

Speakers: *"Audri Lanford interviews Dr. Paul Hartunian about the Secrets of the Universe"*

Audri Lanford
Paul Hartunian

Name: **Conversation:**

Audri: Hi everyone, this is Audri Lanford. Today we have a wonderful guest, Dr. Paul Hartunian, who also happens to be a very close friend of mine. I think you'll see why I am particularly excited about today's teleconference call. Paul is probably best known as the "guy who sold the Brooklyn Bridge." Yes, he really did sell the Brooklyn Bridge and he'll share this story with us in a little bit.

Paul is also a whiz at showing people how they can get mountains of free publicity for both online and offline businesses. He taught us years ago and we've been using his techniques for many years very successfully.

He's shown other people how to use publicity to get sales, make leads and to rocket their businesses to very high levels, and, even to become celebrities.

His techniques require no special skills or insider contacts - in fact, almost no money. Paul has been a guest on so many shows including Phil Donahue, Jenny Jones, To Tell The Truth, Johnny Carson's Tonight Show, Smart Money, CNN, Forbes and the list goes on and on.

He is also an autograph expert as well as an expert on dating and relationships. And he's been very successful making what most people would consider a very good living on Ebay in just a few hours per month.

Today we'll talk about the Secrets of the Universe. I hope that gets everyone's attention. In fact, we'll do something different in this interview. We're going to talk about some of the ways that Paul has been able to achieve exceptional results year after year.

I'm going to ask Paul to share his perspective and secrets on a variety of topics instead of focusing on just one. Things that have led him to be super successful regardless, and at some times, in spite of the economy. So he is going to give you specific advice on a whole bunch of stuff and I'm really excited about this particular interview.

So Paul, welcome!

Paul: Thank you Audri.

Audri: Before we get going, I'd like to ask everyone who is not driving, to take out a pen and paper, and as you listen, please write down the things that we talk about that you can apply to your business and how you can apply them. Because the only way

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that this will make a difference to you is if you take action on the things that we're talking about.

Well, Paul, I simply cannot resist – what are the secrets of the universe?

Paul: I love this title – The Secrets of the Universe – because it conjures up this enormous vision like we're going to be talking about huge things. We're not going to be talking about just one state – we're going to talk about the whole universe and we'll solve the secrets. It's somewhat "tongue in cheek" because the secrets of the universe are the same as the secrets of France, North Carolina or Paul or Audri, or the person down the street.

They are all the same. We'll talk about the basics that make everything operate – whether it's the Universe or your business or anything we're talking about. These are standard – they work all the time and have worked forever and they'll work forever in to the future.

Audri: That's exciting – does it have anything to do with Chocolate? (Laughter) – I couldn't resist.

Paul: Wow – we went from the secrets of the universe to Hershey – Wow. (Laughter)

We're going to find that the rules we're talking about are basic.

I've to wondered for the last 30 years why people don't follow these rules and put them in to action in their own lives. They work in business, politics, in their lives, religion, in economy. They work in everything that affects our lives.

Audri: Wow – so do you want to start?

Paul: Sure. If we consider, for example, some of the things that we want to do – now we'll talk about business today - but I'll also talk about another field that I'm active in which is teaching in the medical field, teaching in the health profession and in medicine.

So, I'll flip back and forth intentionally. Because when I talk about medicine people can understand it because it deals with their own lives. But then I'll take the same example and then we will flip it over to business.

So where would you like to start?

Audri: I'm definitely interested in learning the secrets of the universe.

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Paul: Why don't we start where I started 20 years ago. I picked 20 years ago because that was the moment that I can point to that changed my life forever.

I don't mean this the way that people normally toss that phrase away. "I saw this TV show and it changed my life." Well, I don't think so... it was probably just a very good TV show.

In 1983 you mentioned the thing that I'm probably most well known for and that is for selling the Brooklyn Bridge.

That was a coincidence in some ways, but it also followed what I had been leading up to. I had been perfecting my publicity formula, and by that I mean I had been trying to get publicity the way other people had been trying, but it wasn't working.

So I knew something was wrong. For most of my life I've been a contrarian – and I still am very much – probably more than ever. I'm contrarian in business, investing and in most aspects of my life.

I knew I had to come up with a different way of getting publicity. I had fine-tuned it, but I had to prove that it worked. And, by pure coincidence in 1983 the Brooklyn Bridge was 100 years old.

I happened to turn the TV on, again, purely coincidentally, and I saw that the Brooklyn Bridge was being renovated in honor of its 100th birthday and the original pedestrian walkway – the wooden walkway – where people walked across the bridge was being removed and replaced.

One of the construction workers was being interviewed. Behind him was the wood that was being removed from the Brooklyn Bridge. As soon as I saw that I knew several things.

I knew, number one, that I had my test. This was what I was going to be able to test my publicity formula on. And, number two, my life would never again be the same. It was so clear to me.

