



# Talk Learn Connect

with Yvonne Reddin



Writer Yvonne Reddin asked Executive Coach and 'Exhibition Influencer' Stephan Murtagh to share some TLC (Talk Learn Connect)

***We hear the term 'Influencer' many times on social media, you are known as the 'Exhibition Influencer'. Can you tell me what that means and what results business owners can benefit from this service?***

Yes, we do seem to hear the term a lot these days, but I think the day of an "influencer" being purely a famous singer or model has changed thankfully. The role of an "influencer" today is more about sharing value about something you know well and are passionate about.

I think its way more than just selling products and services but rather how one can help shape an industry



I see a lot more of the younger generation migrating to their friends as influencers and not just famous people.

It's not a title I'm overly comfortable with as I'm just a real person who is incredibly passionate about what I do.

In business, the influencer word was replaced for a short time with "thought leader" – I have been described as a thought leader quite a bit.

More recently I have been described as an "Exhibition Influencer" and think this comes from my deep understanding of what makes exhibitions and Exhibitors get the best results from Trade Shows. This is not borne from reading lots of books on the subject(although I do...2 books a week!) it comes from 30 years of walking thousands of aisles of Exhibition halls globally to understand how powerful our industry is and how my experience can make a real difference. It's about shaping things that will make the next show even 1 per cent better and how we are all learning each day. So, I think that if incredible passion and experience combined make you an influencer, I'm very happy to be called one.

***"I have also always been interested in doing a TED Talk and this is one of my goals for the future"***

Join freelance writer Yvonne Reddin next time as she chats to guests connecting stories and experience.

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***Can you give a summary of your career path to date as there are different areas in particular like your sales training on LinkedIn that you share for free?***

For almost 30 years I have been in the sales environment and it's a high energy job, but I thrive on helping companies do better and it's the key reason we brought *The Exhibition Guy* to market. To combine the passion and experience so everyone wins. In my sales career, I have sold Exhibitions, Yellow Pages, Radio, Print, Digital and a brief stint in office equipment which I was dreadful at!! I'm more of a concept guy and selling physical products like office equipment just wasn't for me...in my sales career I think I just realised that I preferred selling not what is but rather what will be, if that makes sense. I love working with clients on concepts and executing great delivery of training programmes, of looking at their problems and coming up with solutions...of finding better ways of doing things.



**“There`s an old expression that says...”  
Nobody has ever become poor by  
giving” and I really buy onto this logic”**

Aside from *The Exhibition Guy* business, I also have a company called *Your Sales Coach Ltd* which works with companies specifically in Sales, Marketing, Branding & Social Media. Whilst my passion is for all things Exhibitions, running a small business for years has taught me all things sales & marketing, branding & social media.

When I set up *The Exhibition Guy*, I literally had no money for branding and marketing so had to go out and learn how to do it for free. When it comes to Marketing and Branding a small business, I am a big believer in sharing content on social media and looking for nothing in return because longer term relationships are built upon becoming the expert and helping people. I am a real person not a salesperson and real people help each other...it`s that simple.

Someone who is an expert in their field and my hope would be that when someone is doing an Exhibition that they would think of our business. This is why we do what we do and by sharing it with other people we are all winning.

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## ***How has the pandemic affected your business and how have you managed to keep busy?***

The pandemic has obviously decimated the Exhibition industry and no question we are suffering badly however we are a very dynamic industry and if anything, it has shown us that we need to be better as an industry when we come out the other side. We all need to have a better offer for our clients as they will demand and need more. As someone who trains mainly outside of Ireland and can't travel right now, it's had a strong effect on our business but it's also given us a great opportunity to look at and make our offer even better.

I have never been busier, I have been training online for the past 18 months so luckily the whole online, zoom thing is not new to me. I was fortunate to be appointed a trainer for The Entrepreneurs Academy some time ago so am doing 2-3 courses a week for them currently along with some other clients abroad who are training their teams online. Between a couple of training sessions a week, developing new programmes, designing a website, social media content and working as a Team Leader on the Global Exhibition Think Tank for our industry, I can't see myself putting my feet up anytime soon.

## ***Can you share any words of wisdom that helped you in your successful career?***

For me, my definition of success has changed quite a bit. It used to be all about money and having lots of clients and being perceived as successful. This just doesn't matter to me that much anymore and one of the biggest pieces of advice I could give to any business is not to chase the money...chase the passion and the money will follow.

Ironically, since I started to change my mindset to this, business has in fact been far better and I have been far happier.

I am just one person on a mission to help people in business and life and I am loving what I do, this helps me also be a better person. I think one thing I have learned about myself during Covid -19 and one piece of advice I would say is...Just be yourself...Everyone else is taken!

One hashtag that I have started using recently has really become my current day mantra and that is #LookToWhatYouCanDoNotWhatYouCant

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