
Jaime Tardy: Welcome to Eventual Millionaire. I'm Jaime Tardy and today on the show we have Tom Gimbel. I'm really excited. He owns a company called LaSalle Network. You can check it out at LaSalleNetwork.com. And I asked him how I should refer to him and he said Supreme Commander of the World, which I should totally call you. If you were that, I bow down to you sir. Thank you so much for coming on the show today.

Tom Gimbel: Glad to be with you.

Jaime Tardy: So I was checking out your website. Give everybody a down low on what the company does.

Tom Gimbel: So LaSalle Network is the staffing and recruiting firm, meaning temporary and contract staffing as well as permanent search, that we're headquartered in Chicago and now as of about a year ago we're doing searches in about 12 major metropolitan areas across the country and we also have an office in San Francisco doing placement and placing accountants, financial professionals, technology, HR, marketing, admin, call centers, so mostly white collar office positions.

Jaime Tardy: So you are ridiculously good with your processes and systems of hiring people and getting the right fit, right? I really want to dive into that today. What have you found, especially for a small business, right, someone who's doing their first, second, third, five hire or something like that, what have you found are some really great tips on hiring, especially from someone that probably doesn't know how to hire well yet?

Tom Gimbel: I think there's two that I try to live by. The smaller you are – I wish I would have known them back then. No. 1 you need to like the person that you hire. You need to genuinely like the person that you hire.

Secondly, you need to hold them accountable.

Jaime Tardy: Okay.

Tom Gimbel: So usually when you like people, you don't hold them accountable, right? When you don't like them you do hold them accountable because you want a reason to fire them. So it's a reverse on that kind of thing. But I'd say those are the two big things is don't wait until they screw something up to start holding them accountable;

hold them accountable from Day 1, tell them that's your management style and simultaneously make sure you like them.

Jaime Tardy: I've never heard it said in – that's awesome. How do we hold them accountable, though, especially for an entrepreneur type? Because I work with entrepreneurs, right? And sometimes they're all over the place. They're not great with processes and checklists and stuff like that. How do we hold them accountable?

Tom Gimbel: Well, I think that's a cop out that entrepreneurs set. Oh, I'm an entrepreneur so ah. It's like come on, cut the BS and let's focus on this thing. It's you got a skillset that you need to learn in order to grow your business and it may not be your strength, but it doesn't have to be an absolute weakness. And so know what you want out of somebody. Be able to write down on a piece of paper, be able to type it out on a Word doc, whatever the case is, and say if this exists in the first 30 days, 6 months, a year, I will be happy with this person. I expect them to do A, B and C on a daily, weekly basis.

If you want a weekly or a daily email summary of what they've done, tell them that in advance. Tell them that, "Listen, I want to know what's going on, I want to be invested in your activity and I want to be here to help you, but I need to know that I'm getting a return on my money."

So then you can do the whole entrepreneur thing and say, "Listen, this is my baby, it's my money and I want you to trust it as if it were yours, but I'm not going to give you equity, so I'm really kind of full of crap and I'm going to hold you accountable before we start."

Jaime Tardy: I love that. I will use that exact wording, totally. So weekly email summary or something like that. Should we be giving them specific metrics? What if they're brand new and they don't really know the space like with training?

Tom Gimbel: Well, I think it really depends if you're talking about a salesperson, if you're talking about an executive assistant, if you're talking about an HR person or a finance person. Again, you need to like the person and you need to be able to say we want to have – we use in our terminology, right, a come to Jesus meeting or a brutal truth meeting where you sit down and say to somebody, "Listen, this is the positives of working with you, this is the negatives. This is

what I'm getting from you, but metrics are if it's a sales mentality, how many meetings are you having a week? How many orders are you getting? Are you delivering on the orders? What's the follow up?"

When people don't want to share that information with you, it always rubs me wrong, right? It's kind of like I tend to be a pretty open book, so to it's the essence of when people say, "No, I won't take a drug test for the Constitutional value."

I go, "You're going to be a difficult person to manage," right? Someone says to me, "I want you to take a drug test," I go, "Sure. Okay." Because I got nothing to hide, right? And if somebody doesn't want to communicate what they're doing in their job to you and you're their employer, why is that? Why wouldn't they want to share what they're doing with the woman or man that's paying them? Why would they not want to share that?

Jaime Tardy: Heck yeah, that makes perfect sense. You're like, "Okay, you're hiding something" and then you're distrusting from them and that doesn't help with the relationship at all, right?

Tom Gimbel: It's all built on trust.

Jaime Tardy: Yeah, okay. So for an executive assistant, which probably wouldn't have as easy of a metric – because a lot of people, their first hires are executive assistants, right? And so what can they measure in regards to executive assistants?

