

Lou Diamond: We need to fail 70 some odd percent of the time. I stay that again, we need to fail because we don't win everything. In fact, that's probably statistically true in sales that the best salespeople probably hit three out of 10 just like those best baseball players are hitting 300. So we need to fail. So we have to throw stuff out that we do not want to work. So why would we waste our time trying to throw a net and grab people that aren't going to be the ones we want to do business with, but go with the ones who really do.

Robert Glazer: Welcome to Elevate, a podcast about achievement, personal growth, and pushing limits in leadership and life. I'm Robert Glazer and I chat with world class performers who have committed to elevating their own life, pushing the limits of their capacity and helping others to do the same.

Robert Glazer: Welcome to The Elevate Podcast. Our quote for today is from Lewis House and it is one of the most powerful networking practices is to provide immediate value to a new connection. Our guest today Lou Diamond is a leading expert on making an instant deep connection with others described as the master connector. He works with top performers in strengthening sales, relationship management, business development and executive coaching. Lou's keynote presentation Connect To Thrive has been viewed by audiences worldwide and inspires leaders to build deeper, more mutually beneficial connections. Lou is also the CEO of Thrive and host of The Thrive Loud Podcast. Lou, welcome. I'm excited to have you join us on The Elevate Podcast today.

Lou Diamond: Robert, I am equally as excited to be here. Very fun times ahead in the next 30 or so minutes for your listeners I think.

Robert Glazer: Yes. And you know, so I'm always interested when people don't have a paint by number career to ask them how is it that you got your start and then sort of what led you to this vocation?

Lou Diamond: Robert, I like to tell people I was put on this planet to work with the most amazing people and help them thrive through connecting.

Robert Glazer: All right. That is something you probably didn't realize till later. So what, I'm not going to let you get away with that. What were you like as a kid? What did you study? Like what was your first job? Give me a little bit of sense of the progression.

Lou Diamond: The way I can say this is I have always been a very social person. I have always been one to love to work with people and I got just about all the learnings that you could ever get in one's life working in my father's retail jewelry store in downtown Brooklyn, New York city. This was in a store that was 60 feet by nine feet and stuffed people in everyday. People coming in to buy something that they didn't necessarily need. It was something that maybe that they wanted. So having the ability to connect with people very quickly was something I learned at a really young age, kind of put me to work pretty early, to put extra staff

onboard. So growing up in New York city, you kind of grow up a little faster than most people anyway. You get exposed to a lot of things at an early age.

Lou Diamond: But I'll also say it enables you to learn how to relate to people. Be a quick judge of what someone's about, know your surroundings, empathize with others. And it's something that I loved doing yet I always wanted to do more. And when I went through college and then wanted to understand what it was like to work in, I'm putting this in quotes, the corporate world Robert, I recognized that what I really wanted to do is connect with companies and understand what those cultures were about. And in doing that I loved seeing as many different things as possible. I found a real niche in financial services for a while and that's why I worked on Wall Street for a very long time and there I was just connecting with specific clients and what their needs were. It all came ringing, I guess to a point for all those years of customer service, connecting with others, being a top sales performer, all those years because that's what I was always doing.

Lou Diamond: I was always selling something and trying to close and get strong relationships. And I realized that the way that I did things was a little bit different than the way that everyone was telling you how to do things. And it was very effective. So I realized maybe I have to have other people recognize what it's about. It's not about how much money you're bringing or what the art of the sale is. What it really is is that importance of understanding and communicating how to connect with others first. Because once you do that, it's not just making one sale, it's making sales over and over and over again with trusted partners. That theory carries over into so many different businesses, not just in selling and closing and hitting your revenue targets. It's important on that front.

