

Ep #205: What You Can (& Should) Ask For



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With Your Host

Stacey Brown Randall

***Roadmap to Grow Your Business* with Stacey Brown Randall**

Ep #205: What You Can (& Should) Ask For

Stacey Brown Ra...: When you generate referrals naturally, you get to avoid manipulation, incentivizing, and of course even asking. But when I tell people not to ask for referrals, they kind of do a pause and it starts them thinking about, "Wait, there's got to be more to this." So, we're going to tackle it today.

You are not just another hustling salesperson. You are the expert, the resource, the valuable partner for your clients, and how you grow your business should reflect how your clients see you.

Welcome to the Roadmap to Grow Your Business podcast. We generate referrals without asking, build positive client experiences, and help you take control of your business.

Here's your charmingly sarcastic host, Stacey Brown Randall.

Stacey Brown Ra...: Hey there and welcome to episode 205 of the Roadmap To Grow Your Business Podcast. I'm your host, Stacey Brown Randall. Quick shout out, this one goes out to Kate. Kate is a rockstar attorney working at a small law firm. She is one of our newer BRB members. BRB stands for Building a Referable Business. She's one of our newer BRB members and she is in the process of tackling her very first strategy, her very first referral strategy. And for her, based on where she is with her referral development, she's tackling the referring machines strategy, which is how to turn clients and contacts into referring machines or new referral sources. And she's having success. And I wanted to share it with you for this shout out. She was cultivating a new referral source and after following just

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the first step in the process that I teach within referring machines, she received her first referral from her brand new referral source. Congratulations, Kate.

Stacey Brown Ra...: Okay, let's dive into this episode. When you first heard me say or maybe you first read when I stated don't ask for referrals, did you feel a tsunami of relief? And when I went further and said not only do you not ask, but you don't manipulate, or incentivize, or be overly promotional and gimmicky, did the fear of generating referrals fade away? I hope so. One of my new Building a Referable Business client, so one of my new BRB clients, John, explained the feeling this way, and I'm just cutting out a piece of what he said in his welcome post that we have in our group for new members. And he said, "After we spoke, I thought I heard the heavens open and the Hallelujah chorus. I have actually been trying to find a system to make referrals work for me outside of what I've been doing and I'm looking forward to engaging."

Stacey Brown Ra...: That tsunami of relief, the heavens opening and the Hallelujah choir starts singing, the fading, the feeling of that fading fear is the immediate benefit of knowing you can generate referrals naturally, which is the way they were intended to be generated. But that tsunami of relief and fading fear does open up room for some questions. It's the how, the what, the when, I know, all the things, right, the strategies, the methods, the tactics, the language, the rhythm. People want to know, of course, all the things when they're first hearing about generating referrals naturally. And if you're having all the questions, that's actually a really good thing because it means now you're ready, ready to learn the best way to generate the referrals you deserve.

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Stacey Brown Ra...: But over my almost decade of teaching my different referral strategies, I find sometimes folks accidentally apply it incorrectly within their business. I find many take my no asking strategy and apply it out of context. So, when you think about, "Okay, hey, for the first time, I don't have to ask for referrals," it sometimes generates questions like this. So, this is one I got, that came through me through LinkedIn, his name is Paul, and he said he was listening to a podcast episode that I had done and then he messaged me to ask me a question about it. And these are questions I get pretty regularly. And he said, "The one point of your conversation that I really had a question about, however, was when you stated that you should absolutely never ask someone for a referral."

Stacey Brown Ra...: And he goes on to say, "In concept, I understand where you're coming from, but in practice, I just think I find something else to be necessary." He goes, "Was that statement literal or more of a paradigm shift?" It's literal, my friends, it is very, very literal. When I tell you don't ask for referrals, don't manipulate, don't incentivize, don't be promotional and gimmicky, it's a very literal statement. Because actually, how we are able to go about generating referrals is in a completely different way following a different philosophy and formula and it's based on psychology and sociology and all the things about how referrals naturally happen and how we take care and honor the relationship with the people who refer us.

Stacey Brown Ra...: But there's another thing that happens when people first hear me say don't ask for referrals, right? So yes, there's the question of, "Do you actually mean that?" Right? Yes. Yes, I do. But it's the other thing that we're talking about for today's episode is where I find that people take what I teach within my referral strategies, this

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no asking, and they actually start applying it incorrectly to other areas of their business. I find that many take my no asking strategy and they actually start to apply it out of context. So, we're hitting the pause button because it's important. And in this episode, I'm going to break down the times I see my teachings, my no asking for referral teaching, being misapplied. Yes, I teach you shouldn't ask for referrals. Meaning, you should not ask someone to put their reputation on the line by finding someone to send to you who will spend money with you.