Tom Gimbel: I think the summaries at the end of the day of what they've done are great, so I have an executive assistant who's terrific who's been with me for almost three years now and I went through a ton of them in the beginning that were different. And it was one of the last hires that I did. I think in the beginning it's almost better to not have one from the standpoint of you should have your hands in everything you're doing. But when you do, it was a summary of what she was doing every day just at the end of the day. Because I wanted her to keep tabs for herself, so I knew that she was organized and also so I could see where she was spending her time and be able to just look at it and say you know what? I really wish you wouldn't have done that today. And then you realize your communication [inaudible] [00:10:25], she says, "Well, you never told me that."

Well, I learned a lot about myself.

Jaime Tardy: Oh, that's awesome. Tell me a little bit about what made a not good executive assistant from before and what makes this person a better executive assistant. So when somebody's trying to hire their first hire –

Tom Gimbel: I think one of the biggest things I see in any company, especially an entrepreneurial company, though, is when an executive assistant doesn't have a peer group it's a big challenge. So if you go to a big company, a Fortune 500 company or things like that, there's a huge administrative pool and so there's a peer group. When you have people that are all sales people or all developers or what have you and then you have one person who's an admin, they're not sure where they fit. And especially in entrepreneurial, in a tech startup – I think you said you were in Austin, right? There's a lot of tech startups and things like that. Well, now all of the sudden a lot of the coders and developers and architects, they're not the most Type A social people.

And so now you got a more socially inclined administrative assistant and it creates a very difficult and sometimes awkward situation. So I think to make sure you find somebody and you lay out how you like to work, it adds a lot of value.

Jaime Tardy: Okay. How do you do that? What if you are sort of an introvert, you don't want to talk to people and your executive assistant doesn't match with that? How do you know that they don't match?

Tom Gimbel: Well, again, you've got to be interviewing people. You got to be sharing with them and saying, "I'm not a big talker. I don't want that type of relationship." However, you also – you're a leader, you're an entrepreneur, you're going to run a company and you also have to realize you need to not only – it can't always be what you want. We're not all – Steve Jobs could always have what Steve Jobs wants because Steve Jobs was Steve Jobs, right?

Tom Gimbel, Mary Smith, David whatever, we're not Steve Jobs, so we need to learn to accommodate around some other people, even though we're paying the bills and we need to be able to grow and expand our communication styles and our thought processes and our personality because it will make us better at what we do, not just to accommodate somebody, but we should want to grow

and how to relate to people differently. It really is transferable to your clients.

Jaime Tardy: Ah, see I thought you were the Supreme Commander. I thought you – no. So when you –

Tom Gimbel: You read about what other person?

Jaime Tardy: So when you're trying to go okay, that's an issue that I have to work on, right?

Tom Gimbel: Yeah.

Jaime Tardy: And you know that it's an issue. How do you fix that? Because we can read books about changing attitudes or working with people and stuff like that, but it's harder to implement it and get it right.

Tom Gimbel: Well, I think there are a lot of different things. There are professional coaches. I have a person that we refer a ton of companies to from a professional coach and development because they're going to hold you accountable to the changes. You're paying them money and they know that if they hold you accountable you'll do them; if you do them you'll like the results.

There's even easier things, though. Around the country there's groups called Toastmasters which are public speaking engagements, which for the most part are free and/or a small lunch that you have pay for to do it. So there's a lot of things around becoming more – I don't know – gregarious for lack of a better word or more outspoken on certain issues in doing that, but it is a learned behavior.

Jaime Tardy: So somebody was asking, I just did a Periscope right before this, I was telling you, and asking questions to them because I really want to know what you guys want to ask, too, not just – don't get me wrong, I love asking questions. Somebody was asking about outsourcing versus hiring and can you mingle the two. If you have a couple employees, is it weird, does it affect your company culture if you outsource a lot of other tasks?

Tom Gimbel: Well, I think it's no different than anything else. There's some things around your house that you want to do on your own and fix it up and then when you have to do landscaping, cutting the grass,

you outsource that. It doesn't mean you're outsourcing the whole house. You're still going to decorate it and pain the walls and pick the colors, but you're allocating a chore, a responsibility.

So with recruiting, you can outsource recruiting. My firm does recruiting. Companies come to us. They say find me A, B and C. Then they interview A, B and C and then they make a decision on having them join their company. So outsourcing is a huge part of it. My firm belief on whatever you do is focus on what you do and outsource things as much you can from a cost standpoint, but you still need people to manage the process. If you're doing a website, you still need a marketing person internally to manage that process. So there's a lot that goes into it.

Jaime Tardy: Okay, awesome. So having one person here in the states or locally or whatever that can really – you can really communicate with and manage and they can do contractors or whatever. Do you suggest hiring people, outsourcing, actually hiring them or is it easier to just have them as contractors?

Tom Gimbel: No, I think for the most part it's easier to have them as contractors on that if you're going to outsource the stuff. If you're going to bring people in your office, there's got to be a time crunch and a time delay, but a lot of people don't have the management aspects, so they'll pay up on a doer because they can work independently versus the manager who can then manage the people and such.