I took my publicity formula and I contacted the construction worker that I saw on TV. I made a deal to buy the wood from the Brooklyn Bridge.

Now, some people are asking, what are you going to do with scrap wood? This is old junk wood. I made arrangements to have it cut in to one-inch squares and placed on certificates.

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I used the publicity formula to write a press release about the first person in history to really and truly sell the Brooklyn Bridge. I was selling it for \$14.95 per square inch.

Audri: I love this story. I've heard it many times and I love it each time.

Paul: To say that there was an avalanche of media response would be very conservative indeed. For at least six months everywhere I turned media people wanted to do the story of the first guy to really be selling the Brooklyn Bridge.

I put these pieces of wood on a nice certificate that I had designed. I'm not an artist – it was a crude design - but a graphics person was able to make it attractive. I put the history of the Brooklyn Bridge on there and then I put the words that really changed my life. On the certificate I said: "Attached to this certificate is a genuine piece of the world famous Brooklyn Bridge. You just bought the Brooklyn Bridge. You own the Brooklyn Bridge."

It's the biggest joke in history and now I was making it available to anyone around the world.

For six months the media ran the story. Literally thousands of media people covered this story – radio, TV, newspapers, magazines. The real kicker is that every time they ran the story they would say "if you would like to own a piece of the Brooklyn Bridge, just send \$14.95 to.... Me"

As you can guess, I sold one or two pieces of the Brooklyn Bridge. ;-)

That clearly made my first literal fortune and made me a "celebrity" very quickly and set the path for the rest of my life.

Audri: It's interesting. There must have been tens of thousands of people who saw that same story that you did on TV. But you looked at it differently and it literally changed your life. You saw opportunity where other people just saw some guy being interviewed about re-doing the Brooklyn Bridge.

Paul: Right. And the reason that I took action on that is, number one, I was ready for it. I was looking for this opportunity. I certainly wasn't looking for the Brooklyn Bridge, but I was looking for opportunity.

So, as it was coming down the road, I was aware of every opportunity going by. I know the saying "opportunity only knocks once", but that is total nonsense.

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Opportunity pounds on the door. It's constantly pounding and it'll knock you over. All you have to do is open the door.

Audri: That's a great lesson. What other lessons can we learn from this story?

Paul: It's now going on 20 years later and I've learned so many lessons. I continue to learn lessons from this Brooklyn Bridge story. One obviously is, 'take action'. Number two is that I learned so clearly that one step, one action, one idea, can change your life, bring you more money, fame, recognition than you've ever imagined possible.

As I've moved along over these 20 years, I've spoken to a lot of other people who've really made it big. That was one thing that we all agreed on... just one thing changed us forever and we were there doing that thing.

Now, don't misunderstand – I'm not saying do one thing. For example, when people buy lottery tickets, they hope that that one lottery ticket will win. No, keep buying lottery tickets – I don't think that's a good idea – but, you've got to keep putting the lines in the water.

This was not my first idea. I don't know what number it was – it could have been my 500th idea – I just don't know.

But it was the idea that did it. I kept on putting lines in the water and I kept swinging at the ball and I finally hit a home run.

Audri: That's great. And I know one of the other things about this is that – tell the story about how Johnny Carson – you had some very small paper, or radio story that was going on in some very small place and they saw it?

Paul: Actually I had been getting media coverage for six months at the time and the media coverage had started dying down. I thought that this story was over. But I proved what I wanted to prove – that I had this unique publicity formula. And, if I have another story, all I have to do is basically plug in to this formula and get lots of publicity again.

What I didn't know, was the story about the Brooklyn Bridge appeared in Johnny Carson's home town newspaper (I think it was Nebraska) and he happened to see the story in the Nebraska newspaper and he contacted me about six months after the story broke.

He was just curious about what was going on. Apparently he had seen it in other newspapers, or maybe heard it on radio shows, and he asked to see some of the

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Brooklyn Bridge certificates. So I sent him some certificates.

In the meantime I had come up with another series – pieces of Abraham Lincoln’s law office and Yankee Stadium, the White House, etc. So I sent these to him.

About three months went by, I had forgotten that I had sent him the certificates and then a woman from the Johnny Carson show called to say that he was going to do a bit on the Brooklyn Bridge story and we thought you might want to see it.

I turned it on expecting to see my little fifteen seconds of fame and it turned out to be almost 10 minutes of Johnny Carson doing a parody of my whole Brooklyn Bridge thing the way he used to do with Ed McMahon. He held up the certificates, talked about them, made jokes about them and was plugging them like crazy.

As you can imagine, you can’t even buy this kind of publicity. There was another avalanche of publicity after that and more and more pieces of the Brooklyn Bridge sold.

So yes, I sold a lot of the Brooklyn Bridge and yes it was a cute little “Pet Rock” idea. More importantly, I knew I had struck gold in this publicity formula.