Stacey Brown Ra...: But don't apply my no asking for referral strategies to these other areas in your business. So, here are four times that you can absolutely ask. Just note that not one of them says for referrals, because I'm never going to teach you that. That goes against every fiber of my being. Okay. So again, here's what I want you to think about. When I tell people don't ask for referrals, they just misapply it and they're like, "Well, then I shouldn't ask for," fill in the blank. And I'm like, "No, no, no, that's not what I said." And I just want to clear it up. We've talked about this I think in the first year of the podcast so you'd have to go way far back to get to this episode. And I just want to update that episode within this episode to make sure we're all on the same page.

Stacey Brown Ra...: Because I think this is something that bears repeating for people once they start coming into my world, whether they find my book, or they hear me on a podcast, or maybe they're referred to me, of course that's awesome, and they start listening to what I have to say, they read my book, they're following me on social media, they're seeing my post, right, they're listening to this podcast and they constantly hear me beat the same drum beat because I've been beating the same drum beat for

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almost a decade now, do not ask for referrals. But that doesn't mean that you shouldn't be asking for other things in your business. So here they are, here's four of them, four times I want you to be comfortable asking. Number one, ask for the close for the business, for the sale, whatever you say, right? Some people's like, "Well, if I can't ask for referrals, then I can't ask if they're ready to take the next step and do business with me." No, no, no, didn't say that.

Stacey Brown Ra...: Throughout your sales process, whatever that looks like, and later this summer, we're actually going to do a series on business development, I'm really excited about it, and we're going to talk about the process of business development, we're going to talk about the messaging and the sources and of course, the buyer's journey and the important close piece within that business development strategy, within that buyer's journey, your ability to know how to ask someone, however you bring them to that place through your strategy, like through your closing or through your sales strategy, whatever that process looks like for you, your ability to be able to say, "Are you ready to make a decision, are we going to do business together, do you need the link to sign up, are you ready for the agreement to sign," I'm not saying you say it like any of those ways, but whatever it is, you need to be confident and you need to have a process in place and you can't shy away from being able to ask for the business. Right?

Stacey Brown Ra...: Ask for them to become a client. So, I said, don't ask for referrals. I didn't say don't ask your clients or your prospects if they're ready to become clients. I do hear this one from time to time and I just always want to set the record straight, is that your ability to close the people who

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should be doing business with you, who have shown an interest in doing business with you, it is okay to invite them into that business relationship with you by asking them if they're ready to take the next step. And so, even though I say don't ask for referrals, I'm not saying don't ask your clients or your prospects to become clients. Number two, ask your clients for feedback. A lot of people tell me, "Oh, I mean, I know you tell me not to ask for referrals so also I don't ask my clients for feedback." I'm like, "No, no, no, these are two totally different things."

Stacey Brown Ra...: Remember, asking somebody for a referral means that you're asking them to put their reputation on the line by finding someone to send to you who will spend money with you. But that's totally different from you asking a client who's going through the process, who's going through your client experience, who is a client of yours for feedback on what's working and what's not working and what you can approve. Now, there may be times that you don't need to ask for feedback and there may be better times in the client experience to ask for feedback. And maybe there's times in your business life that you're like, "Hey, I need feedback to know what's working," and then other times you're like, "Nope, I'm getting the feedback I need, I don't need to be asking for it or going out and seeking it."

Stacey Brown Ra...: But if you need feedback from your clients, then you need to ask for it. So, don't hide behind my advice of don't ask for referrals and using that as an excuse to not ask your clients for feedback. And this one, not asking your clients for feedback, goes really, really close with reason number three or time number three when you can definitely ask, and that is for testimonials, or case studies, or online reviews. I actually have a program called

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Testimonials Made Easy. And it is a program, it's a standalone program, but right now, it's only available for my Building a Referable Business members. So, it's only for my BRB members right now. But it's a program called Testimonials Made Easy and we actually talk about how you ask your clients for testimonials, or for case studies, or for online reviews.

Stacey Brown Ra...: And we go through how you structure that ask, we go through the types of questions that you ask depending on the type of testimonial you're looking to get back. Because the type of testimonial you want to use in your marketing is usually dictated by overcoming the objections that your potential clients may be having and so you want them to see some of their objections answered within your testimonials. And so, you have to know what questions to ask. And so, we have a whole question bank within Testimonials Made Easy. That makes that process easier for people. But at the heart of Testimonials Made Easy and at the heart of testimonials, or case studies, or online reviews, whatever you call them, ultimately you're going to make the ask, you're going to have to ask.