Lou Diamond: It's also important to connecting your message and how what your voice is and how to get that out and it's very important to work as a leader to connect with your people. So it turned out that these skills that I'd been honing since I was really, really young, have been something that I know can be brought out of others. I love unleashing superpowers Robert, and that's kind of what I do when I speak and that's what I do when I work with companies and solve these problems as a consultant. And it's fun every day to try and really figure out ways that you can bring these things together because when you bring stuff together, you truly do thrive.

Robert Glazer: I'm curious, I'm going to test the theory. I might get this right or wrong, but were you disruptive in class as a kid?

Lou Diamond: Not always. I'd say as I got maybe a little older I was, I think I'd say I was a little bit of a smart alec, maybe you know.

Robert Glazer: Did your report cards say he's talking to his friends too much? I ask because I find that people who demonstrate these strong social skills find that a lot of times that they were not rewarded or discouraged in the traditional academic environment.

Lou Diamond: I was always a really, I was a hard working student, but I certainly did love to have fun. I think I liked maybe getting in the last word every now and then, that type of attitude. I had a couple of teachers who didn't like me because I was so chatty and tried to be a little bit of a wise ass. But for the most part I think the thing that would shine through about this is that my general intention was always to have the best intentions in whatever I was doing. Even the people I met with, I liked making friends. I liked having a large social. I wasn't one of those kids that had like one or two really, really close friends and there was nobody else. I was friends with a lot of different people. So I would say that aspect of me growing up in the school was probably more prevalent when I was young than just being the chitty chatty talkie kid.

Robert Glazer: So you were successful in selling without selling. So where did you develop your style from? Was it something that you learned or was it something you had heard somewhere else and adapted? And really, what was it? How did it manifest itself in your work?

Lou Diamond: So I combine it from two fronts. One, I'll go back to my father who was still the best salesperson I've ever seen, mostly because he is one of the most likable people you ever run into. I can never find anyone that has ever disliked my father. And that likability, fortunately I inherited some of those traits from him in the way that I am. But I think I paired it also with really sharp preparedness. I loved going into meetings, really knowing everything I needed to know. But also what I learned from my father and from many others in the industry is how important it is to ask really good questions. And to never assume that you can tell someone what they need. You need to ask them what they really want. So that pairing together of having a real likable persona with really good understanding and research and preparedness behind him, because you can't cut yourself short in that understanding that, thrown in with the skills of asking questions puts the onus on the person that you're talking to, to start opening up and providing you with information so that you can better connect with.

Robert Glazer: Yeah, we talk a lot about our business on the why or understanding the intent behind the request or the question. Can you remember a question that really changed the whole context of a discussion or just it wasn't what someone was expecting and it totally flipped the whole thing 180 degrees?

Lou Diamond: Yeah, and it was funny. I think I had danced around it. I'm going to give credit to a colleague and a friend, Phil M Jones, who really hit it laser hard because I love the way it's worded and that is what is the problem you solve? It's really funny but when you're working with as a consultant and helping someone to get their message across and helping them to get their voice out and connect that message. The first time I ever heard the answer for what that was, what are the problem you solve? Gets people to really dive deep into understanding how they fix something. I was working with this technology company Robert, that has an amazing voice technology. It's incredible. It's on the forefront and we'll keep their name out of it just for this show here. However, what they're doing is

changing the way that we're going to buy and sell things really, really, in the real near future, effectively using your voice.

Lou Diamond: And what was interesting was trying to determine what the problem that it was solving was initially. And once we clearly understood that, we can direct the whole messaging to that. And the problem in today's world, just to think about where this voice company is going is you're going to be able to use your phone to purchase everything much faster, much faster than we have, as opposed to using our little fingers on those little screens that are hard to see and difficult to navigate and much harder to type. So this voice company recognized that the biggest problem they solved was that you don't have to type anymore in that stupid little phone to buy something. When you think about how powerful that question is, when you drill down what that purpose is, people understand exactly what it is that you do and they know how that works.

Lou Diamond: So what I'm always trying to figure out is what someone's problem is. What they're trying to fix, how you can help make them fix it better. So I think out of all the questions that I've ever heard, that's the one that always just gets you, because when you know the answer to that, it's like a clear path to the end zone.