And then I used this same formula, as have thousands of other people in different businesses, so I don’t want anyone to think this was a fluke. Now we have a formula we can follow over and over and get great results.

Audri: That’s great. I’m going to shift this just a little bit now. One of my favorite articles that you’ve written, we wound up publishing in our ebook “43 Specific Ways to Make 2002 Your Best, Most Profitable Year Ever.” In it, you say you’ve found the “magic pill.”

I’d like you tell us about this. Because the magic pill has to be part of the secrets of the universe.

Paul: Yes – in fact it’s one of the major secrets. In fact, if I were to narrow it down to just a few, this magic pill would be near or at the top. I was having lunch with a friend who I’ve known for a number of years. He has pretty much everything – very sharp, intelligent and creative. He has great skills putting together products, he’s motivated. He’s got a lot going for him.

We were having lunch and he was complaining that he had financial problems and problems with business and I was a little baffled. I had known him for so long that I knew he had a great work ethic and in fact my work ethic frankly is very poor, and

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I'm not saying that for the benefit of this interview – that's the truth. I would much rather be playing with my dogs, or something else, then working.

What is the difference? How was it that he had all of what we are led to believe are the attributes that you need (and I had very few of them), but financially I was so far ahead of him, I had pretty much everything I wanted.

I love cerebral lighting bolts where this lighting bolt just hits you right in the brain and clarifies something for you.

After our lunch I thought about this, and was focused on it all during that day. I asked, what could it be that I have, that he doesn't have.

The word "focus" is the answer. I've got focus and he was not focused. And, I recalled what he was saying during lunch. He was going from topic to topic, maybe I should sell this product, or this one, or this one... I realized that he wasn't focused on one thing.

Pick one product, market that product, keep moving ahead with that product. If it doesn't work, move to another product.

I realized that a lot of people are doing this. When I speak at seminars, I hear lots of people say "but, I have so many products that I want to sell, what do I do first?" Pick any one, it doesn't matter. It really doesn't matter. Just pick one and focus on that and put all your effort in to that.

I saw that when people have focus, not only in marketing, but in their own lives, their lives are remarkably different.

I am very active in the medical field and have been for 25 to 30 years. I would see patients who focused on their treatment and care. These are the people who survived against enormous odds.

But then there were patients who had conditions not nearly as serious and they wound up getting worse, or dying, because they couldn't get to their treatments on time, or they couldn't focus on their treatments and they suffered.

Here it is again – focus and that is the huge difference in my life and in the lives of many successful people.

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Audri: I agree with you. We know some of the same people obviously. When I think about my friends who have been very successful versus those who are not, that really is the key difference. It has nothing to do with intelligence, or where you start, or anything else. It has to do with being able to focus on something and make it happen.

Paul: That's right. And I'm glad you mentioned intelligence in there also. Because people are led to believe that the more degrees you have, or the higher you've climbed on the educational ladder, the more successful you're supposed to be. You and I both know that that is one of the farthest things from the truth, right?

Audri: Yes – Ph.d – Piled Higher and Deeper, right? We both have those.

In that same article you describe the fastest and safest way to achieve the results you want. Why don't you tell us a bit about that.

Paul: Good. This is one of the places that I'll mention medicine and then I'll go right in to business. In medicine there is a technique called modeling. I am strong advocate of modeling. Lots of people in the medical field are strong advocates of modeling.

Modeling simply means, find someone who has done what you want to do – they've already accomplished what you want to accomplish. Then, do exactly what they did.

In medicine, Pancreatic Cancer is a very serious disease with a 1% survival rate. People who have this cancer are told, find someone who survived this cancer and they must know something – do what they did. That will at least improve your odds.

In business now, and in life, why spend so much time reinventing the wheel, trying to beat a brand new path, when people have already accomplished what you want to accomplish? How did they get there? How did they become number one on a best seller list with their book, for example? How did they grow a business to \$25M. Follow what they did. If you can get them as a mentor – great. It will short cut things incredibly.

When I want to do something, I find someone who's already done it. Then, I very quickly offer to reward them in some way. I find out to pay them. I find out what they want in life. I offer to try to get what they want in life.

Maybe I know people that they want to know. I'll make a deal. If you show me how you did this, I'll connect you with these people. Or, I'll pay you. What's your daily rate - \$7,000? Here's my check. I want to know what you know.

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Because at the end of this day, I'll know what you know and my chances at success are tremendously increased.

Audri: That's great. That's sort of the whole point behind this series. We're interviewing people who have been there and done that so that people can be short cutting that process. I couldn't agree with you more.

Paul: Even in the beginning 20 years ago. I would try to model and cut that time down very quickly. Unfortunately, I'll bet you do the same thing, I look at a lot of the discussion boards on the Internet and I see people trying to reinvent this wheel.

They are not simply saying "who is an expert", "who can I hire to do this quickly.?" They try to get things for free and they do things the hard, long way.

