable value in your business. Be sure to tune in each week and follow us wherever you found this podcast and be sure to connect. We love comments. We always respond. So until next time, I'm Tom Bronson reminding you to model the walk-on method while you maximize business. Now

Announcer: 51:03

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Speaker 5: 51:48

That was perfect. I wouldn't make any changes on that.