Robert Glazer: So is that always your opening question?

Lou Diamond: No, no. It's not.

Robert Glazer: No. Okay. I guess it depends on the context, right?

Lou Diamond: It depends on the context. And I say if it's a consulting issue and help ... In the three prongs of what I help people connect with, whether it's their sales, their marketing, or their leadership, it's the marketing one which is getting your voice and your message out. And that is the question I would ask always. But in those other regards, it's really understanding your people or understanding your customers, what their needs are. It used to be what keeps you up at night or what your pain point is, but those don't really matter as much as trying to dig a little bit down into what someone is currently going through at that moment.

Lou Diamond: We're all about being in the moment, Robert right? But priorities change every single day for what is the top thing on your list. I work with sales teams and one of the things that I joke about all the time is you ever go to those sales meetings and they keep repeating here are my biggest opportunities right now. And if I compared it from week one, two and three would all be the same. What is different every week though is your priorities and what you need to focus on immediately that day. What are the biggest things that you need help with and then where do you need help?

Lou Diamond: So one of the things that I'll end up doing is ask, "What is your top priorities right now and where is help needed most?" Because that's actually what we're

all trying to do. We are not salespeople. If you're a sales person and we're trying to offer business development services. Actually what we're really are professional helpers and we're trying to help people achieve their goals.

Robert Glazer: When you first meet someone you're interested in building connection with personally or professionally, what are the best ways to start building a relationship from the start?

Lou Diamond: It's funny you should ask that because I just gave a presentation to the selection committee of this event that I'm going to be speaking at and they selected me to do it and they had a choice from what to choose from and we spoke about what their needs were. How do you start connecting with someone? And I like to say you want to connect your voice, and voice is an acronym, V-O-I-C-E. And each one of those steps that you start out by really understanding the vision of what your purpose is for connecting. That's the V in voice, V-O-I-C-E. The V is the vision. If you imagine yourself entering a situation and you know you're trying to grow your network or you want to have someone added into your world, what you really have to understand is what is the potential if that person is in your world? And that's the vision that you have to see for what having a relationship and a connection with that person can bring you or more importantly, bring them.

Lou Diamond: A lot of times we go in selfishly into a room and we try and say, "Hey, listen, I really know that that's a key client. If I add that client to my list, how valuable that's going to be to our business. We get them, that's going to be half our revenue number. My nut is done and we're finished." You can go in with that and really great offerings and stuff like that will work.

Lou Diamond: But the truth is if you flip that around and you understand, if I'm engaged with that person, what do they gain from it and can I connect with that message to them? That's the vision of what I have to start thinking about. So believe it or not, when you go to connect with someone, you have to go in with a game plan and figure out how you can help them. That's the first thing you try to do. And if you go in with that mindset Robert, the potential, it doesn't become about you trying to feel like you've won or lost. What you're actually trying to do is figure out how you're helping somebody else and it's such a better way to approach something.

Robert Glazer: And let me ask you the opposite. So we have a lot of automation these days. We have a lot of people doing I think low quality things at scale because the tools are out there to do it. How do you respond in disarming someone or saying to someone who on the reverse side who just comes in transaction, not understanding what you want, trying to sell you something that say, "Hey, kind of back off."

Lou Diamond: Robert. You mean like the 6,000 in mail-

Robert Glazer: Yeah. That would be one example that I would ... yes, one of many.

Lou Diamond: It goes into my component about being likable and prepared. One time I received one of those LinkedIn messages Robert, and it was so great. It said, we understand that you're one of the largest businesses in the state of Wyoming. And I started recognizing that this guy must've mistakenly put me on the wrong list, but I found the ... I've been to Wyoming, I've actually spoken in Wyoming, but I certainly don't do business in the state of Wyoming. And I remembered saying how comical it was that here was somebody technically who incorrectly sent me something. How do we deal with all these distractions and things that actually disconnect us from them, right? Because it's nonstop. If I have to subscribe to another mailing list Robert, I'm going to jump out the window. Please don't take offense that as I went on your website and said, "No, I didn't to be on it."

