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PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

Episode 019, with Lor Bradley

& Guest; Colleen Jeffs from The Honest Tech Company

Building A 7-Figure Business With Values

Lor:

Colleen, welcome. It's so good to have you here on the podcast, and we've been talking about this for quite a number of weeks now about getting you on, and finding out a bit more about your story and your journey to 7 figures in your business. I just want to dig into your background so that our listeners can understand sort of a bit more about where you've come from.

Colleen:

Well first of all thank you for having me. It's an honour to be here with you today. I was a project manager and so I worked in IT on technical projects, and I'm not hugely technical myself but I do love developing, we developed a lot of software and applications, and I'm very methodical in the way that I work and so being an IT tech project manager kind of made sense for me.

Lor:

You at some point took a leap into starting your own business. So, what was the driving force between you leaving the IT project worlds, and going into working for yourself.

Colleen:

Kind of funny actually. I'm a little bit lippy. And I have lots of ideas. And I've been very entrepreneurial since I was young. And I just, I got to the point in my career where I felt like, "what is this all for?" like, "who is this impacting?" and one of the very last projects that I worked on was corporate compliance for a bank, and I just remember sitting in meetings thinking, I have to motivate my team, but I was not motivated.

I just felt like this is not for me and I really wanted to help other people do what I wanted to do, which was to be able to work from home, running my own business, but of course because I hadn't done it myself yet so I couldn't teach other people. So I knew that I needed to learn how to do that myself. And we had a couple of false starts where we had a brick and mortar store, that didn't work. We had a couple of online stores where we were drop shipping. We had an Amazon FBA store. I think you and I might have talked about them before.

And all of those things just didn't feel right for me. It's kind of a funny story where I started out, learning how to run a business online, because one business that we had was, I was a relationship coach.



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And so, like through the course of my corporate career people would just confide in me and just tell me these stories and, you know, people have were having relationship issues at home and I would not be asking these people, how their personal lives were going like, I was not eliciting, you know, this kind of conversation right, but people were wanting to talk to me about these things.

And so I thought maybe if I had an online business and I was a relationship coach that would be great. But it turns out, I'm not as patient as I thought I was!

And I ended up working with a few people who just didn't really want to fix the relationships and I'm a fixer like if there's a problem. I like to, you know, I go into solution mode and I like to fix things, and it just dawned on me that there were a lot of people who really just wanted to complain about the relationship and didn't really want to fix it and they didn't want to do the hard work.

But, in building that business, I needed to learn more about funnels and automation and that's how we got started. And that's how we started the Honest Tech Company, because I was in all of these business groups on Facebook, talking to people about my relationship coaching business, but then still talking about IT stuff. Yeah, and I kind of got known as the person who you would go to if you wanted to build a funnel because 'Colleen's done it before' and 'she's giving advice on this' and 'Colleen's giving advice on how to send emails and automate their systems' and because I wasn't doing so well with the relationship coaching business, Paul and I ended up having a discussion where I said, "shouldn't we just do some tech stuff?" And that's how the Honest Tech Company came about.

Finding Our Business Name In Our Values

The thing for us is, we call it the Honest Tech Company because honesty and integrity are big things for us. And I think in the online space there are people who, you know, sell something and they don't deliver it and there's, there's a lot of charlatans out there right, but we didn't want to be tarred with that brush. We really genuinely want the best for our customers and we really genuinely provide a great service where we make sure that it's fairly priced and that we really go out of our way to make sure that we deliver on the outcome.

And so that's why we call it the Honest Tech Company because we treat our customers how we wanted to be treated. And we didn't get that sometimes when we were getting someone else to build our website. You know they would sell us something and then you end up getting like a half assembled car that you couldn't really use! And we just don't want to be like that so that's why we use the word 'honest' in our name because, that really is a big thing for us and that's kind of what we're known for now.

Lor:

So you mentioned earlier that people started asking you for relationship advice, what what are your clients asking you for today?

Colleen:



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There's kind of a backstory to this actually. Today they're asking us like how to get more clients how to get more leads, how and when they say, "I need more clients", what they're really saying is, "I need to bring in some revenue and get some freedom" so I hear something else that they say. Now, when we started out now business, we built funnels and we automated systems for people and that's what we thought we wanted to do. But as we were doing that for people they were also asking us for business advice, because we'd had previous businesses before we kind of knew what to do.

