

---

Jaime: Welcome to Eventual Millionaire. I am Jaime Masters. And today on the show we have Mary Grothe. You can check her out at marygrothe.com and Sales BQ. And she's a sales expert, and I cannot wait to dive into this. Thanks so much for coming on the show today.

Mary: Hey, I'm so happy to be here.

Jaime: Everybody right now are like, okay, more sales would be great. So, one of the main things you talk about is BQ, like IQ or EQ, but it's BQ. So, can you tell me a little bit more about that?

Mary: Yeah, the background of it is, I'm a former No. 1 sales rep. So, I worked for a Fortune 1000 payroll and HR company. Sales came pretty naturally to me. I had crazy good sales performance. In my first year, I sold \$758,000.00 on a \$150,000.00 quota. And so then, the corporate group of sales leaders, the VPs, executives are like oh, we need more of this. What's happening? And it was such a cool opportunity. I was really young. I was 24 in my first sales year. And so, they said, hey, can you just write down your process? I said, sure, I'll write it down.

So, we created this little playbook. Hey, this is my process. This is how I'm selling so much. And with that came a little methodology as well. So, processes are more of your steps and stages, and then methodology is really the how. And so, we wrote this out. Then they saw a little bit of increase in performance in the reps, but they were like, it's not enough. We need more.

Okay. So, I decided to start helping with training. And I loved that component. This was great. I got to facilitate classes and then also led a weekly webinar. So, with the combination of hey, we wrote a playbook. It helped. Then I did a little bit of training. It helped a little bit more. But there was still a gap, and that was a problem. They wanted to figure it out. So, they started to send reps to Denver, and that's where I'm based, and said, shadow Mary in the field for a couple of days and let's see if we can really identify the gap.

Well, we figured it out pretty quickly when the reps were not able to hang through the first day. They were exhausted. They called – the terms – I've heard a lot of terms used to describe me, but ultimately, they just couldn't keep up. And so, they determined there's a work ethic. There is a behavior that's happening in the top performers of the company that are not happening with the rest

of the performers. And that's where BQ came from.

So, when people were asking me, how are you a top rep? What are you doing? I didn't even know what I was doing that made me successful. I just loved sales so much and had a lot of success with it. But when I broke it down, I said, there is an IQ component. I have learned the technology inside and out, the product and service inside and out. I don't have to rely on a sales engineer or anyone else to ask a question. I just know the answers. And I can demo it. I can do all of that. I earn trust because I have the IQ component down.

EQ, being able to emotionally connect with your buyers, because sales is an emotional decision. They justify it logically. But how are you connecting emotionally with the buyers and responding to their needs? Because sales is really just solving their problems and having the right solution to what they need in order to get to where they want to go, that desired future state. And so, when you break it down and look at the EQ part, that was really important.

So, you're a wicked smart IQ, you're a great salesperson, EQ, but none of those matter if you don't actually show up and do the work, and that's the BQ. So, the BQ component was that hinging factor to success. And all three are needed because you can't just be this crazy person on a mission that's terrible at sales. You're doing all the effort and work, but you're not getting results. And so, it's really just a trifecta of the three.

And when you break down BQ, it's your mental mindset that fuels your emotional state. And then, based on how you are emotionally, that typically dictates your actions. And those actions yield performance. And so, that's that cycle of BQ. It can be virtuous. It can be vicious. It just depends.

Jaime: It can be virtuous; it can be vicious. I like that; that's awesome. Well, it's funny because everybody talks about sort of potential. And there's a lot of potentially good salespeople that might have even IQ and EQ, but like you said, if they can't even keep up with your pace – so, what does your level of pace and your level of BQ look like? So, that way we can paint a picture for people.

Mary: Yeah. Well, it starts with – so, at the top of BQ is mental preparedness. So, mental mindset you've heard of a million times. It's everything. But it is. The saying, whether you think you can or you can't, you're right. And it's all sort of mental mindset. And so,

for me, my little BQ was dependent upon how I mentally prepared for my day. And I also had to keep myself in check throughout the day because as human beings, this weird thing happens. A piece of information enters our mind, and we immediately tell ourselves a story about it.

And based on the story that we tell ourselves, we have an emotional reaction. And that emotional reaction is going to help or hinder our set of actions for the day that are required to do the job. For me, the mental mindset on a daily basis was mental preparedness to put myself in action and be prepared for any potential outcome. For me, it was about setting prioritization in the morning or the night before. Usually the night before, because I seem to sleep a little bit better when I know what I'm doing the next day.