I truly believe it's not a one-size-fits-all. I don't think business is one-size-fits-all. I don't think people are one-size-fits-all. So you got to figure out what works for you and then manage your own expectations.

Jaime Tardy: How do you hire a really amazing manager that really has their stuff together? How do you know that it's the right person?

Tom Gimbel: Wait until the recession hits and big companies lay off all the middle managers and hire one of theirs.

It is – a good manager is probably one of the most undervalued commodities because they're not managing or leading huge groups of people. Their salary structure's a little bit lower than directors, VPs right? They're middle managers for a reason, but they're excellent at problem solving and nurturing. And for me, it's about getting references from the managers, not just from their superiors,

but from their subordinates. What was it like working for Mary? What was it like working for Scott? And to find out those experiences to make sure you're bringing on the right people.

But to also realize that for the most part, how big was the team? And if they have you talk to only one person out of 12 people, maybe there's one person that liked them, right? I think you really have to – a lot of behavioral or situational interviewing is helpful. But to realize that you got to differentiate being sold a bill of goods and buying something that you're confident in the ingredients, so to speak.

Jaime Tardy: So what's your hiring process? Do you go through – I mean, I'm sure it's probably pretty rigorous on everything that you do with what you guys have learned. So what sort of tips can you sort of give us on that hiring process? I know you said talk to more people, but step by step what should we be doing?

Tom Gimbel: Well, I think No. 1 you want to have somebody who is assigned to facilitate this person through the process, might be the CEO if that's the case, might be an admin, might be a different person every month. But someone's got to own that communication process because if somebody's waiting a week or 10 days or 2 weeks just to hear that you're thinking about it, which is fine, they just need that communication.

You should treat internal candidates as potential clients. And how would you treat your client? How are you going to treat your candidates? Because you want to guide them through the process. You don't want to tell them how everything's going to go, but you want to guide them through the process. Then you want to have as many people on your team from a time standpoint makes sense meet with this candidate. If you're a startup and you've got a five, six person team, you should have people meet him because two things. No. 1, you want everybody's buy in on this, but No. 2 you don't want to alienate one of your good employees but not letting him be involved in the process. So you really accomplish two birds – you really kill two birds with one stone. That's a key, key aspect on this.

And then you want to go through – I'm not a big believer in personality profiles or tests, but a lot of people are and it's an easy way to take a gray issue and make it black and white. And so it can be more of a deciding factor and you can find a lot of disc tests

fairly affordable and online and relatively easy to do. And that makes sense.

And then what I like to do is add in through the interview process some sort of social mechanism, whether it be a coffee, a lunch, a happy hour and depending on the level of the person, the more I'll invest from a time standpoint and do a dinner with someone coming in who's going to be a direct report to me and making go of it that way.

Jaime Tardy: Okay. Why don't you like personality tests?

Tom Gimbel: I think that people don't always know – am I supposed to answer this the way I think they want me to answer it or am I supposed to answer it – you can't get past the first initial thought – and I've done them and I think they're accurate to an extent of are you dominant and all the other – I get it. I totally get it. But I think there's also a gray area, too.

Jaime Tardy: Okay. That's interesting. So it's – I mean and that's the thing that's hard. People want data, but sometimes if they just go by that and don't go by all the other things –

Tom Gimbel: Yeah, I'm not completely against it. I'm just not – to me it's not the deciding – and I find it an interesting thing to do. I always think that if you're going to start doing profile tests on candidates, you should do it on your staff first and then you have a benchmark.

Jaime Tardy: Well, that's what I was wondering because how do you fit company culture? Do you just know innately or does your team know innately this person's going to fit really well with all these other people?

Tom Gimbel: I think you know innately a little bit. I mean, there is a part to hiring from a culture standpoint that is a little sorority/fraternity-ish, right? You don't get that much time people and you have to make an evaluation and if they have a referral, which in the college world it would be if they were a legacy, then they get a leg up on coming in and you do that. I think there is something to that to the hiring process. If you want to have that kind of culture where it's very – pun intended – very collegial, that you're going to do that, I think it makes sense.

Jaime Tardy: Awesome. So let's say you find somebody that is a great hire or so you think, right, and you're crossing your fingers –

Tom Gimbel: Always so you think.

Jaime Tardy: Exactly. So normally I give a 90 day trial or a 60 day or something like that and then we train them. So tell me what that process looks like or what you recommend for A) hiring them and then getting them up to speed and then do you do a trial or something like that?

Tom Gimbel: Well, I mean, there's two ways to do it. The trial for us is if we do that, we bring people on temporary to permanent. So they're hourly before then we convert them over to salary. I think the 90 day trial period, I think everybody's on a trial period. And it's whether you tell people and to me it's more of psychological expectations of management.