Lou Diamond: But because here's what it is, right? If you establish a relationship with someone in person and when you recognize you can't always do that upfront. And there are all these devices, our phones, our emails, our sooner will be shut and wired into our brains on ways that we can communicate with one another. I think it's important to recognize how valuable that communication is at the right time. I find it really rude and insulting the people are telling me that this is a service that I need when I receive something versus flipping that around and asking me, "Is this something that's appropriate?" Because here's what I can't stand. We need to fail 70 some odd percent of the time. I stay that again, we need to fail because we don't want everything. In fact, that's probably statistically true in sales that the best sales people probably hit three out of 10 just like those best baseball players are hitting 300. So we need to fail. So we have to throw stuff out that we do not want to work.

Lou Diamond: So why would we waste our time trying to throw a net and grab people that aren't going to be the ones we want to do business with, but go with the ones who really do. So instead basically saying, "These are the things that we're actually offering. What we'd like to know from you, is there something you want to hear more about? Is this something that's in your avenue? Because we don't want to bother you otherwise." I would love someone to send me a cold communication in that regard because then I could opt out, which is a win for them. Because me opting out means they don't have to spend any more money or energy or the six followup messages where they say, "Hey, I know you received our earlier in mail message that said we would love you to help with this." Right? It would be better for them to get to know faster, Robert.

Lou Diamond: This is what we need to do. We need to get to know faster because then we can get to the wins even more faster and focus on those. So all the communications that we have, if they were more direct in asking us what we want as opposed to telling us, we would be such a better place. And it also wouldn't waste so much of our time in our junk mails, and then we'd want to subscribe. When someone opts in to learn more about you and proactively says, "I want to hear more. I want to get connected." That's someone who's chosen to go in. It doesn't

matter how many listeners you have on this podcast, if you have thousands of listeners, you marketed the hell out of it and all these people clicked subscribe or they got some free offer. If you had a small niche group that were just your clients and the ones who wanted to do business with you, that would be a perfect world of listening, right?

Robert Glazer: Absolutely.

Lou Diamond: So we want to get to those that want to engage with us, that want to have a community with us. That want to interact and transact with us. Get to that faster by eliminating the ones that don't want to be there.

Robert Glazer: All right, well, we're going to take a quick break for word from our sponsors and we'll be right back with Lou. Whenever I'm doing an interview and someone asks me about the best productivity tool I use, my answer is SaneBox. I've been using SaneBox for four years and cannot manage my email without it. SaneBox artificial intelligence monitors your inbox and moves email you don't need to read right away to your sane later folder. All that's left in your inbox is the important stuff. You can also snooze emails and have them come back to you in your inbox at the right time. If you know how email folders work, then you know how SaneBox works. Find an email in the wrong folder, just move it. There's nothing to learn, nothing to install. SaneBox works directly with every single email server or service that's ever been created. Get a free two week trial and a \$25 credit by visiting [sanebox.com/elevate](https://sanebox.com/elevate) that's S-A-N-E B-O-X.com/elevate.

Robert Glazer: And we're back with Lou Diamond. So Lou, over the past several years there's definitely been a rise, I think in the distrust people have for one another. We seem to be getting into these camps on each issue. Given that your approach is building trust with connections, how do you overcome when you know that there is an inherent barrier in place? Everyone can do their research, right? They can see where someone stands, what they've been talking about otherwise. Now you're going to need to build a connection with someone who you know has fundamentally different views and approaches than you and maybe very entrenched in that. Any specific strategies or tactics in those cases?