So, I would look at the list of what I have. I would look at the daily lineup with the schedule. I would also look at where I was year-to-date, or quarter-to-date, or month-to-date in my pipeline and in my closed business. And I would look at the schedule, and I would simply ask myself the question, is the schedule set up for me to win, or are there gaps in the schedule? What more could I be doing tomorrow to achieve where I need to be?

I looked at my pipeline, and I wanted to keep my pipeline – I wanted to sell about \$1 million a year. And so, the pipeline needed to be 2 to 3 X of that. So, \$2 million to \$3 million in the pipeline qualified at any time. So, if I had a full schedule, but if I had a low pipeline, that's great I had a full schedule, but I also knew there were additional things that I needed to do to be mindful of the fact that I need to fill the pipeline. So, just knowing all of this is in my control, so the prioritization was key.

So, if I knew that I already had a packed schedule, some things I would do is look at all the meetings. Was everything revenue-generating, or were there things on there that could be pushed before or after work, later in the week, or to another week, or completely delegated to somebody else? And I would be very honest about the day's lineup. Is this going to help me win, or is this noise? And I would make decisions on the calendar. And then, I would look for any gaps and opportunities to fill in additional work.

So, if I had a break between meetings, I was an outside salesperson, so I would oftentimes just pack my lunch, eat from a

cooler throughout the day. I didn't stop for lunch. I also packed a list, and of course, I had my cell phone. And I would do telemarketing when I was in the car. I would have my Wi-Fi hotspot. I would have my laptop. I would have ways to make sure that no minute of the day was wasted.

So, for me, the BQ Step 1 was preparedness. So, being mentally prepared. So, being mentally prepared the night before, I already woke up excited, optimistic. That was my emotional state. And it started by determining what time I needed to wake up. So, some mornings, sure, it was 4:45 or 5:00 a.m. But I chose to get a head start on the day. I chose to knock out non revenue-generating tasks or non client-facing tasks before 7:00 or 8:00 a.m.

I was leaving the office when my peers were coming in. I was going to that first meeting, that second meeting. I also had a backup plan for every meeting, in case it canceled. So, depending on where I was geographically, I would look up other clients or prospects and say, in case this meeting cancels or reschedules, who else, since I'll already be up in this area, who else can I see, or who can I call, or what can I do during that time? And I was also masterful. Nothing fell through the cracks with me.

And so, I made sure that I would print off my task list from the CRM. And I would know what I needed to follow-up on, so, who I spoke to three months ago that said hey, we might evaluate in three months, that's a good callback, etc. Or I would also call lost opportunities, so, deals that said no to me 3, 6, 9, 12 months ago, I want to reconnect, re-engage. And so, I was always working. I was always purposeful. And that's the BQ. That's the behavioral quotient.

And when people were riding with me, they thought I was nuts. They were like, seriously? This is just so much work. I also sell four times the amount of my peers. One goes with the other.

Jaime: I'm four people; I'm four people. So, we can clone you four times, if you want to have the same result. Even just you saying that, I'm like how did you even keep up the amount of energy that you needed? How many hours a week was that?

Mary: Yeah, it varied. I worked hard, though. I was in my 20s, I was single. I didn't have a lot of responsibility. And I was in the hustle phase of my life. I'm not in the hustle phase of my life now. And that is a huge reward. I'm making more money than I ever have. I

---

have a wildly successful business, thank you, Jesus. And I have a family that I just adore, and I cannot get enough time with them. I just love them so much. But that wasn't always my life. I did the hustle in my 20s so that in my 30s, I could reap the rewards. It's called seed planting. The seeds you plant today, you do get to reap a harvest from.

So, I took advantage of that. So, Jaime, some days, I would wake up at 4:45 in the morning. I was in the office by 6:00 a.m. and I probably didn't leave until 7:00 or 8:00 p.m., but I wanted to. How did I have energy? I loved it. I aligned my work with a profession that aligned with my natural talents, and it aligned with something I just love to do. And I think that when you get to show up to work every day and do a profession that aligns with your passion and talents, you – sure, people say, you never work a day in your life.

Oh, trust me, I worked and it was hard, but I had endless energy for it. And the wins fueled me. So, I look at some salespeople, or some entrepreneurs that are trying to scale their business, and they are responsible for sales, but sales doesn't come naturally. And it's like a necessary evil, but it actually drains their energy versus gives them energy. My recommendation there, get out of your own way. Quit trying to sell. Make your first investment to be a salesperson, a good one, please, that you can trust and will actually do the work.

So, it's one of those tradeoffs. We all have natural energy for the things that we're passionate about. And if you find yourself trying to excel in a sales role or selling in any type of role, and you're not good at it, you don't have the passion or the energy, you probably shouldn't be doing it, is my recommendation.

Jaime: Thank you for saying that and clarifying that.