So if you bring people in and you say you're on a 90 day trial period, a lot of times you can bring people in and on the 91st day they change. "I made it." Put my hands up, got legs up on the desk. So I think you got to be careful with that a little bit and tell people what the expectations are, though in how they're being view. I mean, to me you're coming into a hard charging environment. You've got to realize that the first few weeks – it's a clichés. Clichés are clichés for a reason because they're usually true. And you don't usually get a second chance to make a first impression. And that's what the 90 day window is. Those first three months are how people to determine your work ethic, your sense of communication, your passion, are you a talker, are you knowledgeable, are you a listener, so on and so forth.

Jaime Tardy: So when they're in that 90 day trial, what do you guys use for processes in terms of training, especially for a startup that doesn't have the documentation and the things that they should technically have like a big company?

Tom Gimbel: Yeah, I'd say more it's task orientated. So these are the accomplishments I want you to do. These are the people I want you to talk to on the phone. These are the things I want you to be able to checklist off. And people don't have to be recruiters or HR professionals, they need to say in six months what are my expectations and write that down. Then work backwards and say how can somebody have learned that by doing A, B and C. Okay,

you need to do A 10 times, B 10 times, C 10 times. You need to put thought into it.

You hire Michael Jordan; you're going to get great results no matter what. That's fine, right? The fact of the matter is Scottie Pippen wasn't Scottie Pippen until he played with Michael Jordan. He was a late first round draft pick. You got to mold and choose people and figure out – I would say people learn more – from anybody else, they learn from the person they sit next to period. Right? The person they have the closest proximity to ask questions to and to listen to are the people that they learn the most from.

Well, you can only have a person on your right and your left, right? So eventually you got somebody sitting next to a weaker person. And when they're doing that, they're learning weak traits. Those are the challenges that you face and you got to make sure that you're offsetting that with exposure to other people that you view as good.

Jaime Tardy: How can you do that? Assuming that your team is pretty darn good, but there's always people that are less or maybe there are only a handful of people or maybe they don't – maybe they all work virtually.

Tom Gimbel: Yeah.

Jaime Tardy: Do you know what I mean? So how do we make sure that we do that?

Tom Gimbel: Well, I think when you're in a virtual world, if you're purely a development company or something along those lines, it's harder. You're judging by the code that they write and auditing that code and making sure that that make sense. But I'm a big believer that I like people – I think the culture of change is a good culture. Everyone says I love change. I love – no they don't. It's against our human nature to love change, right? Even people who are antiestablishment, they like antiestablishment. They don't want change from antiestablishment. So everyone's full of crap a little bit, right?

So I'm a big believer in moving people around for the sake of moving them around. Moving desks around, moving offices, moving responsibilities because people need to adjust and adapt

and their brain needs to go from here to here and see what kind of thought process they have.

Jaime Tardy: That's really interesting. I've never heard of that, but it does make sense. We're even told don't keep taking the same route to work or to whatever every single day because that change actually really helps.

What do you find has been the benefit of doing that?

Tom Gimbel: I think it's shaken out some people fairly early on that were a little rigid. And the other thing it does is it really gets people to be more malleable. I mean, they're easier going. It's not a big – and I've seen people that they move desks five feet and it's a three day ordeal. And it's like I got somebody else it's not. They do it in 15 minutes. Then you get somebody else who doesn't even clean off their desk for anybody else. It's like a moving sale. I mean, you gain a lot of knowledge on that by the consideration that people put into their stuff, into their wares and it's interesting.

Jaime Tardy: And so if you have 5, 10, 15 people, how do you create the culture that you want because you've seen Google and foosball tables and massages, is that what it's about? Is it about communication?

Tom Gimbel: No, that's not what it's about at all.

Jaime Tardy: Yeah.

Tom Gimbel: No, there's nothing – hey, Google could eat us all for lunch. They're a great company. And if anybody says otherwise, they're crazy. They're crazy, same with Facebook. But what everyone has to realize is whether it's them or if it's 15 person company, if somebody's feeding you dinner every night it's because they don't want you to leave, right? If they have a pool table it's because they don't want you to leave. They have video games. They want you to stay where you're at. And I don't mean stay career-wise. I mean for the night. They want you there and working.

And so you can't talk work/life balance at one place and foosball table, free food all day at the same place. They do that because they want you to be there. And it's great. It's a genius idea and it works and people want to be there. It's terrific. But what people really want is a sense of community. And whether you leave at 5:00 or 6:00 or midnight or whenever you leave it's a sense of

belonging, a sense of feeling that I'm going to get feedback, that I'm accepted for who I am and that I'm encouraged to grow and develop. And if you can give those things on a regular basis, which is the part that usually forgotten. It's not first day, six months, a year. It's every week, every month, every quarter, feedback, acknowledgement, participation.

Jaime Tardy: What do you say for employee reviews and stuff like – so it sounds like you have a whole process on this. So it's not just we have a quarterly review and we stay 10 minutes and then we leave. So what is that process that you're working them through, the weekly and that sort of thing?