Audri: We should point out that it doesn't necessarily cost \$7,000. Very often it can be doing some kind of barter.

Paul: Some people may say, how do you find out what people want in exchange. Well, ask them... That's what I always do. It's usually a short discussion. I may say something like, "Audri, I see you've grown a software business to this great height. I'd like to learn how you did that. What can I do for you in return?"

That's the simple question I ask them.

Audri: And, not everyone will say yes, I'm sure. But, a lot of them will.

Paul: No one has ever slammed a door in my face, laughed at me or anything else. They may say, "I appreciate it, I'm much too busy, read my book", for example, or something else. A lot of people have done what I've asked them.

Audri: Yes, we've had that experience too. That's great advice. Talking about great advice... if you were going to give advice to a close friend of yours who was about to start a business, what would you tell him that we haven't yet discussed?

Paul: That's a very timely question. My brother, for the last 30 years has been a classic "9 to 5'er". He's been a Systems Analyst in the insurance industry. A classic 9 to 5 job. He's now finding out that he may have to go out on his own. The change in the economy and everything may force him. He's looking for business. He asked me this same question.

The first thing I told him is, "Rick, maximize your time". I don't mean to use time saving devices – that's not what I mean. By maximize your time and effort I mean, try to do one thing one time and then have it generate income for a long time – if

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not forever. For example, I've put together my publicity kit. I put it together one time five years ago and that same kit has been generating income for me for years and years and will continue for years and years.

There's a formula that we're both familiar with and I want to make everyone else familiar with it. It's a standard in the marketing field. The formula is, basically, do something, teach something, run a seminar...

For example, let's say that you install linoleum kitchen floors, or you're in the nail salon business. The lowest level is that you actually do it yourself.

So you have customer after customer coming in and you do their nails, or you find a new customer or two and put a new linoleum floor in their house. That's the lowest level. You're not maximizing your time and efforts.

The next level up would be to write a manual on how to run a linoleum laying business or a nail business and then sell that manual. You can sell thousands in a short amount of time.

The next level above that is to run a seminar for these people who bought your manual and now give them marketing tools. Set them up, they come together.

So you may do someone's nails for \$20.00. You may sell your manual on how to run a nail salon for \$500.00 and you may run a seminar for all of these people who have your manual for \$2,000.

You're now maximizing your time and effort instead of singly doing one set of nails at a time.

Audri: Great. Do you want to give people advice on how to pick that one thing that they'll do?

Paul: Yes. Again, this may sound like wise-guy advice, but just pick it. That's all. There is no perfect thing. For example, I'm not going to say, if you're a plumber you have a higher chance of success than if you're a barber. Not at all.

I speak at seminars all the time. I spoke at a seminar which I thought was an unlikely group of people. This person runs seminars for people who repair wind shields for cars. Well I didn't think that would be all that big of seminar, but there is a big market.

There's another seminar for people who own storage facilities.

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So, I can't pick five markets and say that these are the hot five markets. If you're a plumber, an accountant, instead of doing taxes one on one, teach accountants how to improve their practice. Same thing for dentists or chiropractors. We could go on and on. In almost every field, every trade, every product, you can use the same formula over again.

Audri: That's great. What would you say are the most important principles of your success that we haven't yet talked about? And, can you give some examples as well?

Paul: Yes. One that we did talk about that I'll briefly repeat is modeling. Modeling is one of the top five techniques that I use.

Also, continuing education – we hear this over and over – Audri, I'm sure you do the same thing I do. I spend thousands, if not tens of thousands of dollars every year on other people's products.

I'm amazed at how you can buy a book for \$20.00 and get 20 years of someone's life and experience in that \$20.00 book. Boy, talk about cutting down your time.

Audri: Absolutely. And, of course you're right. I don't even want to think about how much I spend, but it's how we make money.

Paul: Also, I have no fear. We'll talk more about fear. I talk about fear in my classes all the time. There is no such thing as fear. People make up their fear. Once you resolve that, you understand it, go out and try it.

I have a lot of lines in the water. I don't bank everything on one idea. I see people doing this all the time. They say, for 12 years I've been working on the next pet rock. I've spent all my money on this. I've had molds made. I've had a designer come in. I had a patent. I mortgaged the house and I'm betting everything on this one product.

Yikes. I'm pretty nervous for that person. Put a lot of lines in the water. The more lines you have in the water, the more fish you're likely to get.

Audri: I'm going to stop you here for one minute. This sounds contradictory, Paul, to your concept of focus. Can you talk about that for a minute.

Paul: I'm glad you brought that up. People would say that. I have a lot of lines in the water. But I go to each line and I give each line its time of focus. That time may be only ten minutes, or it may be ten days, but I'll go to one idea and I'll completely focus on that idea for a period of time.

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I will then stop – either I'll get tired of it, or I've done what I want to do, and I'll go to the next thing. But, I'll just focus on that one thing one at a time. Does that make sense?

Audri: Yes.