Mary: Find somebody else who can.

Jaime: Yeah, and I'll see a lot of business owners. So, some business owners are really great at sales. And they were sort of the fuel for the company and why they're doing so well. And then, other people are more of the systems processes and not salespeople. And they have to supplement. Either they have great marketing or whatever the chunks are. They have great salespeople.

The hard thing that I see, and I'm sure you have thoughts on this, is that the people that are owners that are really good salespeople,

because they're so good, when they try to hire anybody else, everybody else is worse than they are. Right? You know exactly what I 'm talking about. And they are like, they suck. I need to do it. And then they pull it back. Or the owner won't put enough in my experience and effort into the sales side because they have other things to do, and then their revenue drops, too. So, it feels like a catch-22 to them.

Mary:

Yeah. Well, guess what I learned on that? I learned that – it's from Gary V, Gary Vaynerchuk– and I love this. So, I have to give him credit because he said it first. But it's amazing. CEOs like that, that you just described, we call them 100s, which is why they run their own company. There's very few people like them. You can only ever expect a salesperson on their best day to be a 75. And if you change – at Sales BQ, one of the things that we do when we first started out – we don't do this anymore – we will work with small companies, \$1 million to \$3 million, and we would help them with their first sales hire.

So, this is one of those problems I was passionate about solving. We don't do this anymore. We've evolved. We do different things now. But this was three years ago. And there was more coaching and training the CEO to let go of expectations than there was coaching and training the salesperson to come in because the CEO's the 100. They're amazing. They're so talented, and they're infectious. They have credibility; they have clout. It's their baby, the company. They made it, so they know things a salesperson will never know.

So, let's say that CEO is capable of selling \$1 million a year in recurring revenue or in one-time revenue, whatever it is. If it's ARR or just annual revenue. Well, great. You should only expect your salesperson to be able to sell about half of that because most salespeople will operate at 50 percent of your best. So, you're a CEO; you're 100. And on a really, really good day, when it's their best work and they're firing on full cylinders, or maybe after they've been there for a year or two and worked their way up, they may get to a 75.

And a news flash, CEOs, quit trying to hire 100s. They are already running their own companies, and they don't want to work for you. So, you have to base your entire plan of success and growth around people really operating at 50 percent of your talent, with the high points of 75. And when you find those 75s and those 80s, you invest in them. You give them deferred compensation. You figure

---

out how to put them on not a fast track, but just a track to upper level management.

And as you scale your company into one, two, three, four or five million, these are the people that are going to make up your executive team and help get you out of the weeds and start enjoying that life. But those 75s and 80s, love on them, invest in them, mentor them, be great to them, because they're gonna be your future when you're stepping out of the day-to-day operations at the level that you're in today.

But stop expecting ever a salesperson to come in and be anything near like you. And this message goes towards those CEOs that are really good at sales, and you know who you are.

Jaime: Like I could probably name a couple bazillion people right now. And I really appreciate all of the information on that because it is an owner, and they need to take self responsibility for some of this instead of pointing the fingers and blaming. Because sometimes either they're like, I'm bad at hiring. So, that could be it also. Maybe they just suck at hiring – side note. But the expectations that owners have of their entire team is expecting them to be exactly like they are.

Most of the people that I work with are like, well, if we could just get a cloning device, just like we were saying for you. If we could have cloned you, and just made you salespeople at all the small businesses, we would love that. But we don't have that, unfortunately. And because each person's individual and different, we kind of have to work around with what they do. So, give me some tips, especially since you've done it before. I'm sure the first hire of a salesperson was a huge pain in the butt.

Mary: Yeah.

Jaime: So, tell me some tips for those people that are in that space right now, on what they can do to try and have this be a good experience.

Mary: Yeah, I'm just gonna be real with you. This is not like 10 steps to success. This is just 10 steps to being real. Be prepared to throw away \$250,000.00 before you do your first sales hire. Just do it. Write the check and be ready to tear it up and throw it out the window. There are no guarantees on sales performance; there aren't. You cannot control a human being.

Plus, salespeople, and I can say this because I am one, and I've lived my life around hundreds of them. We are very difficult. We're tough to manage. You can't rely on us all the time. We're high-risk, high-urgency. We have a lot of ebbs and flows, peaks, valleys. We have, just in our moods, in our ability to execute, our emotions, there's a lot that's special about salespeople. So, 1.) You have to put us in our own category. So, were tough to manage.

The second thing is we can sell our way through anything, so we might be a little bit of a BS'er. You may not always get the clear truth. You're gonna hear a lot of hope because we're also selling you as much as we're selling clients for you. So, FYI, you're not always getting down to the truth.