Tom Gimbel: Well, first of all when you only have meetings when things are going badly, you're the grim reaper, right? So the first week you start you need to have a one-on-one outside of the office or outside of your desk area in a conference room or a coffee shop and say, "Listen. Every week or every other week at the latest, we're going to have a one-on-one that we have set. Some weeks it will be my meeting meaning I have the agenda; some weeks it will be your meeting meaning you have the agenda. But we're going to spend a half an hour a time and we're going to talk about things, get to know each other, work through stuff, give assignments, get feedback."

And sometimes they may need to have another one, a Part 2. Other times we're good. But if you do those on a consistent basis, they believe you're invested in them, which you are, and then when you have some bad or constructive criticism to give them, it's not coming out of left field. It's the No. 1 thing to create the culture.

Jaime Tardy: It is the No. 1 thing. Okay, that's really interesting because you also hear other people are like meetings? Let's just get some stuff done and not have a bazillion meetings of everyone sort of talking about their stuff.

Tom Gimbel: And they're 100 percent correct. The issue isn't meetings. The issue is the efficiency of meetings. And why are we having it and what do we need to do and do we have the right people included? A lot of times they'll have the wrong people included and they'll let them drag on too long. And the key is to have the right people.

And now there's also another reason to have a meeting. It's a culture creator. I want misery loves company. I want this person that's having a hard time to know this person's also having a hard time and let's get together and have a good cry for 15 minutes and talk about it and people appreciate that. It's a very strong synergy.

Jaime Tardy: Okay and that's a good thing. So you want to get those people, even if they're complaining, together and not keep the complainers in their respective corners or anything like that.

Tom Gimbel: Well, think about this. If complainers are the enemy, right, I don't want them coming in from two separate ways, that's harder to fight. I want them together coming at me so I can take the battle head on.

Jaime Tardy: Oh my gosh, that's awesome. Okay, that makes a lot of sense. Now, what do you do with that? Let's say we've got somebody with an attitude that's not great, but they're doing their job okay, but their attitude's not great.

Tom Gimbel: No, they're not. They're not. You just made the biggest management faux pas there is. If their attitude is not great, they're not doing their job okay.

Jaime Tardy: Okay. How do you know if they're just going through something, right?

Tom Gimbel: You told me the attitude wasn't good.

Jaime Tardy: Well, no, but – okay, let me ask you this because the thing is that when I get feedback from people sometimes they're like they were really good and then their attitude seemed to change. And you're sort of going well, is it something that they're going through at home?

Tom Gimbel: Totally.

Jaime Tardy: These are some of the questions that are coming – so is it a temporary or is it like an oh my gosh, get rid of them because they're not doing their job?

Tom Gimbel: If you like your employee and they like you then they should be sharing with you what's going on at home. And if you're perspective to their attitude change, then you want to talk about

that with them and that's part of those one-on-ones I'm talking about. It's not just about hey listen, we love you. I believe there's two things that you gauge an employee on, right: results, productivity and attitude. And my feeling is that both can never be down at the same time, right?

Jaime Tardy: Ah, interesting. Okay.

Tom Gimbel: If you're going through a divorce, your grandma's sick, whatever the situation is and your attitude's in the toilet, then your activity and your productivity better be darn high.

Jaime Tardy: Okay because if isn't – yeah, go ahead.

Tom Gimbel: Well, if it's not, why do I have you? You're a complaining, no good, culture shocker and you don't add any revenue or productivity. Why are you here? Why do I want you?

Jaime Tardy: Okay, well, this goes perfectly into the how do you fire someone? Because I've fired people, it can be ridiculously difficult to fire someone and nobody really likes to do it.

Tom Gimbel: You should hate doing it. You should hate firing. If you don't hate firing somebody, you got a genetic problem, okay? You're a descent from Attila the Hun. You're bad. Firing people's not fun because it's their lives. It can be a relief. If you've got somebody's who's not giving their all, it's a relief because you don't have to worry about that problem anymore. But you want a termination to be simple, to the point, move on. You want to bring them in and say, "David, have a seat. I want to let you know I'm going to cut through the BS. We're letting you go today. We feel we need to make a change." If you think they're a good person, you can say that. If you think it's not the right fit, you can say that. But say, "We feel we need to go in a different direction. I don't want to hold this over your head any longer. I just wanted to be upfront, adult to adult, let you know we're making a change."

Jaime Tardy: Okay.

Tom Gimbel: It's when they beat around the bush in circles and circles and circles then they go and it's because of the way you talked to Brian on Thursday and it's because of the way you came in late on – why? Why do you need to throw dirt on the grave after you've already made the decision to fire them?