Paul: Some other things that have clearly helped me become successful. I know when to walk away. I know when to cut my losses and turn my back and say, wow, I thought that was a good idea, and I still think it's a great idea, but I guess it's not.

Something in the past that people will recall is the Enron scandal. As people there were watching the stock (I'm not talking about the employees – they were locked in to their stock), but as outsiders holding Enron stock were watching it go from \$90.00 to \$80, \$70, \$60, \$50, \$40, \$30, \$20, \$10, \$9, \$8, \$7, \$6, \$5, \$4, \$3, \$2, \$1, \$.50, \$.25. And they kept saying "it's going to turn around, I'm going to hold on..."

You've got to know when to give up and say – Whoa, I've got to get out.

I also know that I have excellent balance between my life and my work. That is so important. So many people get sucked up into their work. Now, if you love your work and it's real passion, great.

But, if your family is suffering, or your vacations are suffering, or the rest of your life is suffering, that just doesn't work.

The last thing that I know that I mentioned earlier, in fact I have these words taped on the wall right in front of me, "Free Sucks."

Audri: Please elaborate on this one.

Paul: I'm not saying I never use or get free things. But, I'm not going to depend on something for free to maintain a business that is my lively hood. On discussion boards I see this all this time.

People are saying "does someone know where I can get some free legal advice?"

Yikes! or free accounting advice, do you know someone who can edit my book for free, or where I can get a free cgi script that will run my whole business.

I'm not interested. There is no such thing as a free lunch. I'm willing to pay for it.

Audri: Especially, if there's one thing you want to pay for, it's legal advice. It will cost you thousands more.

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Paul: You'll either pay for it in the beginning or you'll pay for it many times later on. I see this all the time. People asking for a legal advice on a discussion board. Wow.

Audri: Based on your experience, what's the single best advice you'd give someone in business today that we haven't yet talked about, to help them achieve the results that they want?

Paul: This also is something that made a significant change in my income. That was "specializing." Become a specialist. When I was out there talking about my publicity kit to everyone and every thing, sure, I sold lots of them.

But, when I created template press releases for Chiropractors and I put together a special Chiropractor kit. Instead of saying "How to Get \$1M Worth of Publicity", I changed it to "How Any Chiropractor can get \$1M Worth of Publicity." All of a sudden I was the king of the Chiropractic market.

Then I went to the Real Estate market and did the same thing. Then I went to the financial planners and did the same thing.

Specialize, and all of a sudden you become recognized.

Audri: It's so interesting. The common myth is that if you pick a niche and specialize, you're shrinking your market. When in fact, exactly the opposite is true.

Paul: Right. When I was talking about publicity, people were saying, well this is one more publicity manual and there are probably sixty of these on the book shelves in book stores and in the library.

But I went right to the Chiropractors and I said, "How Any Chiropractor Can Get \$1M Worth of Publicity" -- there was nothing like that. There still isn't anything like that.

Audri: Just about everyone who is listening to this can take that principle and apply it to your business.

Paul: There's no doubt. In fact there's an "Association" directory. Go down this list and figure out how your product, business, service can affect these people. How can you do business with them? Put the name of their field – an accountant – "How any accountant can do...."

Audri: That's great. O.K. Now that we've given some great advice. What's the worst advice that you think people commonly believe?

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Paul: Unfortunately we only have an hour for this interview. There is so much of it out there. I am astonished at what people will believe.

My Masters Degree is in Environmental Science. I mention this because in 1990, Ted Dantzen, the entertainer who I hold in nothing but contempt, fancied himself as the environmental spokesman of the world.

He said, and this is recorded, "the earth only has ten years left. In 10 more years the earth and humanity will cease to exist because of what we've done to the Earth." Well, Ted, it's a few years past your 10 year deadline and it looks like we're doing darn well. Lots of people for 10 years believed it.

Probably the worst advice I ever heard anyone give was Winston Churchill in his famous speech – the shortest speech in history. He was asked to give a commencement speech. He simply said "Never, never, never, never, never, give up" and he sat down

Since that speech in the 1940's, people have held those words in such reverence they basically worshipped his words as an idol. I think that's some of the worst advice ever given. It's totally ridiculous.

You had better know when to give up. In medicine, I see patients who are taking treatments and they're getting worse. You better give up.

In business I see people pouring money in to an idea and it's not working.

Know when to give up. Take your losses and move on.

Audri: In business one of the things, as another example, which makes me cringe, but I've heard it so often, I'm sure everybody's heard it as well, which is, you run an ad and it doesn't work. The person who sold your ad says "yes, but you've only run it once. You really have to run it five times."

Five times zero is still zero.

Paul: In class I call that my "mugger example." You walk down the street and you get mugged on Monday. You get mugged on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday... when are you going to walk down a different street?

Audri: Everyone gets in to a slump now and again. How do you get yourself out?

