

Join Julie Livingston, founder and president of WantLeverage Communications and host of PR Patter, a series of talks focusing on relevant topics in marketing and public relations today, in conversation with Brian Gorman, professional certified coach and Do-Be Associate. With Do-Be, Gorman brings business improvement and consulting and coaching to the table in a way that helps business owners get back to the business of doing what they love.

Livingston and Gorman discuss how disruption causes change, how to succeed despite and because of change, and adapting in order to succeed as a business leader.

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—Julie Livingston

“Whether a change is positive or negative is a mindset. The change that I can see, that I see as positive, is change driven by the great resignation. My job isn't to convince you that you're seeing the change wrong— it's to help you succeed despite how you feel about the change.”

“Anchors are those things in our lives that provide us a sense of stability, security sense of we know what to expect.”

“We raise our children to belong in their generation, and then when their peers come to work for us, we expect them to adapt to our generation's work norms. They're stepping up and saying ‘this isn't how I work.’ Your role as a business leader is to do everything you can to set people up for success, to get out of the way and to clear the road ahead for them.”

“Don't lose track of your anchors. Think about what the changes are that you don't need to make. Think about what the changes are that are essential. We say ‘yes’ to too much. We need to say ‘no’ to those things that are nice to have, nice to do.”

—Brian Gorman

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### Unedited Transcript

Julie Livingston:

Hey everyone, it's Julie Livingston with Want Leverage Communications for another installment of Julie's PR pattern, where I bring in all the great people in my marketing and communications network to talk about everything in terms of marketing and public relations, and actually just navigating today's workplace <laugh>. So today I wanna know how are you addressing the massive amounts of change at work today and in life? We are in the midst of a workplace revolution, and there's just no going back to the way it was. I am so delighted to welcome my colleague and my coach, Brian Gorman of Dubee Associates. Today we're gonna talk about approaching change with a new mindset. There's been so much disruption over the last few, few years due the, the pandemic social movements, major political upheaval and challenges to

our global democracy. So much is going on, that change is just a constant. And how do you adjust your mindset to embrace change? So Brian has spent much of his career studying the effects of change on people, and especially in the workplace. The Dubee Associates team brings business improvement, consulting and coaching, executive coaching together in a very dynamic way that helps business owners get back to the business of doing what they love. Brian, thank you so much for joining me today.

Brian Gorman:

It's great to be here. Julie, as you know, this is a topic that lights me up.

Julie Livingston:

I, I know, and I, you know, I think that everyone I happen to be somebody who does even though change creates a little bit of fear, I also embrace it. And so I have myself re I've reinvented myself and my career many, many times over the years, but I have friends and colleagues who, when they hear the word change or transformation or pivoting, they just kind of flip out. They, they, they, it is just something so fear inducing to them that they just avoid it as much as they can. So how do you, how do you help people and business leaders to embrace change is something that's actually positive.

Brian Gorman:

So, whether a change, first of all, Julie, whether of change is positive or negative is mindset. The change that I can see, that I see as positive which is change driven by the great resignation, and we can dive more deeply into that. Many other business literacy is negative. So my job isn't to convince you that you're seeing the change wrong. It's to help you succeed despite how you feel about the change,

Julie Livingston:

Right? Because the, your mindset is sort of like the lens through which you see the world and all of the, I guess, preconceived notions or conditioning that you've had affects how you will cope with change. Is that right?

Brian Gorman:

That, that that's true. And, and even there, you know, do I want to cope with change <laugh> or do I want to leverage change to the benefit of myself, my business, my customers and and so forth?

Julie Livingston:

Can you give us a few examples of how, of the work that you've done with executives business leaders in helping them to address their mindset a, about change and, and helping them to move forward in the way that makes sense for them?