And we were also being coached at the same time by other business coaches, teaching us how to grow our business and so, as we were building funnels, we were also working out the marketing strategy, and we were also working out the customer journey. And so, we realised that was a part of our business that we weren't really selling, because we were selling funnels and automation. But, as an aside, we were also teaching and coaching from that perspective, and from there, our next offer came about, which was our Mastermind.

And that kind of evolved over time. We realised that it wasn't just the core offering that people needed in the end, and in answer to your question, now they're asking us more business consulting type questions rather than, "can you build my funnel".

Lor:

Have you found that over time with The Honest Tech Company that the types of clients have changed, or have they pretty much stayed the same?

Colleen:

I think they have changed, and I think it's because we have grown as well so it's like any business when you first start out, you know you'll take any client who's got a credit card right?! Anyone who's gonna pay you. But, that is not going to serve you going forward and you know that, so I think the clients that we had in the beginning were people who were very green and very new in the journey in terms of building funnels.

And it's because we've grown now, we don't take people at that at that point in their journey. We take people who really know that a funnel is what they want to do going forward rather than someone who's just heard of it and thought, "oh I should build a funnel". We're now working with people who know that is the next stage in their business, and that they really want and need it.

And I think those 2 different schools of thought are very different and those clients present in different ways, and it's just because we just might take people at the beginner stage now.

Lor:

Tell us a little bit about just some of the values that you have and that you look for in your clients?



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Colleen:

The values that we're looking for are honesty and integrity, obviously because it's things that we value. People who are hardworking and who really want it. So having people who have got a real 'can do' attitude who are driven who are really hungry for it, and who will put themselves out of their comfort zone to achieve what they need to do

Lor:

You're on your journey to 7 figures now, and where are you heading? Do you want to tell us a little bit about your dreams and your aspirations?

Colleen:

I love this question as it allows me to just transport myself to the future! I would love to do a couple of personal things.

So, my father passed away in 2016, and he passed away in a rest home. And I was so bummed that he died there. And I don't want that for my mom, and I want her to be able to stay with us in our own home, she stays with us now. I want to have like a purpose-built room for her where she can get around and has grab bars and stuff so that she can actually go and have a shower in a wheelchair all that stuff. I want her to be with us.

When she grew up (she's one of 8, she's the eldest), she has just served everybody her whole life. She helped raise all of her siblings because she was the eldest. And then when she was 18, she ended up having my sister, and then my brother and then me. And then she got married. And then she just raised us, and she just dedicated her whole life to looking after all of us and my father. And then my father passed away. And so, I would love to be able to give back to her. She's the kindest person I know, like she's the type of person who would just give you the shirt off her back, or without even a thought.

And to be able to travel. I love travelling and I know in these times, it's a little bit tough right now to be able to travel. Paul and I, want to be able to travel, and, and we love skiing. I'm not a good skier, but I do love it I'm really good at falling over and getting up again (because I practice it a lot!) but one of our dreams is to be able to go to Breckenridge over in the United States. And we have this agreement that if we could get to go to Breckenridge during the week (not during school holidays, or Christmas time when everyone else would be there) to be able to sit on the top of the mountain, during the week, and stay in a ski-in ski-out place that we would feel like we have made it. And so that's one of our dreams.

Also I've sponsored children for years and years. And so when Shane my son was born, before he turned 1, I sponsored my first child. And then, when Jasmine was born, I sponsored another child. And so, I've had three children (because I picked up another one along the way!) that I've been sponsoring. And I would love to go to where they are(they're in Africa) and I would love to go and meet them. And I would love to do some projects like helping them dig a well, or just because I can and because I have



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the time. And I think it's been very important for me to let my children see those children growing up, they've all been growing up together.

And, you know, for them to be able to see what it's like for someone else and they're so humble and grateful for anything, you know, just anything. And I like my children just to see that there's another way of life and that they're actually quite privileged. So, to do something like that.

Once you have all the money you want, you can't take it with you. So what are you going to do? And if I can help other people have a better life somehow (which is exactly why we run our business right?...because we want people to have more freedom in their lives). But beyond that, what would I like to do with my time that I couldn't do if I was working for someone else. And going to Africa to meet the girls would be amazing to see them. I've seen them grow up from little kids, before they were like 1 year old and now, Shane is 18 and Jasmine is 12.

To actually see them in person would just be so amazing, you know, to see where they live and grow up. I think that would be really fulfilling, rather than just buying amazing things, expensive things - it's definitely not on my agenda at all.

Lor:

What do you believe are some of the key tips, or pieces of advice that that people listening that who haven't quite hit their multi-6 figures need to take on board?