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Paul: Good time to mention that if anyone thinks I'm here to profess my perfect life and follow everything I do that's certainly not true. I get in to slumps. I have a typical life. I have the ups and down that everyone has.

Fortunately my slumps rarely last for a long time. As soon as I feel a slump happening I immediately go in to an action plan that I've used all my life. I immerse myself in positive tapes, reinforcing books, positive people. I make sure I'm around motivational people. I'll start to call people right away and I'll say I'm in a slump here – what have you been doing, what's going on?

I will know when to give up. For example, if I'm in a slump when writing, I'll just not write for a while. I'll let that go and I'll move on to something else. I'll change what I'm doing and I'll get back to something else. But I will recognize that I'm in a slump.

One of the keys is, make sure you're surrounded by real positive things, real motivational things and other opportunities that you can continue on.

Audri: That's great. You're not just an expert in one thing, but in lots of very different things. I can't think of much that's more different than medicine and dating.

Can you take us through the process of how you decide to do a new project. What's important to you. I know you've said to just pick one. But, nonetheless, obviously you do have criteria that you use.

What do you find is important to you to make decisions and then to move forward or scrap it if it's not working?

Paul: The basics obviously are the morals, the ethics, if it's something I'm interested in at all. If it's something I have no interest in, I'll pass on it.

If it's something I'm not comfortable with, I'll pass on it. Beyond that, I will set a limited budget. Again, I'm a contrarian. I don't believe in setting big budgets for anything. Once I hit that budget, I'm out of that idea.

If it's something that's even curious to me, I'll try it.

Twenty and thirty years later, I have pretty good instincts. But, in the beginning I did not have very good instincts. Maybe one out of twenty of my ideas worked. Nineteen of them failed, but I didn't spend a lot of time pondering the failures. I did ponder why they failed, but I didn't do the "woe is me – I lost my \$500.00 or

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something." Move on again. And, I tried a lot of things. The more things you try, the sharper your instincts become.

Until now, in fact I've probably reversed it, instead of 1 out of 20 succeeding, maybe 1 out of 20 fails right now. One of the keys here is that I've really got an interest in this. It's a genuine interest. I'm doing something I really care about and the revenue is generated from there.

Audri: Do you have a budget? How would you recommend people set their budget?

Paul: That's going to be tough for me to really pinpoint. I work on very, very, low budget things. I may have a budget of \$50.00 for something. Right now one of the things that's intriguing me is buying up web sites and my limit is \$100.00 I will not pay more than \$100 for a completed web site up and running.

Now, you may think that that's not possible to do, but Audri I think you know, you've gone to my websites, I own approximately 22 web sites and I have not paid more than \$100 for those web sites and they are a lot of fun.

Other people may say, Oh, but I'm in the cat scanning business. Well, you're not going to find much for \$50.00 in the cat scanning business, so your budget has to be higher. So, you can see that it's tough for me to pin point the answer to this question.

Audri: O.K. At some point, we touched on this as well, people need help. Everyone needs help in whatever it is that they're doing. You've mentioned surrounding yourself with positive people...

How do you go about getting the help that you need from peers, experts and so on?

Paul: I seek the people out that I need. I try to involve them in my business life. I make sure that my business and social private life are very separate. But, I'll involve them in my business life in one of several ways.

I may get into some type of joint venture with them. I have never and probably never will get in to a partnership simply because that's just not me. It may be fine for someone else, but not for me.

So, I do joint ventures.

One thing that I do want to do with my most valuable people is to get them into a mastermind group. That simply means a group of people who meet at some level – either on the phone, in person, by email – on a fairly regular schedule.

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When these people get together, I will bring challenges that I have in to the group. I'll say "you know I'm stuck on this – have you ever done this, or do you know where I can get this done?", etc. Almost invariably the answer will come from one of the other people in the mastermind group.

I'm not sure how people are successful without mastermind groups. This idea of being a one-man band is just a fantasy – there is no such thing as a one man band.

Audri: That's Great. I'd love for you to tell us about how you hired your assistant, Denise. You used an incredibly simple, common sense process that I've never heard anyone else use. It's such a great idea and a good way to get phenomenal help.

Paul: Sure. Denise has been with me now going on five years and when I count the blessings in my life, I count Denise in that list every single time.

She is one of the most wonderful things that ever happened in my business life, in my social life and my personal life. She is such a valued person to me.

The reason I promote her in that way is because I do want to tell you how I hired her and how I got this diamond in my life. It was so simple.

I ran a 3 line ad in my local community paper. I live in a fairly small town and I think the ad cost me \$11.00 It was a fairly general ad.

It said: part time assistant needed, blue jeans environment, very flexible hours, I put the amount I was paying – an hourly rate, interesting work combined with tedious work. Then I put a phone number.

All I wanted to do was to generate leads.

Now here's where my life became very easy. What most people do is they will have people call a phone line and then they'll have to go over the same scenario for 100 or 200 people. They will have to describe the job and their life is tied up.