The other part is now, as we are closing out 2020, heading into 2021, gone are the days of hiring the sales unicorn. They do not exist. So, stop. Do not put all of your eggs in a basket and find – seriously, let's break this down. This is what I see time and time again. Just like you said, you need your cloning device. Trust me, I've heard it. This is what happens.

You find your brother's cousin's nephew's college roommate, who is a top-10 rep at Oracle. And you have an opportunity to get him to work for your small company. But he makes a lot of money. So, you're gonna somehow figure out how to take all of your available cash and give this person, because of the fact that they were a top rep for a big-name company \$100,000.00-plus base.

Plus, by the way, you're like, if I'm gonna give you a \$100,000.00 base, that means you're gonna have to build the infrastructure for the department. I'm gonna need you to build systems processes. I'm gonna need you to develop our whole sales department. And then, you dangle this carrot. If you perform well as a salesperson, we might make you the real executive, actually let you build out a team. It's just, what a great opportunity. You can start ground level. Okay, stop.

That person's gonna come in. They're gonna take your \$100,000.00 base salary, and they're not going to do anything because that salesperson just came from Oracle, where they have all the infrastructure in the world. And by the way, they have name brand recognition that you're not gonna have until you're Oracle.

They don't know how to sell for a small local company. They don't know how to sell without the name brand. They don't know

how to sell without inbound leads and referral partners filling their pipeline. They don't know how to sell when they don't have an IT department, when their Outlook malfunctions on their computer. And it's paralyzing for an entire day. And their computer doesn't work. And you don't have an IT department, and they have to go to the Geek Squad to figure it out.

They also don't do well when they don't have a thousand other sales peers that they get to compete against, that there is recognition and things that fuel high performing salespeople that come from those big environments. It's just not going to work. So, save yourself the time, energy, and the money. That's not how you do it.

The first sales hire should be built after you build your inbound marketing funnel. And your inbound marketing funnel can be built for less than \$100,000.00 over a year. It can be built through a very proven process. There's a lot of literature out there on this. And it's something that you can easily identify and look how to do. But when you build the inbound marketing funnel, you carve out the hardest part of a salesperson's job that will be your biggest anxiety point, which is they don't know how to prospect. They don't want to prospect, and they don't have enough opportunities in the pipeline.

Your biggest challenge in your first sales hire is you're gonna freak out when they don't have enough in the pipeline because you're smart, and you know you can't close what you don't have in the pipeline. So, what you want to do is build the marketing engine first. I'm not talking about having name brand awareness like Coca-Cola. That's not gonna happen.

But you can build an inbound marketing funnel that's targeted to your ideal client profile and it uses both SEO and SEM, but you're able to leverage an inbound funnel based on buyers who are showing intent because they're in the awareness phase. And you're intercepting with them while they're searching for things online. So, there's a way to proven methodology to do that. We're not talking about that right now. But you want to get them into the funnel. When you start proving that you've built that part of the engine, a new CEO that can sell, close a few of those deals and get your marketing funnel paid for.

And then when it becomes to the point where you have a really great inbound funnel engine, that's when you hire the salesperson.

---

You don't pay for a \$100,000.00 person. You go to market and you pay a fair salary of about \$50,000.00 to \$65,000.00, and you pull somebody that has worked for a small company and knows how to sell a small company against big name competitors. And then, you put them in a process that works because you've already built the engine. And then, you don't train them through osmosis. That one drives me nuts.

CEOs are like, I'll just sell the first couple deals with you. We'll just go in the meeting together. And then after we do a couple together, you'll be fine. It's like, no. You can't train salespeople through osmosis. They need a playbook. They need it in writing. They need purposeful and intentional training, immersion learning sell. You don't sit them down for two days and teach them everything about your company and say, here's your laptop; go sell. That's a recipe for disaster.

You actually have to train them and teach them. And you do it piece by piece by piece until you start to see the key components of your selling substance stages and methodology being mastered by that salesperson. You may have to hold their hand for a period of six months in a variety of different ways. And then, there should be a graduation period where they can really take this over and sell. But that's the way that you build it. That's the way that you do it, but please do not go hire that \$150,000.00 person, give them a VIP of Sales title because they were a top performing rep for a Fortune 1000 company. Don't, just don't.

Jaime: You just saved a lot of owners a lot of pain, a lot of money, because you've seen this so many times before. And it's ridiculous. Again, they think they're smart with going with this, and as you start going down the path, you're like ah, then we blame the sales – it must be them. Let's try that again. Oh, wait, right? Question, then – when it comes to actually training up internally. So, let's say they have 10 employees. And somebody's like oh, actually, I kind of want to learn. Because like you were saying beforehand, having somebody that's a boss that knows their sales stuff in their head, completely different than having a whole process.