Colleen:

That's a good question. They've probably heard this a million times before but, do what you love, really, because then it really isn't like work. I really love learning and we talked about this before we started recording. I would do this until I die, because I just love learning and just getting better at things. I'm always thinking 'how can I do that better?'

And I think running a business that you really love and that just comes naturally to you, really doesn't make it feel like work. It really is fun for me to see my clients achieving the things that we have achieved because I want more people to be working from home so they can have more time to do all the other things, the personal things that they want to achieve in life.

And it's not just about making money, but what do you really get a kick out of? What hobbies do you like doing? Do you want to spend more time with your kids, going to the school plays or sports days? Or, do you want to spend more time with family? What is it that you really want to do? Do you want to volunteer? I've done lots of volunteer work over the years but I've always had to go back to work.

Yeah, so to be able to have that freedom, to be able to do that would just be priceless. And so I think definitely doing what you love. And don't do it just for the money, because we need to have sustainable businesses but if you're doing it just for the money I just think it speaks of desperation. It doesn't come across the same way as if you genuinely really want to help people succeed.



I can see 2 different types of people here, those that are just always selling and always trying to get something out of people, rather than 'how can I help you solve a real problem so that you can have the life that you really want?' I think that's just a very different way of thinking so, definitely doing what you love.

Yes, you want to create a sustainable business but don't let money be the only driver, which I think ties into the 1st one,

Lor:

So we're not going to see you draped across a Lamborghini anytime soon then?

Colleen:

And I promise you, you will not see me driving a Lamborghini! No, that's just not practical car!

Lor:

You can't reverse park it!

You've recently grown as a business and you have new team members working with you as well. So how's that going?

Colleen:

Good. Kind of funny story, when we first hired our first VA we thought, excellent, we'll just get her to do everything!

That didn't work so well. So, she was good at certain things and not good at others. And so we learned over time that we would give her everything and then would pull things back. If we could see that those were not her strengths and so things like helping us write statements of work for our clients, for example, was not good to give to a VA. And so now we need to spend more time doing it ourselves. But then, there are other things we've learned, now we have 3 team members; 3 assistants who work with us. But, we've learned to play to their strengths and so one does a lot of tech stuff and funnel building, another does the graphic design, and another one will do like social media management. And so, we're using them for their strengths and what they're good at. And that works really well for us.

Like any new team members when they come on board, you've got to spend time ramping them up and getting them to understand what it is that you do. And having worked with people around the world before, I know that making remote team members feel welcome by spending a lot of time with them and just checking in with them every day really helps.

So, I'll have a 15-minute call if something's going on that they need time with me. We'll do like a 15-minute zoom call each day until we run that project down, until they're ready to go on their own. And then, they'll have less calls with me.



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But I find in the beginning, just doing that (because we've got two on Venezuela and one in the Philippines), I don't want him to feel left out and feel like I'm just a remote team member. I want them to feel like part of the team and we trust them explicitly, And so, we treat them like family and I think that it's been a journey learning how to make that work. And it's very different to the corporate world, very, very different, and that they just don't think like corporate employees.

And, so we have to treat them differently to corporate employees, but it works well so we're grateful that we've got 3 and we're learning more and more about how we can leverage their time, so that we don't have to do so much, but it's a journey right like anything.

Lor:

Yeah, it is, and I love that you've weaved family values back into your team as well.

Now that you're in your own business, along with Paul, how are you finding that with new team members and delegating work?

Colleen:

Yeah, that's a good question, and I think the way that we manage them is we treat them like family and they evolve and grow with our business. So when we moved from just doing funnels and automation to doing more business kind of consulting with our mastermind, it meant that our VA who was doing a lot of tech stuff for us didn't really have a lot to do, and so we had to transition her from full-time to part-time.

And then we ended up taking on more people but they're also part-time. They work every day, but they're also part-time doing their own little things. And so we've learned that we don't have to have full-time staff members that work from 9-5, whatever, every single day. And we've learned that we can just have adhoc work going on, which works really well for our business, so making that model work for us has kind of evolved over time.

Lor:

How do you see your role as leader evolving over that time? Have you ever thought about what role you'd like to do in your business or, if you want one at all?

Well, you put the idea in my head when you said “eventually when would you like to step out?”, or, “would you like to sell your business?” I think we had a conversation around selling or stepping out and being the CEO, and I hadn't thought about that before because I was so stuck in the grind of just doing everything, and just making sure that we had money coming in and growing our business.