Lou Diamond: Brutal honesty and addressing the 800 pound gorillas in the room very quickly. I think it's so important that we not harp on our differences but appreciate them faster. If I knew right away that someone was, I don't like talking politics as a way of separating, but I'll use it as a common thing. If someone was maybe more conservative versus someone more liberal, what we've always found is just understanding that that's where they're at and then hearing their perspective is always really important. It also can gauge the type of communication you might want to have with someone. I've noted that if you do that faster and you recognize and explain who you are, what you're about. I'm not one of those that will not do business with someone because they're so in one direction. I'm pretty open with that.

Lou Diamond: In fact, I need all those bits of information because it's not their views necessarily that I'm always trying to connect with. In some instances it might be, I'll use an example in a second. But in most cases it's important because it's a way of communicating that's going to help you connect faster and be a perspective. And if we recognize those differences right out of the gate and we address them on how we want to interact with people, it could make the communication more direct and not necessarily offend somebody. And I don't think in business it happens as often as we think. I think people are willing to try to figure out how to help one another. I'll use a good example though. I've done some business in the past with Chick-fil-A. Chick-fil-A I think you know this, they're closed universally on Sundays because it's a fairly Christian religious organization and that's what they do. And they are a wonderful company to work for.

Lou Diamond: They have an unbelievable high rate of employees that are there. Now I am not Christian and I've done plenty of business with Chick-fil-A. I don't think we might not agree on the same religious views, but yet we do understand each other's purpose and respect them for that. I noted this specifically as they one time had asked if I could actually present to one of their teams on a day that was a holiday in my religion. And it turned out that I couldn't do that and I remembered feeling a little bad about it because my initial thought was that they wouldn't be able to understand it because it was something that wasn't in their priority. When I started to mention it, they knew immediately, oh my goodness, I totally knew that and forgot that that was that particular holiday. No issues whatsoever, but we had addressed it earlier on because it was something that came up. I think in those instances we can connect faster by recognizing that as opposed to dancing around it or walking on eggshells and being afraid to say those things.

Robert Glazer: Right. If you think it's going to be an elephant in the room, you're saying get it out there earlier rather than getting around to it later.

Lou Diamond: I had an instance a long time ago where I spoke in an area, Utah and I learned this the hard way. I now when I speak have ground rules and I ask the permission of everyone in the group what, these are the ground rules, we're okay with them along the lines of like Vegas rules, what happens in the conference room stays here. But one of the other ones I always bring up has to do with language and I put it with a question mark. Because I do come from Brooklyn, New York and I do tend to maybe drop some words that are inappropriate. And in that particular client instance, I didn't do those ground rules ahead of time and I said something that really wasn't that offensive to me but was very offensive to this individual.

Lou Diamond: When that happened, I recognized that was my fault for not addressing that that might come out of me. Because what had happened there was that the person felt offended by it, but if I had explained that in the beginning, it would have enabled me to connect them faster and they would have been much more appropriate to be aware that that would be offensive.



Robert Glazer: I really like the ground rules idea and I've seen some speakers and some good facilitators do that every time. And it also just, it's disarming, right? In terms of it like if I say something, if we talk about this, here's how you can handle it. If you need to get up, you can leave, I think that's something we could all remember to do a little more and remember who our audience is.

Lou Diamond: And companies and groups and teams can do that too. It's really important. Those are the things as you work together with others, you are connecting with them and you want to make sure that you're incorporating the values that are important to them in your world when you're doing that. That's so important right from the get go. And it's early, early is important, not do it and then apologize later. Recognize where those issues might come up in front and then you'll keep moving forward.

Robert Glazer: So can you tell me a story or do you have a circumstance when it just didn't work? So you reached out, you tried to connect, the other just shut down. They're kind of like, "No, just tell me the number." like they were pushing you to be transactional. And I guess how did you handle that situation or in that example, like how did it end up?