So, as soon as we actually try and bring someone up in sales, they need so many assets that they don't have. So, if somebody on their team is like, oh, train me in sales, is that a recipe for disaster also, or what would you do in that case?

Mary: Well, then they have to have the DNA of a salesperson. That's

really, really sweet if somebody on the team's like, I've always wanted to do sales. Do you think I can – okay, hold on; hold on. Sales is like, how important is this role? You're good for one thing. Sorry. In a marketing position, or operations, or a product position, or technology, or operations, there are multiple ways that you can be evaluated where you bring value to your role.

In sales, there's one way you bring value to the role. So, gambling on somebody, especially if they're valuable in a different capacity, don't do that. But if you think that they have the DNA of a salesperson and you're able to identify that through a series of conversations with them, and you're able to do this in a protected way that they know the risk and they understand that if you are a current member of this team and you're doing – fill in the blank. Let's say you're doing marketing. You're doing very well. And you have job security because you're bringing a lot of value.

There's a lot of risk moving you into a sales role, because if you don't succeed after a period of time, you can't have a seat on this bus anymore. I'm sorry. Your value changes to the organization. You have to have that conversation. But then, you need to benchmark them. I don't like training programs that are one size fits all. That's ludicrous. You have to benchmark the person, or all the salespeople, if you're doing a talent development strategy.

So, you need to understand the current state. You need to identify where they are today. Then, you need to look at the desired future state where you want them to be, and then, in between those two things is the gap. And the gap is different for every single person. The learning and development plan is specific to each individual. You never want to put a salesperson in a training for something they're proficient in. That's really annoying, coming from a top salesperson.

Jaime: Yeah. They're gonna be like, screw this, yeah.

Mary: You might actually do more harm than good. So, you had made a comment to me that there are people that are very unique about how they go about the role. That should be embraced. We were all built uniquely. We've been created as very unique creatures. So, to take three salespeople who are uniquely made with different ways of doing something, and all getting results. And then, trying to get them in a standardized training process or sales plan or playbook, that is not a recipe for success.

Fun story. I was selling for that payroll and HR company. I had been there – I was on my second tour. And I came back and they said, hey, we're gonna start a new division. We're calling it the Up Market. Cool. They took 11 of the top 25 reps in the company, and they put us on one team. So, top 25 reps out of like 3,000 salespeople. They took 11 of us and put us on one team. There's a lot of talent amongst those 11. And then, they brought in a sales playbook for the Up Market and said, you're all gonna sell this way. And we went ha, ha, ha, ha.

It was – sorry – it was one of the dumbest things I've ever seen. If you have 11 of the sharpest, brightest, most talented salespeople in the company, and now you're gonna tell them to all sell the same way. Wrong answer. What that sales manager should have done is sat down with each rep, rode with them in the field, spent a day or two with them, been along on at least three or four sales meetings with those same prospects, saw how that salesperson progresses deals, how they present, how they solve problems, how they gain trust, how they work towards the close.

And then, the manager should have compiled all of that into a spreadsheet and said, what are all the things that are similar that we can somewhat standardize. And where are the unique pieces that I would never want to change or take away from that salesperson? So, we all had 11 different ways of doing it. And that's something that I have embraced in my own company. I tell my team members, I say, I don't care how you get there. I just care about the outcome.

I only care how you get there if you're missing the outcome. Then we have a different conversation. But I am not here to create robots, and we all have to do it the same way. If we're all so uniquely talented, why are you making people do that the same way? So, putting a bow on this, with your salespeople, meet them where they are. Understand what the gap is.

And then, train specifically on the gap, and don't rush the training. You have to put your big rocks and say, these are the four components I'm gonna help you with over the next two months. And you have to break them apart. You also have to understand what type of learner they are. Some people learn great through reading a book and curriculum, and doing their own self-study. Some people need to hear it. And so, they do better with audio. Some people actually need to do it. You could preach to them all day long and give them the playbook, but until they actually show

up and do it – they learn by doing.

And so, you have to understand what kind of learner they are. And then you have to break it apart and do immersion learning. You have to break it into small chunks. And then, you have to give them success metrics so they know when they graduate from a certain area. But see, most managers, let alone a CEO, have the time, energy, or patience to put something like that in place. And then, they wonder why they can't train up great salespeople, because you actually can't do it any other way.

Jaime: You're limping along. And you're like pointing fingers again. Yeah. So, question, though. You said the DNA of a salesperson. But we're also unique. So, what are those pieces you look for that really makes up the DNA of a salesperson?