My phone number was directed to a voice mail. What they got on the voicemail was me speaking for between 2 and 3 minutes. I gave them lots of details about the job.

And what I tried to do was to "down sell" the job. I tried to get them to hang up and say "this job is not for me." So, I told them a lot of good things about the job. I said

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you'll be dealing with very interesting people, you'll be dealing with media people, famous people – I know lots of celebrities and they'll be calling, but there are also tedious parts to the job. You'll have to get the mail out, do customer service work, data entry work. I also told them that they'd be working in my home – if that's a problem for you, then this isn't the job for you.

I have four dogs – if you don't like dogs, then this certainly isn't the job for you. I don't want someone who smokes. I usually have a good temper, but I've got my nasty days too and you'll have to live with that.

So I told them the good and the bad. Remember, so far I haven't spent one minute interviewing or talking to anyone. At the end of the 3 minute message I said "if you're still interested in the job, I want you to hand write me a letter and tell me why I should hire you and send it to my post office box." (So they couldn't identify me or knock on my door.)

Again, I live in a small town. I had approximately 113 people respond to the voice mail and of that 113, twelve people sent me hand written letters. One woman sent me her letter on the back of one of those paper place mats from a diner...

Another woman sent me a letter on one of those loose leaf pages that you rip out of a book.

They were immediately disqualified.

Denise's letter immediately got her the job. So, interviewing her took no more than 10 minutes – it was just a formality. I spent a total of 10 minutes getting in my life one of the most valuable people ever to become part of my life.

Audri: Just to take this principle further, you automated so much of that process and by asking people to write you a hand written letter, you learned so much about them that you could make a very good decision very quickly.

Paul: That's right. A friend of mine had a vacant apartment very recently – and apartments around this area are scarce. I told him to do the same thing. Send them to a voicemail which describes the apartment and have them all show up at one time on one day and within one hour you've got your apartment rented.

Audri: That's really a gem there, Paul.

What do you think is the single biggest mistake business owners are making during recession that kills their short term and long term profits?

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Paul: Oh boy – you are talking right to my niche – one of the areas of my passion. That is, they do not use publicity and this is the time, probably more than any other time, where you've got to use publicity.

Publicity is literally free. It costs zero cents – nothing. Because you are faxing out press releases to local media in your local area.

Now, in typical recession times, sales will start to drop, revenue will drop. People get nervous and they start to pull in. They don't want to spend as much on advertising.

Why aren't you using publicity right now? It's free. This is probably the strongest tool that you have in your marketing toolbox now. But you're either not using it, or, you don't know how to use it.

That's the mistake I see people making all the time.

Audri: We only have a few minutes left here. Let's talk for a moment about specific things people can do to ensure that their businesses will survive and thrive in the coming days, months and years. And, maybe provide us with some examples as well.

Paul: Sure. If you were in business before this economic downturn and now you're still in business, you're getting valuable lesson that you'll remember forever. You'll know exactly what economic downturn is like as a business owner, not just as a consumer.

You'll know that probably you should have diversified when times were good. You should not have put all eggs in one basket.

For example, I have made an enormous amount of money buying what are called "reprint rights." That is I will pay X number of dollars for the right to reprint, republish or copy (reproduce) someone else's work, someone else's video tapes, audio tapes, or manuals or software. I can make as many copies as I'd like.

I have bought hundreds of these licenses in a whole variety of fields. So, if one field starts to get soft for a while, I have another fifty products in a different field that are doing very well.

So, diversity is a very important aspect of success during recession.

Also, I'm going to mention again to give up the fear of the recession. A lot of this is just based on fear. Look at all the opportunities out there now.

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Audri: How do you take advantage of these opportunities that help you benefit from the recession?

Paul: I've been in the stock market most of my life. My guess is that I've made more money in the last two years in the stock market than I made in the previous seven years in the bull market.

It took no genius to make a lot of money in that bull market. But right now, in the recession in the stock market, there is so much opportunity. There are irresistible bargains out there.

Now, let's say that you are in a business and you're not getting as much money coming in. Well, where does this money come from to take advantage of the opportunities?

That's where barter comes in big time. Because the person you're going to make a deal with is probably having the same problem. They want more opportunity.

So you say, "listen, we're both kind of tight on money coming in. Why don't we barter here and we will, for example, exchange rights to products." We've now diversified.

Now, let's start to increase our product line. Let's start to use each other's services.

This is such a phenomenal period to start making money or to increase what you've got right there.

Audri: That's great – that's wonderful. O.K., I have to ask you this. What are "turkey shoots?" and why are they important to success?

Paul: Ah – you've heard my term "turkey shoots." Every year, if not more often I have what I call is a turkey shoot. Most people have heard the saying that if you surround yourself with turkeys, you'll be a turkey and if you surround yourself with Eagles and you'll soar.

That's what I do. I make sure that I get rid of the turkeys in my life.