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- Jaime Tardy: Yeah, some people over talk because they want to make them know that this is their fault not your fault, yeah.
- Tom Gimbel: They're justifying themselves. They're saying if I can explain to you why I'm letting you go, then maybe you'll understand why I have to be a jerk and do this, right?
- Jaime Tardy: Yep.
- Tom Gimbel: You're already doing it. It's fine. They're going to think what they think.
- Jaime Tardy: Awesome. So then what's the procedure after that? For somebody who's new to the firing process, is it change passwords right away? Give me the process that you should go through after?
- Tom Gimbel: Yeah, you want to make sure that – you got to ask them for keys to the office, you got to ask them for their security badges. But you address – you go, “Listen, now I got to do – if that wasn't bad enough, I got to do the uncomfortable stuff. And I'm sorry I have to do this, but there's horror stories about this and I just got to run the same gambit on everybody. So I need your keys and your security badge. You can unload your briefcase and take out any company stuff that you have and is there anything that you have at home that might be company property?”
- Jaime Tardy: Okay, great. Walk them back to their desk, give them a little bit of dignity and then take them to the door. Move on.
Then go like this – no. Yeah, okay, perfect. So can you tell me a little bit about your – how did you get into staffing and recruiting?
- Tom Gimbel: The story goes I was recruited into it. So I had a friend from college that was in the business and had a small startup going. And he needed a sales guy and he recruited me to join him. And I came onboard and rest so on and so forth is history, but it was – I had no idea. I was 24 years old, but I didn't know oh, I want to do sales in a staffing and recruiting company. I didn't know. But the aspect of every company needs people is a huge selling point. I mean, it's the one thing that every company needs.
- Jaime Tardy: Yeah and most people aren't very good at it, either. And it's costly if they're not good at it. So therefore it makes perfect sense that they'll hire you.
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- Tom Gimbel: Exactly.
- Jaime Tardy: I used to get jobs all the time that way. I remember way back when, I worked in tech. I applied to this company four times. They did not care about my resume. As soon as I got a staffing agency to say how awesome I was, they hired me in two seconds and then hired three of my friends.
- Tom Gimbel: Validation.
- Jaime Tardy: Yes, it was ridiculous. So you guys – I really appreciate everything that you do. How long have you had the company?
- Tom Gimbel: A little over 17 years.
- Jaime Tardy: Wow. So what made you start your own? So you're in that space already, what made you actually start this?
- Tom Gimbel: Well, they were going through a transition. They were preparing to sell the company, so it was divestiture and different people and emotions and egos and things like that. So I had two job offers from other companies to get involved with them in a leadership role. It was a different world in the late '90s and I was able to get the capital together to do this without going into debt or taking private owners or taking outside interest in the company.
- And we had had a really great run and I had proven to be pretty successful at it, so it seemed to make sense at the time. But it was more happenstance than anything else.
- Jaime Tardy: So you had never really run a company like this before. Did it just start with you as a solopreneur or did you already have people around you?
- Tom Gimbel: No, I had two other people that I hired to work with me. One was with me – one lasted about six months and the other one lasted about nine years.
- Jaime Tardy: Really? Okay, what was the difference between the two?
- Tom Gimbel: Well, one was younger in her early 20s and didn't have a college degree, which I knew when I hired I wanted a college degree on people and I bent the rule a little bit and it bit me. And the other
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one was somebody I'd worked with for about six months previously in a different place and didn't know him intimately, but thought he could add value. He was older than me, too, more of a gray haired type of individual. Kept him around for nine years, but probably the welcome started to wear out probably about year seven.

Jaime Tardy: Oh, interesting. Were you able to – at that time I know you said you had some cash, but you probably were trying to keep it as lean as you could.

Tom Gimbel: Sure.

Jaime Tardy: Did you pay them what the standard was or did you try and get them less or how did that work?

Tom Gimbel: Well, I paid them pretty competitively. I got a loan from the bank based against the equity that I had and so I had some funds to make payroll and do those things. But you're right. We were extremely lean, extremely lean. And it may have played a role in the type of person that I hired.

Jaime Tardy: Interesting. Okay. Give us some tips on, especially the very beginning because you've been through this before.

Tom Gimbel: Yeah.

Jaime Tardy: Right? How do you grow because if you're the guy and you only have a handful of people and you're trying to grow as fast as you possibly – or not as fast, but as much as you possibly can because that's what everyone does, give us some tips on managing that and dealing with the overwhelm.

Tom Gimbel: Well, I'll tell you, it's ironic because the other day I gave a presentation to my company. We do a quarterly kickoff meeting and we just kicked off the fourth quarter even though we're ahead of schedule. And I was looking at different speeches and interviews of different people. And I read Elon Musk's and it was address – I watched Elon Musk. And he's crazy, awesome, right?

Jaime Tardy: Yeah.

Tom Gimbel: But he said if you're doing a startup, you work a million hours. And he said we actually put couches in our office because we slept

at the office. And I coded and I ate and I coded and I ate. And I think that there's a lot to that. If you're going to do this and start it up and you want to make millions and millions and millions of dollars, right, you want to grow this, why wouldn't you invest all the time that you have into it? And I think that's the No. 1 thing, is you're trying to carve out time. There is no – people go, "Oh, I still need me time to recharge the batteries."