Lou Diamond: So there was a, it comes to my mind is this was not a client of mine. This was my client's client and I was helping them with a lot of the sales calls, almost being like a sales coach, for lack of a better word in certain instances. This particular service that they offered was some form of unique accounting service that everybody needs to have because of certain rules and laws. And at the end of the day, the end client really just cared about how expensive the service was. All the other services that were being provided, any consulting or personal relationships or any of that stuff, truth be told was just minor to the [inaudible 00:24:40] all price. It was all about what the number was. And here we were trying to establish the value that we would be getting without having to talk about price. Now here's the irony.

Lou Diamond: The irony was, is that we didn't want to lead with the price because we didn't want them to think that this was the only thing that they would be getting with us because we didn't want to be considered transactional. We wanted to show the value. And they said, "Can you just cut to the chase and get to where the price was?" And we gave the price and where it was and they said, "Okay, we'll get back to you." And we thought it was a lost deal. And I actually remembered reporting it back. Well meanwhile it turned out this offering was the lowest price that was out there and they came back and they said to us, "No, I'm sorry. Listen, we're not going to work with you." And we said, "Well did you find a price that was better from where that was? Because that's obviously our concern."

Lou Diamond: And the reality was no. They were happy with who they were working with. They just wanted this low price to be able to use it as leverage to go back to their existing provider and get the pricing for them. What I remember there was here with someone that did not want to connect with us at all. All they wanted

was that information. And I made a comment as part of the time and effort that we went down this road is part of the questions that should be asked early on is exactly that. Are you happy with who your provider is and is price just the concern? Well we'd like to see that price lower. Okay, well that's not what we're going to be about. If you're going to use that as leverage, we don't want to have this conversation. That would have helped in the process going forward. So the failure was us not doing our job in the beginning to ask all the right questions that would've got us to the answer faster.

Robert Glazer: Yeah, that's a really good point because look, one of our values as an organization is embrace relationships. And frankly, the clients who have come to us and they're in the beginning and they're in the prospecting, so I guess not clients. The prospects that have come to us and they're all dollars and cents and they're transactional and they just seem like they will be not the type of people we want to work with. Like these are actually the people we probably shouldn't work with.

Lou Diamond: Bingo. And that's it. So flip it around to whether it's you're meeting someone, whether you're dating someone, whether you're just trying to connect, merge two companies together in the spirit of connection. If you can't find that common ground where you're going to have a strong connection and value each other from both of those sides, why bother to partner within that connection? So there's an example. Like you're not going to connect with everyone. You're going to fail most of the time. It's finding the ones you do connect with and making those valuable.

Robert Glazer: Right. And then a lot of businesses need to be aware of this RFP trap, right? Where a lot of these big companies are required probably like the case you're talking about to RFP three or four firms against the incumbent every couple of years. We've been to these pitches, we get five days notice to spend \$5,000 to fly a team out there to be at the thing. And the no communication otherwise follow the process. And you get a sense before you even left that, oh, that was just a goat rodeo. That was all about validating the current provider. They're not even looking to make a change. And I think we've tried to get better at snuffing those out and say, "Look, if you're not even willing to talk to us or we can talk to someone on the team. Like we're not flying everyone out there in three days to meet with you."

Lou Diamond: Would you like a statistic Robert that your listeners will love?

Robert Glazer: Yes. Particularly if it's RFPs because everyone-

Lou Diamond: Yes. Yeah. Here it is. So 89% of the RFPs, if you receive an RFP and you're asked to fill it out, 89% of the time you're going to lose. Okay. The numbers change if your client asks you to help them build the RFP because you're the existing one that you're working with and you have over a 60% chance of winning, probably something close to 65. But when a proposal comes out, I actually worked with one company and one of the strategies that we came up with was that we do

not answer RFPs ever. The general idea is this, is that the purpose of these requests for proposal for these larger organizations which they think is going to try to help us, we understand that this is just bureaucracy at its best.