Brian Gorman:

Yeah, and let's go back actually to the early days of covid. And if you're like most people, the response was, everything's changing the world around me. I don't know it anymore. Everything's

changing. Well, that's because our focus was on all of the disruption. And so one of the first things that, that I did during Covid was to conduct online anchors workshops. Anchors are those things in our lives that provide us a sense of stability, security sense of we know what to expect. And Covid disrupted a lot of those anchors. I'm not commuting to work anymore. I'm, you know, I'm not going to the gym anymore. I'm not having that drink on Friday evenings with, with my colleagues anymore. I'm, I'm not hanging around the coffee pot of the water cooler anymore. Everything's changing. Well, no, no. You know, at the organizational level the organizational values haven't changed. The organizational mission hasn't changed. The, the customers the organization is serving are, are still the organization's customers other than disruptions in, in the marketplace and so forth. And even at the personal level, everything didn't have to change. So, as I was conducting these workshops, just one, one quick example very early on, I, I had in one of my workshops a Wall Street lawyer, and he lived in Brooklyn, commuted by Subway to Wall Street every day. And I, I introduced the concept of anchors.

Brian Gorman:

The workshop structure was people would go into breakout rooms that identified their own anchors personally and organizationally. They'd come back in, we'd talk about that. And then you have to readjust your anchors. So, you know, maybe you listen to podcasts on the way to work and now you get up and, and outta bed and you head to the desk,

Julie Livingston:

Right? So you set up your day differently. Yeah.

Brian Gorman:

Put those podcasts back in between the time you eat breakfast and, and, and the time you go to work and so forth. But this one guy came running figuratively, digitally back into the main room after the breakout session. And he said, now I get it. Now I get it. Like, before I even asked for a response. And I said, what, what, what do you get? He said, for the first two weeks, I get up in the morning, I go into my office, I had my computer, I had my files, I had access to, to, you know, the law firm's computer network and so forth. I could get nothing done. And then one day I wasn't really thinking. I got up, I put my suit on, I went into the home office, and all of a sudden I was in control again. Wow. My suit is an anchor, he said.

Brian Gorman:

So I added another anchor to my work, my, my day. He said, before I leave the home office, at the end of the day, I text my wife to tell her I'm coming home. Anchors are personal. So, so that's just one example of, of the, the early work that I did. Now it really does require significant shift in leadership mindset to, to deal with the disruption that organizations are experiencing coming out of covid, whatever that might mean. And I think that's best illustrated by a conversation I had with author Kris DeSantis. Chris wrote the book, why I Find You Irritating

Julie Livingston:

<Laugh>. I think I should read that book, <laugh>. That's

Brian Gorman:

Great. It's it's a great book. He said he actually gave the publishers several titles, and they jumped on that one. It's about intergenerational conflict at work.

Julie Livingston:

Wow. That's a hot topic. I mean, for, for the first time there are five generations Yeah. Working side by side in the workplace.

Brian Gorman:

And he said the problem, well, he said, really, there are a number of problems, but, but two of the significant ones are the de generational differences are real, but we stereotype everybody into their generation. So we stereotypically expect millennial behavior from every millennial. And just like any stereotype you, that, that doesn't treat people fairly,

Julie Livingston:

So we have a, a set a mindset when we, even when we enter those relationships, we don't even, we may not even realize it unless we develop this awareness of what our mindset is. Right?

Brian Gorman:

Absolutely. Absolutely. The the second thing that I thought was really brilliant that Chris Point pointed out is we raise our children to belong in their generation, and then when their peers come to work for us, we expect them to adapt to our generation's work norms. And they're stepping up and saying, this isn't how I work. Working 60 hours a week is not right.

Julie Livingston:

Right. And it doesn't, it doesn't align with my lifestyle needs and what I need to be successful.

Brian Gorman:

And, and so the significant shift in mindset, I, I think for business owners, for leaders write down to leaders at the frontline and, and leaders, managers at the frontline now need to be leaders. That's a shift in mindset, but your role is to do everything you can to set people up for success, to get out of the way and to clear the road ahead for them.

Julie Livingston:

Yeah. I, I couldn't agree more. And I, and I think having that awareness of what you know, where you are before you even open your mouth, before you even get into a conversation with people at work is, is really so critical. It can help break down a lot of barriers and blocks certainly with this whole, you know, intergenerational workplace that we're in now, wouldn't that be wonderful to have that conversation at the onset, right. To see what people really need,

Brian Gorman:

Not only to see what people really need, but to see why people get up and come to work in the morning,

Julie Livingston:  
What their motivation is.