Mary: Yeah. Well, if you look at the sales cycle, I think there's three different types of salespeople. There's top of funnel. So, you're hunters prospecting – they want to open up new conversations, new relationships. They love that. They get a thrill out of it. Then you have middle of funnel. So, you're gonna have middle of funnel, which will be the people that get a qualified opportunity. It's on their calendar. They do phenomenal discovery, presentation, and close.

Then you have account management. And the account management piece is gonna be on the back end. And that's after the client says yes, but it's retaining the relationship, upselling, cross-selling, renewal, revenue expansion, soliciting referrals. And that's the role of account management.

So, when you look at how people are motivated, there's intrinsic, extrinsic, and altruistic. Those that are altruistic, they are fueled by having the opportunity to serve others. You'll find some altruism within most types of salespeople, but the high level of altruism, they need to be in account management.

They do far better serving consistently over, and over, and over again. Also, the DNA of an account manager, usually they have call reluctance, a fear of prospecting. They don't handle rejection well. And they just don't want to be on the front of the sales conversation. They think sales is sleazy. They don't want to be too pushy or aggressive. That's how you know that, that person should really be more in a customer success or account management role.

---

When you get into the DNA of a salesperson that's middle of funnel – I'm working backwards – middle of funnel. So, the person that's exceptional with closing deals, they start with a great discovery and they work through the process to close. They are complex problem solvers. So, the DNA of this person is they have a very high Figure it Out Factor. And that's a term that comes from Dave Kurlan at Objective Management Group.

But a high Figure it Out Factor is somebody that can take a prospect's problems and can simply just visualize how to solve them. And they're brilliant in speaking that person's language, the prospect's language, and translating everything into what actually means something to them. And that person, their DNA is about they are detailed, so follow through. They don't let things fall through the cracks. And they care so deeply about winning a relationship.

So, they care about the close. They will lose sleep at night if they don't win the deal. They'll beat themselves up over it. They go for the kill. I hate that word. I'm sorry. But they go for the win, we'll just say it like that. They go for the win, and they care so much about making that person's life better because they're in it. And that's a lot of that intrinsic motivation. So, that's a big, big deal in that middle of the funnel.

Your front of the funnel, the top of the funnel – these people are typically not detail-oriented. They are usually very high urgency, fast-paced. They do not think salespeople are pushy or aggressive. They have a high rejection factor. They don't care. These are like the honey badgers, if you know what I mean.

Jaime: Eccentric.

Mary: Well, you hung up on me. Make another dial. They're super competitive. They just have really thick skin, and they're very, very persistent. So, the DNA of someone who does prospecting, they need to just be all in. They should have that endless energy factor like you were talking about earlier because when you're doing prospecting all day long, man, can that get boring real fast, or just become disengaged or you just don't feel like you can do one more email, one more call. So, people on the top of the funnel have to have a true passion for talking to strangers.

Like we weren't typically raised to want to talk to strangers. We were raised as children to not ever talk to strangers. So, that's a

---

problem. So, that's the DNA of somebody that can handle that. So, some small organizations, they say that they don't have \$1 million sitting around to build a sales department. If they can only hire one person, who do they hire? So, they try to hire that sales unicorn that does all the prospecting, and all of the middle of the funnel closing, and account management. It's just so hard to find a single person that can be proficient in all three areas.

So, what you'll find is you think you hired a great salesperson, and then you'll find that they favor one of the three. And then, they lack in the other two areas. And then, you wonder why they're not successful. So, my recommendation is to create that engine where you have top of funnel.

So, that needs to be automated through marketing. And I will say, the hardest sales position to fill is top of funnel. It's the least favorable job, favorite job.

Jaime: It's no fun, no.

Mary: I don't like it.

Jaime: Well, that's the thing. You did it because you did it and you could be really good at it. But most people would prefer to be like, do you want to have a hunger and go crazy prospecting, or would you like an inbound marketing strategy that you don't actually have to pound the door on anybody. And they actually are quite well qualified. I don't know, which – do you want to annoy people? No. But it does make a huge difference. Can you tell me just a little bit about the methodology, because I also know how important it is for owners to have this? But they feel like it's coveted. Like, that's great for all those people that can have it.

But I'm holding all the other – juggling everything right now. And I've got one that might be like nah. So, they're actually, technically, an offline business that's trying to do the prospecting and can't, and trying to sort of half do. I'm almost gonna swear – half do the inbound marketing strategy. We're like, that doesn't work, and this doesn't work. And then, they just get frustrated. So, tell us more on how to fix that.

Mary: Yeah, well, when it takes an investment, and you can't give up on marketing early. And so, there's two strategies. There's organic, through SEL and content. And then, there's paid. And the way that you have to offset the two is you have to start them both at the

---

same time. And organic takes time, but it's the gift that keeps on giving forever.