But, I love that idea of stepping out and just being the CEO and letting other people manage it for me and just coming in. And I love the idea of ‘this is how I see myself’ in maybe 10 to 15 years time that I just come into the office for a few days or maybe an hour long meeting, or something, two or three hour meetings or whatever. And I'm just giving advice, and then people go and do the things. I would love that.



So, if I can build our business in a way we could do that. That would be great. That would be a dream come true where I could just step out and go and do these other fun projects that I want to do. I think I'll always be doing something.

But, you know, doing something just as a fun project rather than this building a business to leave a legacy. But I just go and do these little projects on the side that I like, you know, community type projects - that kind of thing.

Lor:

It's important to talk about the low points that we go through, and you've been through some scrapes, and you've got battle scars, and it's not been all peaches and cream! I just want to talk about some of the biggest flops that you've been through. What do you think has been the worst?

Colleen:

The hardest thing was just before we brought these 11 women into the mastermind. I don't know what happened, but there was this incredibly long dry spell, where I was doing all the things that I would normally do, but I was not able to bring in a single client, not one. And I couldn't figure out why. And I was doing all the same things that I did before when I launched my November programme.

And when I launched mastermind in February, but for some reason, things just weren't working, and I realised that, over time, I started to feel like it wasn't going to happen. And when you go into that low dip where you're like, 'what's wrong with me? Why can't I do this?' And I knew it wasn't the strategy because I'd use the strategy before, and I really had to take a long hard look and think 'what energy am I bringing?' and I'm not a woowoo person at all. And I was thinking, 'how am I showing up?' 'Am I coming from a place of desperation?'

And I really had to look at my mindset, and I know how important mindset is being an entrepreneur. You really have to have a strong mindset. And so I thought, 'no, you can do this' and I had plenty of pity parties during that time where I was like, just moping on the couch watching Netflix in a fetal position. Totally chips and chocolate, you know, that was me.

I don't let myself stay in those places for too long because I think it's just a downward spiral and it doesn't suit me, so I know that. I just made the decision that I am gonna get myself out of this and you're just gonna start thinking that 'success is there for you'.

And I started just really talking to myself in that way and waking up thinking, 'today's the day. Today's the day you're gonna do it', and every day that didn't happen. I was like no, don't let that stop you and I just kind of pushed myself out of it, and I was very motivated by other people who were successful.

And I made sure that I was celebrating those people and genuinely feeling happy for them when they were getting these big wins, and also thinking, it's not happening for



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me, but you can do it. And that's when we ended up having this launch, and I just followed everything that I did before, and I just went totally like all out into this launch really believing that it was going to happen, and I was going to be happy with 5 people.

And in the end, we ended up getting 11, and that was hard though because we went through this incredibly dry spell. It was also hard because the ladies in the mastermind were watching the whole thing.

And when you're telling people, you're telling your clients about having a successful business yet, you're going through this long dry spell.

And I thought, okay, look at that as learning for them to see you. Be tenacious and get out of it. And I thought that that was an incredible learning curve for me as well where I was showing them how you can go through this slump and get out of it. And I looked at it from the perspective of, you get to show them how driven you can be even when you're not achieving in your business.

And I think that that's really important for any business owner so I knew I had to set that example, and also get out of the slump myself because I didn't want to stay there. I'm grateful for the experience.

It was hard at the time though.

Lor:

What advice would you give to somebody else that's in a similar kind of slump?

Colleen:

Many people are teaching their own journey that 'your mess is your message' kind of thing, and they know that they've come through this before, they know that what they're teaching is going to give people results. And really having that belief that you can do it. I think that's the strongest thing. I think you have to believe in yourself that you can do it. And there was a point there where my mother said to me, 'will you ever quit?'

And I said 'never'. And this was right in the bottom of it, right where I was just like not achieving and she just saw me working so hard, trying to make this work and it was just every day, day after day, no sales, no sales, no sales. I'm doing a live in another group, no sales. And I think she was really feeling for me but then one person signed up. And I remember taking my phone to her and showing her the stripe app and it was just so exciting and it just gave me that boost that I needed.

And then the next person signed up, and then I was having only sales calls and all these people were booking me up for sales calls to the point where Paul said 'you're going to have to cut those sales calls down to half an hour because you can't set them!' It was great.



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And so, it was so cool for my mom to see that we just got another person sign up and we just got another person sign up, that I was taking them into our mastermind feeling like I could really help them and that they were someone that I would really love to work with.