Brian Gorman:  
As, as one of the Duby associates, my partner and I Tony kk years ago, met with a financial advisor, very successful. He, he led his region and basically he set up plateaued. I'm not working the way I should be working. I'm not producing the results I should be producing. And we asked him, so what would it take to motivate you? What gets you up and excited about this work? And, and he answered, and I mean, he was clear about literally the building he wanted to buy for his team. And he said, people love to do financial planning around the dining room table. And so I'm gonna furnish my conference rooms in different dining room furniture styles and <laugh>. He had such a clear picture of where he wanted to go, and he got excited and motivated about it. And then we said, and what gets your team up and coming into the office in the morning, this was pre Covid. I, I can't sleep. And he said, you know, I don't know.

Julie Livingston:  
Wow.

Brian Gorman:  
But I think I should find out. Yeah. And so he literally went out with each team member for lunch and had that conversation, and he looked at how can I realign responsibility and, and realign how I'm expecting them to do their job, to what motivates them, where their passion is his team. That's,

Julie Livingston:  
Wow, that's amazing.

Brian Gorman:  
His team has gone from seven to 30, and it is now the highest performing team in the company nationally.

Julie Livingston:  
Wow. That's how you really operate an employee first organization. Yeah. By focusing on what people need.

Brian Gorman:  
Yep.

Julie Livingston:  
Knowing what drives them, what get that, what gets them excited, motivated you know, how to get them to strive for, for, for more to reach for the stars kind of thing.

Brian Gorman:

I had another client, just, just very briefly, briefly, Julie we had that same basic conversation, and he came back into the next coaching session and he said, thank you. He said, the day before we had that session, I had assigned my best employee to head up customer relations for the division. I went back to him and had this conversation. He said, I hate people. <Laugh> <laugh> put me in a, you

Julie Livingston:  
Admit that?

Brian Gorman:  
He said, put me in a closet with spreadsheets and I will be happy all day. You're

Julie Livingston:  
Comfortable. Right. Oh,

Brian Gorman:  
This is not the job I want.

Julie Livingston:  
Wow. Wow.

Brian Gorman:  
So as leaders, we need we need a mindset that is open to seeing the world through the eyes of the people that work for us.

Julie Livingston:  
Brian, can you talk a little bit about the basis of Dubbi Associates is to doing and being and finding kind of a balance between those? Can you, can you talk a little bit about that? I mean, through our work together, you got me to start using this, the Monk Manual, which has been really helpful in creating more balance in my life. And in fact, I, I'm hoping to have Steve Lawson on the show in a few months. He founded The Monk Manual. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Brian Gorman:  
Yeah. But first I wanna say I didn't get you to,

Julie Livingston:  
Well, you suggested it.

Brian Gorman:  
I didn't even suggest that. Okay.

Julie Livingston:  
You just put it out there. I

Brian Gorman:

Introduced it to you and it fit what you were looking for. Yeah,

Julie Livingston:

Yeah, yeah.

Brian Gorman:

So the Dub associates are really based on the fact that at any level, whether it's individual, whether it's in personal relationships, whether it's as business leaders success depends both on what we're doing and who we're being. Tony is the due side of the equation. Tony identifies himself as a CPA in recovery. He really focuses on policies, procedures, processes good financial reporting to inform decision making, all those things that business leaders need to be doing in order to succeed. And even when they know what they should be doing, you know, they're not. And so as a coach, I focus on who you need to be in order to be successful. So a couple of things. First of all, that makes me half a Dooby <laugh>. And, and second, and, and this is true, true, and it's sort of our tagline at this point, when times are tough in business, it's time because you need to pay attention to both.

Julie Livingston:

Yeah, that is so true. I can't believe we're, we're almost at out of time. This went so quickly. Is there anything you wanna leave us with about <affirmative> create, you know, really looking at your mindset as it, as you approach change, because change is gonna keep coming at us.

Brian Gorman:

Yeah. I, I, I think there are a couple of things, Julie. First of all don't lose track of your anchors. Don't lose track of your anchors. Secondly, what are the changes I don't need to make? What are the changes that are essential? We say yes to too much. We need to say no to those things that are, are nice to haves, nice to dos. Maybe someday I should, and then really keep your eye on the future you want. You don't have to know how to get there. Yeah. You just have to know how to take the next step. Yeah.

Julie Livingston:

That's great. Brian, thank you so much for being with me today on Julie's PR pattern. Look forward to having you back again someday. And have a great week everyone.

Brian Gorman:

Thank you, Julie.