And so, hear me out on this. Organic content, when you get your content strategy down. And I'll talk about it here in a second. You could literally stop producing content for a couple of months, and you'll still be getting inbound leads because the content you've already put out continues to produce for you through a search engine. However, if you stop paid search, the day, the minute you stop paid search is when you stop getting leads.

And so, you think about the time, energy, and the investment, paid search is usually what you start with. It's short-term, and so, it should teeter off as your work unit grows over time. And so, that's the thing to think about.

But the inbound marketing methodology, this is what it follows. 1.) Know your customer inside and out. Get niche, get rich. Get specific. Stop trying to sell to everybody. Find your favorite customer, and go find more of them. And the way that you do it, Step No. 1 is go interview that customer or customers. We call it buyer persona interview. You're listening for keywords and key phrases that you can rank for, which are what your prospective buyers are actually searching for when they are aware that they have a problem.

So, the buyer funnel is awareness, consideration, decision. In awareness, they're aware that they have a problem. So, they go to the trusted friend, the internet, and they start searching. You need to intercept them there. But if you're in a competitive industry, your big-name competitors are probably buying up all their logical keywords. So, you need to do an interview. In the buyer persona interview, you're looking for long tail key phrases of things they actually care about.

So, gosh, this gets so deep. If you think about the last time you had a problem you wanted solved, you didn't start searching keywords for a service provider to solve your problem. You tried to solve it yourself. So, you were looking for do-it-yourself, and how-to, and what are the 10 things I need to know before I hire my first salesperson? That's a problem you had to solve.

So, at Sales BQ, I would be very smart if I was still serving that type of CEO to write an article and a series of content, audio, blog, video, webinar, training, written material, all around the 10 things

---

to do when hiring your first salesperson. Because that CEO, they're not looking for a sales trainer or consultant, which is what I used to be. They're not looking for that. They're not typing into Google, sales training, Denver. They're saying, how do I hire my first salesperson. So, you want to rank for that long tail key phrase, and you build content around that.

And what Google is doing, Google made a shift four or five years ago in the algorithm. And what they are looking for are sites, could be yours, that actually answer questions because they know today's buyer cares more about trying to solve the problem on their own and being educated versus find me a sales trainer or sales consultant in Denver. They're not looking for that anymore.

So, that's my advice to you. Do the interview. Get the long tail key phrase. Then, if you use a tool like SEMrush or Moz, you can actually type in on the back end all of your competitors' domains, the keywords you want to rank for. And you can see how your competitors are performing against keywords. And it will actually show you the overlap on your strategies.

And you want to go for the keywords your competitor is not. Or if you want to go head-to-head, go to that competitor's website. Look at their content strategy. Read what's on their website. Look at what they're doing in their content to rank for those keywords. And then, go all in to try to empty them and get the movement on the pages of Google on the search. But when you do that, I am telling you, it's the No. 1 strategy. And then, you align your paid search or paid social strategy to align with that.

And if you're not interested in going and paying for clicks and keywords, do a retargeting strategy. And once people come to your website based on the behavior on there, re-target to them so they see an ad for you in a different place. Or you can do it real strategically through LinkedIn, if you have a professional buyer. I could talk about this forever. But ultimately, once you're doing intersection with the buyer in their awareness phase is when they come into the funnel.

You can't then screw it up and have a really lousy website. Your website has to yield conversions. So, you need to go look at your website and you need to look at how many times you talk about your products and services and your company. And you need to completely flip it and rewrite it in your prospect's language. And it talks about the pains and problems that you solve. The greatest

---

thing you can do is help them realize that you understand their day in the life, emotionally connect with them.

They should have zero doubt in their mind. When they land on the webpage, they should say, I am in the right spot. And you're gonna have content that helps them answer their questions, solve their problems. And all of a sudden, you're building trust and credibility. And you get the inbound lead. You should have calls to action embedded through your website. You need to make sure that when they mouse up towards the X out, that the pop-out comes up on the screen. There's ways to look at their behavior and use on the website. You've got to get them to convert.

Then you have to make sure that you're responding to those inbound leads within two minutes, as fast as humanly possible. They should be your top priority when they come in. Get that person on the phone, get that meeting scheduled. Work them through the funnel as quickly as possible. But that inbound methodology is incredibly important to getting the funnel filled, and you can do it without a huge expense. You just have to make sure that all those pieces are working.

Jaime: Oh yes. So, I am super at the SEO, and I see so many people with a content strategy that does not include SEO in any – and I'm like social is gone. Putting out content for content's sake is done and a waste of energy. And so, I love that you were talking about this because it's not rocket science. And there are so many free courses and free tutorials on how to do SEO.