It's like you know what? You're missing the boat. You are missing the boat. You are living in me time. If this isn't your me time, if you don't feel that this is me time for the first four, five, six, seven, eight years, what are you doing? What are you doing?

Jaime Tardy: Yeah, you better love what you do. Well, let me ask you this, though, because when I started this business, I had two small kids, right? And so I only wanted to work 20 or 30 –

Tom Gimbel: You don't look old enough for that.

Jaime Tardy: Why, thank you. They're 6 and 8 now, so they're not little anymore. But when I started this 8 years ago, I had a baby and I didn't want to work very much. So I was working 20, 30 hours a week, which was not good for an overachiever because I wanted to see massive growth, but I couldn't work very much. So I was frustrated in sort of both ways.

Tom Gimbel: And I say this because I'm a word semantics geek, right, at that point in time you stopped becoming an overachiever.

Jaime Tardy: Ouch. No, I was. I was an overachiever mom.

Tom Gimbel: Well, you're exactly right. 100 percent correct, right? But that's what it comes down to. It's looking in the mirror and answering the tough questions. Am I really giving this all I have? Am I really giving this all I have? And you have to be able to say no, I'm not and I'm okay with slower growth. There's a give and a take for everything.

Jaime Tardy: Yeah, that's what was so difficult for me trying to do that, though, because I always expected massive results because I had always gotten massive results. Then when I put my priority as my children, which makes sense, right, I was like shoot. I couldn't have both like I wanted.

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- Tom Gimbel: There's nothing wrong with raising a family. There's nothing wrong with volunteering at the church or temple or masque. There's nothing wrong with any of it. You just have to realize you've shifted your priorities and the other things are going to pay a price, which isn't a bad thing. That's what happens with priorities, right?
- Jaime Tardy: It's slower and I had to deal with that and that was pain.
- Tom Gimbel: Something gives. I mean, if everything could be balanced all the time, there'd never be any problems in the world. That's not the way it is.
- Jaime Tardy: So what do you think about balance in general, especially for running a company and that sort of thing. Now you have a huge team, do you still work?
- Tom Gimbel: I don't believe in it.
- Jaime Tardy: Do you still work?
- Tom Gimbel: Yeah, I work all the time.
- Jaime Tardy: But you love it I'm assuming, right?
- Tom Gimbel: I love it.
- Jaime Tardy: Yeah.
- Tom Gimbel: Yeah. Balance is on a year not on a day, a week or a month, right? So if at the end of the year you look back over it and you say I never missed a kid's birthday party, I was there for my anniversary, we took a vacation in the summer and I got a day off at Christmas and we took a couple three day weekends and I got promoted and my team hit goal and I made more money than I ever made before, that's a balanced year. Does it mean that on Thursday evening that you're working until midnight that you really balanced? No, but I got to tell you, you can be home and be in love with somebody and you look in the mirror when you're fighting or they're picking their toenails in bed and you want to cut their throat and guess what? You're not in love then either. And balance is – at the moment you have more than one kid, you don't have balance.
- Jaime Tardy: Yeah, no kidding.
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- Tom Gimbel: When one kid's got a soccer game and one kid's got a piano recital, you got to pick which one.
- Jaime Tardy: You pick the kid you love the most, right? I mean, that's what you do.
- Tom Gimbel: Which changes every single day. And what I always say is you got to view your career – when it's more established, you got to view your career as a kid meaning just don't always neglect that kid. Sometimes that kid, that work, has to come first over your children because at the end of the day – I was interviewing a guy once and he said, "I want to be a great dad. I want to be at all of my daughter's ballet recitals. I want to be there all the time."
- I go, "I have no problem with that. You have to figure out if being a great dad means being at every ballet recital when they're 4 or being able to afford to send them to Princeton when they're 18. Your decision, not mine. I'm okay with whatever you do, you just may not be able to do it here."
- Jaime Tardy: You can't do both you don't think?
- Tom Gimbel: I think there's – hey, there's a situation that works for everybody. I'm telling you that the one situation that usually never fails is work ethic and time commitment. And if you put in – if I put in 60 hours a week and I'm just as smart as you and you put in 40 hours a week, I'm 50 percent ahead of you.
- Jaime Tardy: I know. Man, I have a client –
- Tom Gimbel: That's the way it is.
- Jaime Tardy: She works 20 hours a week and I had another client who worked about 80 hours a week. She's like, "How come he's going so much faster?"
- I'm like, "He's doing four times what you are."
- Tom Gimbel: It's not hard to figure out, right? And so you just have to be okay with the consequences. And someone says, "Well, I'm being penalized because I want to be a parent."
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No, you're not. The other guy's being rewarded because he works more.

Jaime Tardy: Well, and it's your choice to be a parent and it's a good thing to be.