Stacey Brown Ra...: That doesn't mean that sometimes people won't volunteer them and that is amazing. And if you can volunteer a testimonial, or an online review, or to be a case study for someone that you were a client of, you would be amazing. That would be such an awesome thing when people raise their hand and say, "Oh my gosh, this was great and I'm loving it." Right? I have a member within my Growth By Referrals standalone program, Aileen, who is part of our process, so many days into the process, there is one of our generated emails that goes out, is giving them some tips and then actually asking

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them to provide feedback. And if the feedback is really good, obviously, to then provide a testimonial. And she did, it was awesome. And so, she's providing it without me having to ask. That's how we want it to happen. But that's not how it's always going to happen.

Stacey Brown Ra...: So, we have to be prepared if we want testimonials, or case studies, or online reviews that we need to be willing to ask for them. And the fourth time that I want you to be able to do some asking is when someone offers to help you. When someone says, "Hey Stacey, how can I help you?" I want you to tell them how they can help you. And if that means it comes in the formulation of an ask, that's okay. Right? Because they've offered, you're not putting them on the spot. They have said if they mean it and they are genuine. I don't mean it like they say it as the throwaway question at the end of a coffee meeting as they're walking out the door, "Hey, by the way, let me know how I can help you," as they are leaving the meeting, I mean somebody who's like genuinely interested in hearing your response.

Stacey Brown Ra...: And you can always tell usually, right? You can always tell the moment of like they're just saying that to be polite as they run out the door because they're done talking about themselves over our coffee meeting or they ultimately want to know, "Hey, how can I help you?" And when somebody asks you, "How I can help you," I just want you to be ready. I want you to be ready to tell them how they can help you. And I don't know what that looks like for you. Right? I don't know if you really want to meet somebody because you're looking to hire a great business coach, or business mentor, or you want to get connected with somebody because you want to learn from them, if that's what you need and they can make that

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happen, then I want you to be prepared to tell them how they can help you. Right?

Stacey Brown Ra...: Or if you are struggling with something else in your business and you're like, maybe there's an issue point and you're like, "Wow, do you know anything about bookkeeping," or, "Do you know anything about technology," or, "Do you know anything about making this part of tech run easier in my business?" If you're talking to the person who can answer that question, be prepared. Right? But when they ask you how they can help, be prepared to answer the question whatever that may look like to you. Right? And so, what I don't want you to do is think because you can't ask for referrals, that means when somebody asks you, "Hey, how can I help you," that you can't answer the question. You can definitely answer the question in whatever you need help with or whatever you think they can help you with.

Stacey Brown Ra...: And that's going to be subjective to where you are in your business, and your business development, and your business growth. But I don't want you to ignore the question because you've heard me say don't ask for referrals. Because how I teach don't ask for referrals is that we don't go up to people and we don't end coffee meetings with people. And we don't end client meetings with people saying, "By the way, who do you know who should be working with me," or, "Do you have some clients you can refer to me," or, "The way that I make my money, of course, as you know is by more clients. And so, if you have great clients to refer to me, that would be great." Those are all the bad things we don't want to do. Right?

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Stacey Brown Ra...: But I do want you focusing on the times when you need to do asking. I just don't want you doing it for referrals. So again, in recap, here's the four times you can ask. Just note again, none of them say for referrals. Ask for the close for the business, invite your prospect to become a client. Ask your clients for feedback if you want to know how something's working or not working, ask them for feedback. Ask for testimonials, or case studies, or online reviews. If they're not being given at a rate you would prefer, it's okay to have a mechanism in place where you're actually asking them for that testimonial or those reviews.

Stacey Brown Ra...: And then, when someone offers to help you and you know they mean it, then make sure you're prepared to answer the question and tell them how they can help you. But again, none of these tell you to ask for a referral. So, I hope this episode has been helpful and kind of hit in the pause button and making sure that if you've started paying attention to what I teach, and how I teach it, and the ways that I teach it, my philosophy and the tactics and the methodology that comes from that, we do teach to generate referrals naturally, which means without manipulation, without incentivizing, and definitely without even having to ask for referrals. But don't apply that to other parts of your business.

Stacey Brown Ra...: And that's why I wanted to hit the pause button for this episode so that you guys could really, really make sure you're doing the right things in terms of how you're thinking about what you're learning from me. And of course, you can find more information about this episode on our show notes page at staceybrownrandall.com/205. That's right because this is episode 205, and Stacey has an E. Next week, we're going to dig into episode 206 and

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we're going to talk about building your own networking group so that it actually generates probably what you're ultimately after, the right relationships that can become referring relationships. Until then, take control and grow your business. Bye for now.

Thanks for listening to the Roadmap to Grow Your Business podcast. To access all resources and links mentioned in today's show, and to connect with Stacey, head over to www.staceybrownrandall.com.