Mary: Yes.

Jaime: It's getting your stuff out there, and so, it's not that big of a deal. And so, learning that, though, can make it so that, like you said, you can actually back away. And you get leads. It's mind blowing. I also want to highlight one thing because when I went to your website, I wrote this down, because you're very good at what you do.

Yes, there is an exit pop on your website. So, you do what you say you're gonna do, which is great. But it says, solve revenue blocks. And I wrote that down because I was like, that's good. The headline matters so much. I know exactly what you do. That's the problem that I need solved. And so, I could totally tell you have spent so much time and energy in regards to this.

Mary: Thank you.

---

Jaime: Because I do website reviews. And I ask usually an audience, who is this for, what do they do? And people are like, huh. And then, what do you want to click on? And they're like, I don't – hmm.

Mary: It's amazing.

Jaime: I know. And again, this is why we're teachers, so we can help the people so that way, they don't have so much pain. But I can just tell you've been in for such a long time. You're like please, just do these basics. How long do you, especially for SEO and paid, how long do you really feel like until they can go, my inbound strategy actually feels good? You said about a year or so? Tell me a little more about that.

Mary: Yeah, it really just depends. The more competitive your space is and the less differentiated you are, the longer it takes. But for one of our clients, they were ranking on Page 1 in Google, and they had no ranking on any keyword. They were ranking on page 1 of Google within three months, and we established their inbound funnel without paid. Well, it was paid at first, and then we were able to pull it. So, it was really exciting to see that happen organic. But they're in a very innovative space. It's not very saturated. And so, their ability to differentiate is key.

And there just was very little competition for the keywords because the industry is only six years old. So, that's a great success story. But you look at some companies that we've worked with that are a lot more competitive and in saturated industries, to get it to the point where it's so predictable, consistent, high performing, and you're just flooded with inbound opportunities, yeah, you should probably estimate a year to where you can do that without any paid.

And I also believe that's about that time where if you took your foot off the gas and didn't produce eight new pieces of content a month and have your pillar pages broken out, and your e-books and white papers, and case studies, I mean content, content, content, content, it's a lot. It's a huge lift. It's a big commitment, but that stuff will be the gift that keeps on giving for a very long time.

Jaime: Then you don't have to hire a hunter who's gonna be a little emotional. And you have to pay a lot of money. So, you might as well set up a system that you don't have to touch.

---

Mary: Yeah.

Jaime: It's worth its weight in gold.

Mary: One of my CEOs said, he's like, you built a system that it doesn't matter who I plug in here at this point, he was like, I think I could even just hire a sales coordinator because the leads that are coming in are so qualified, and they're so ready, and there are so many of them that all they need is a guided conversation. And they're getting a presentation scheduled with capabilities. And they're closing. He said, I don't need that expensive salesperson anymore.

I use a sales coordinator, and then we'll team sell it internally. He said, you've built the system. I could plug anyone in there. That's how it should be for anybody. Salespeople are unpredictable. They're expensive. They're emotional. They over exaggerate on things. They're tough to manage. I said unpredictable. I'll say it twice. They're unpredictable. So, if you can build systems that you don't have to rely as heavily on having top sales performers, then you win.

Jaime: Yay. I know we have to start wrapping up, but I adore this. What is one action listeners can take this week to move them forward towards their goal of a million?

Mary: Yeah. Get customer centered. If you're not, the best person that will tell you what you should sell and how to sell it, is your customer. And the biggest thing that we fix for our clients out of the gate is their pride around their product and service and how much they think it solves the world's problems, but they've not done the exercise to ensure it's exactly how the customer wants it.

There's so much expense and investment that CEOs will make into trying to get people to be convinced to buy their product or service, when if you just revamp it slightly or adjust it or iterate and make it exactly what the market is asking for, people will be begging for it. That's called demand generation versus lead generation.

If you create a demand for what you have, it's the easiest thing in the whole world to sell. And sometimes, it's just a matter of a few tweaks or pivots in adjustments. It could even be keeping the exact same product or service, just completely changing the way that you talk about it. That one fix right there should open up the floodgates for your pipeline.

---

Jaime: And then, sales and revenue will be easier, and that's what everybody wants and they don't know how to get. So, thank you so much for explaining that. Where can we find more about you online?

Mary: You can find me at marygrothe.com. You can find me on LinkedIn, Mary Grothe Instagram, and Twitter. And Sales BQ is gonna go through a big rebrand here. So, you can definitely hit salesbq.com and you'll see the new company name revealed soon.

Jaime: Awesome. Thank you so much for coming on the show today.

Mary: Thank you.

**[End of Audio]**

**Duration: 44 minutes**