Tom Gimbel: 100 percent. Absolutely.

Jaime Tardy: You just can't move as fast in other things.

Tom Gimbel: The biggest problem I see is that everyone wants to criticize the other party. You want to be a full-time mom or a part-time – good. That's awesome. Live with the consequences. You want to not be at home as much and be a career person. Live with the consequences. It's living with your own responsibility. It's okay.

Jaime Tardy: Do you think everything has consequences? So there's nothing that we can do that we can't sort of figure out both.

Tom Gimbel: I think everything has consequences. Everything. It's called a give and a take. Action and reaction.

Jaime Tardy: That's awesome. Ah man, we have to start wrapping up, but this has been such an interesting conversation. One of the reasons why I started millionaire interviews was to ask these questions.

Tom Gimbel: Yeah.

Jaime Tardy: And one of the things that I brought on when I did a survey of all the millions at the very beginning was how many hours at the beginning of their company did they work. And it was just a blank and the most common answer was all of them. And I was like, "Crap, I'm only working 20 hours a week." Everybody else was like all of them.

Tom Gimbel: That's funny.

Jaime Tardy: And it's true. It's true though. I'm assuming it's true for you, right? Did you work all of them at the beginning?

Tom Gimbel: I work more now than I worked then.

Jaime Tardy: Really? Why?

Tom Gimbel: I have more responsibility.

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- Jaime Tardy: Interesting. But that means you could have worked harder earlier, though, huh?
- Tom Gimbel: For sure I could have. Absolutely.
- Jaime Tardy: Why didn't you?
- Tom Gimbel: I wasn't smart enough. I'm smarter now than I was then.
- Jaime Tardy: Well, that's a good thing, right?
- Tom Gimbel: I think the most successful people in the world tend to work more. It's different kinds of work, right? Mark Zuckerberg or Elon Musk or whatever, they're not writing code anymore maybe, but they're traveling more. When they're on a plane and they're flying to DC to talk to the Congress and they're going to Europe, that's work. That's work. And maybe you tie in trips on the backend or the frontend, but they're working more on different things, on bigger picture things. The most – the president of the United States works more as the president of the United States than he did when he was a state senator for Illinois. It's just how it is.
- Jaime Tardy: Before I get to my last question, do you think that – give me some tips on handling overwhelm and stuff like that because I get a lot of people coming in that are running around like chickens with their head cut off.
- Tom Gimbel: Yeah.
- Jaime Tardy: Right? And they're like, "I am an entrepreneur and I'm trying to work 90 hours."
- Tom Gimbel: Breathe, write and don't buy into the stereotypes. So breathe meaning the world is not going to end because you don't get X done. It's just not. Breathe. Right? And then don't buy into the stereotypes of I'm an entrepreneur so everything is going to be like this. Everything is the way you want it to be. And again, you make decisions and you get rewarded or penalized based on those decisions. Really, really important. And work hard. I mean, I've never seen things that can't be fixed with hard work and honesty and communication. Own what you say you're going to do.
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Jaime Tardy: That's awesome. Okay, so the last question. What's one action listeners can take this week to help move them forward towards their goal of a million?

Tom Gimbel: Save more than you spend.

Jaime Tardy: That's awesome. Elaborate because we know – I know it's a cliché and you know you just said that that's exactly why people say it because it's extremely important, but how do you do it?

Tom Gimbel: Well, I think No. 1, the more money you're making, the more you have to live on what you used to make. And I think that's an important thing if you accumulate – and I'm not even talking individually, as a corporation. You want your company to have a strong balance sheet and if you're spending money all the time for your own personal lifestyle and taking out of the company, you're weakening your company and you're weakening your lifestyle. So to create an asset that seven figures plus, you need to be financially sound and think I don't really need everything. I don't need everything today. And that goes a long way to moving forward on that.

The other thing is, focus on short term goals, right? You got to get to \$50,000.00 and \$100,000.00 or a quarter of a million and a half a million and a million and then you get there and then you have a catastrophe and you need to spend money and liquidate some assets. There's a million things that go on. The key is it's very, very difficult to make a lot of money, to earn a lot of money without working your butt off. It's very difficult.

Jaime Tardy: I hope everybody's super excited to work their butts off right now. Where can we find out more information on you? Tell us your website where we can contact you.

Tom Gimbel: So you can get us at LaSalleNetwork.com, L-A-S-A-L-L-E Network.com. And if you want to know about what I do during the day, which probably isn't that stimulating to most, you can follow me on Twitter @TomGimbel and you will most likely see a lot of Cubs mentions on that. So as we like to say in Chicago #WorldSeries2015.

Jaime Tardy: So you don't work all the time.

Tom Gimbel: Well, I try to take clients with me to the game. I kill two birds with one stone.

Jaime Tardy: So smart. So smart. Thank you so much for coming on the show today, Tom. I really, really appreciate it.

Tom Gimbel: Good to be with you. Thanks for having me.