By turkeys I mean vendors who are failing me. They're not producing on time, not producing the quality I need, etc. There are individuals who are bad mouthing what I'm doing, ridiculing, making fun of what I'm doing – they are people who have caused me problems, lawyers who did not get back to me quickly enough or didn't do their job.

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I will get rid of these turkeys in a very, it sounds cold hearted, but I'll pull the plug, because I know they are problems in my life and in my success. I will replace them.

There is no one in your life that can't be replaced. Now, I'm talking about your children, husband, wife, etc. I'm talking about people in your business life. Don't think you've got the greatest accountant out there – there are other accountants. If your accountant is screwing up, the accountant has got to go.

It may be temporarily painful. I know that when I lost the duplicator – someone who was doing my duplication work – it was painful for a while, but I got another duplicator who turned out to be very, very reliable.

So, everyone should be having a turkey shoot. Get rid of those turkeys in your life. Replace them with the eagles and get right back up there and keep soaring.

Audri: Great. O.K. – let's go to a couple wrap up questions here. What gem of information have you learned "the hard way" that can help all of us?

Paul: Ooh – painful. Not only did I learn this hard way, I learned it unfortunately the slow way and the gem that I learned that I now can see so significantly affected negatively my life and success is: the world does not revolve around me.

Boy was that tough. If hurt my ego, it hurt everything. But I was going through life and business thinking that the world revolved around me. A lot of people do this. I'm the customer, I'm the expert, I'm the guru – the world revolves around me.

That was very painful to resolve that. Once I found some humility there, I found life a whole lot easier and success coming faster.

Audri: That's great. If you could have each person in the audience ask one question of themselves and the answer to that question would be a self revelation, what would that question be?

Paul: This again may be something we heard. So many things become trite, and they say it, but I wonder if they really understand what they just said. I do ask this often, often of my members and at talks I ask this often.

The question is, "why are you here?" You're not here to sell water filters or air purifiers or long distance. Why are you here? What's the purpose here? That's the cosmic question, of course. I'm not asking for a quick trite answer, but your life is not centered around selling long distance service.

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Why are you doing this? To raise money? O.K., what are you going to do with the money? I want to... for example in my case, I want to build a big dog shelter. Now, we can talk about selling your long distance service. Now we have a focus on it. Now it makes a lot more sense.

But if you're simply saying that you're selling long distance because you're going to change the world, you're dreaming.

Audri: Great. O.K. What one thing would you like people to remember from this interview?

Paul: It would have to be the way I start every class at the University where I teach and I've started every class this way for ten years. And, I end it the same way. I'd like to wrap up the same way.

It's something that I mentioned earlier, but I want to drive this point home. And that is: four words on my wall, I live by them and I know that they have made a huge impact on my life.

Those four words are: There is no fear.

There is no such thing as fear. I'll clarify this right away. If someone is holding a gun to your head and they say in 3 seconds I'm going to shoot and kill you. That's not fear you'll feeling. That's being a reasonable, normal human being. That's human survival.

But, when someone says "I'm afraid of speaking in public", you've now limited your opportunities. When you say "I'm afraid to fly", you've limited your travel opportunities. "When you say "I'm afraid to try this business idea", there is no such thing as fear.

You made that up. You are making that up. And, because you believe in fear, you've limited your opportunities.

There is no fear.

Audri: Wow – that's great. That's actually very, very inspiring. And, I agree with you.

Paul: It's done so much in my life. And I remember, for example, when I was 17, 18 and 19 years old, being afraid to talk to girls and the days that I was home alone. Because I made up this fear that there's something to be afraid of to talk to these girls that I was interested in.

And, I was afraid to try things. Oh please, stop. The world is passing you by because you're making up this fear.

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Audri: Great. Well Paul, this has been terrific. How can people get in touch with you? Everything you offer is phenomenal. Your publicity course is absolutely the best. I've been a subscriber of your newsletter forever. Everyone should subscribe to your newsletter. It is fabulous.

Paul: Thank you. There are a few ways to get in touch with me or to find out more about what I do. You mentioned my newsletter. I have a free publicity ezine which you can subscribe to called "Million Dollar Publicity Strategies" by going to www.hartunian.com/ezine

My web site www.hartunian.com

My email is paul@hartunian.com

My office phone is 973-509-5244

And that, by the way, is a last example of focus. The domain name, hartunian.com, was taken when I wanted it in 1995. Every single week, every single Friday for three years, I would go in and search the domain name and finally, I couldn't believe it when I saw it, it popped up and said "this domain is available for \$13.50."

Audri: Well thank you so much. This has been absolutely terrific and I look forward to everyone applying what they have learned here today. This really was a lot of the secrets of the universe.

Paul: I thank you so much. They truly are. They've worked for me and for so many people – we are living proof. I have got the life that I want and that I've always dreamed about and it's because of exactly what we talked about on this phone call.

END OF TRANSCRIPT