And so we have this application process and people get vetted to go into the programme. And all of these people that we took in in the last cohort are just amazing driven women who just really want to succeed and impact other people's lives and grow their businesses and they have a real passion for what they do. So that was fuelling me as well.

But you're right, it's really hard to come out of that and I think if you are in that situation, really just having the belief that you can do it. And there's one question that I asked myself, when things are tough, and it always throws me off without, without a shadow of a doubt, and that question is, 'what is the alternative?'

And when I think of that, what is the alternative, and the alternative is going to work for someone else and there is no way in hell that I know, never, never, and so that moves me into action. And then I just keep going.

Lor:

If there was one mistake that we that we all have to go through, no matter where we are in business and ride that experience, what would it be?

I didn't realise how much effort would be required to be able to reach this level of success. And I think that there's a lot of people out there who just say, that's really easy and you can just work three hours or three days a week and you'll be hitting six figures by the end of the year. That is totally not true, right?

You've got to put in a level of effort. And, I think that I subscribed to that way of thinking, I was thinking that it's not going to be that hard and I think because I was so successful in my career; I was very lucky I got almost every job that I went for. I was very lucky and I climbed the corporate ladder very quickly and I made friends with the right people and you know, and that was easy for me.

Going into business, I thought, 'I'm a smart woman, I can do this, I'm university educated.' I've worked with CEOs and directors, and that doesn't necessarily work, because even though you're smart, it doesn't mean success, it doesn't equal success so, yeah, I think the mistake that I made was thinking that I could take all of those transferable skills, and just apply it to an online business, and I'd be, you know, home free. I thought it would just work. That did not happen - ever.

I talk about eating humble pie a lot because I've eaten a lot of humble pie. And I think when you're humble, that things don't hurt so much. Yeah, I don't know if you agree with that but I feel like if you go into things, looking at it from a perspective of what can I learn from this, how, you know, how can I, how is this going to help me.



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How can I help other people, then it's not all about me me me me making money. And I think when you have these flops in your business. If you can reframe it like you say, and come from a place of what can I learn from this, in a healthy way reframe it in a way that serves you.

Just makes it so much easier and you accept that it's just part of the course, and it's all part of my story. When I have these flops I think 'it's all part of my story.'

Lor:

Have you got any final pieces of advice to give to those listening that are where you are right now, and looking to move ahead in their journeys to 7 figures?

Colleen:

Be brave. Just go and do it, even though it makes you feel uncomfortable. I think the greatest growth that I've experienced has been in those very uncomfortable phases where I'm really pushing myself to do things, like when I launched the mastermind.

I also said that I was going to 'leave comfort in the rear-view mirror'. I did this post on Facebook and I said I'm leaving comfort the rear-view mirror, and I really did that. I completely stepped up and I'm introverted. I don't like crowds, I don't like attention. Which is funny for a project manager and a coach!

But I knew that I had to step into the shoes of someone else, of my future successful self, if I wanted to grow a business. And I think there's different versions of my successful future self. And I knew that I needed to step out of my comfort zone. So, being brave and doing that really helped me grow and that's when we took a whole bunch of people into our mastermind.

And I did things like, I put my hand up to go on live TV, I would never do that! And I wrote a whole bunch of articles, and they were published online and I contributed to some online magazines and just things that I wouldn't have done before to be visible.

And so my advice would be:

- Be brave and step into the uncomfortable.
- Get comfortable with being uncomfortable (because that's definitely something that we all need to get used to) and
- Take risks. Take calculated risks. But, take risks in your business and
- Watch other people who are ahead of you in their journey and model them. Surround yourself with really successful people. There's a saying, it's better to be the dumbest one in the group and I fully believe that, because you will then aspire to be better than you are. And so, I don't mind being the dumbest one in the group because it means I'm going to get better.

So, surround yourself with really inspirational people who are going places and who don't mind helping pull you up when you need to be helped and just be brave and push the boundaries. And really believe in yourself that you can achieve that goal. I think that there's a huge part of it. Having that belief that you can achieve that, like my, my



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mother said to me, 'will you ever give up? Will you ever quit?' No, because I don't see another life, I don't see Plan B, I don't see myself working for someone else.

At the beginning of this podcast, I said that I'm too lippy and I just have too many ideas. We just couldn't work for somebody else, so I know that this the path for me and I just feel so much more fulfilled following that. So yeah, that would be my advice, just believe in yourself and keep chasing your dream because it totally does pay off.

Until next time,
Lor