Lou Diamond: And we already know we're dealing with someone that's coming up with a process. They're looking for people who want to work with them and ask to work with them, not being told how they should work with them. So going back to my whole ask first tell thing is recognize that those connections are made when you're asked. And those are the ones that you want to keep on both sides. So in those instances where someone tells you how they want to work with you, flip it around and say, "Is that how you really want to be worked with?"

Robert Glazer: So that is an absolute rule. I assume it's different if it's the current vendor.

Lou Diamond: Yeah. The current I told you was close to, if you're the current one, usually they're asking you to help you.

Robert Glazer: But if you get one out of the blue, irrespective of if the team wants to talk to you, not talk to you, have a meeting, get to know you.

Lou Diamond: You've got a one in 10 chance of winning.

Robert Glazer: But they just developed a 0% ... Look it's interesting. I've been thinking about article on this and drafting it because I think a lot of people manage by exceptions and I think the great organizations and sports coaches and otherwise and professional gamblers play the odds. So people might point to that one, one that they ... one one that they won RFP and not count the cost of the 90% of the time that they lose and understanding that it's like a net zero gain for them.

Lou Diamond: It is. It's so unbelievable and this is by the way, this came from work. I worked in consulting for a very long time at Deloitte and saw those numbers and then I got to see it on the other end in working in financial services when we looked at other players and recognize the reason that you're asking for the RFP is to make the process synchronized so that you're dealing with similar responses and you're not comparing apples to oranges. You're trying to compare everything as close as you can. However, the reality is that certain organizations are meant to work with other organizations. And when they know there's a change, usually what happens is the following.

Lou Diamond: They just fire that other firm because they've messed up and the connection has been, the relationship has gone so far astray that they won't actually do the full RFP to bring in another person. What they will do is they'll go out and they will have actively recruited those that they want and that's asking someone to do the business with you versus here, here's an RFP, fill this out and go with it. I had filled out so many RFPs and proposals in my life I started tracking the stats and I started to say you don't win. So therefore why bother?

Robert Glazer: Or the bigger trick is you win, right? So you win one for \$200,000 9% of the time and that keeps you playing a game that has a 90% loss. I think that even the more danger in it is because all those other ones had a cost.

Lou Diamond: Yep. Most of the speaking gigs that I get, like there is sort of a proposal process but you don't know it. They're asking you for certain information and it goes to a committee table and when you start doing the math, like I one time was told that I didn't win a speaking gig because a man spoke at the previous year's conference and there was no way they were going to not have a woman at this particular event. What I remembered saying was along the lines of, "All right, well how about for next year because next year you're not going to want to have another woman back to back. Could I book the date and be available?" But also think about it beforehand. Recognize in going in, hey, what's the likelihood of me getting a chance to win this? You could ask that question. You could totally ask that question and you know that the real players, they might come in and go, "Look, we're going out to a whole bunch of firms." That should be a negative.

Lou Diamond: We have to go through this process because it has to approve lots of different groups and budgets, another negative. And we're looking at a two month timeframe before we get to the end of this. Great, why do I want to waste my time or worry about it? Or if I'm able to do something canned and quick and it's a quick response, I don't want to have to put that in my pipeline to say that there's a likelihood. What I actually do is anytime an RFP is put together by any sales organization and I'm working with that sales team in the RFP, we put down as 10%. The likelihood of it happening is 10%. And then we feel like we won the lottery if we get it. But that's the initiative and effort that we should into it. This is fun, right? I like this conversation.

Robert Glazer: It is and I'm going to flip discussion totally on you as we start to wrap up here, because I'm really curious on your opinion on something else. So a lot of what you focus on being connected and one of the things in building real relationships I'm fascinated by is that even though the younger generations are connected more by technology than ever to other people, all the studies coming out say they're lonely or in fact I just read one that said like 20% of millennials said they have like no friends at all. So have you seen this at all? Are you seeing sort of generational differences in the work that you do and the willingness for someone to sort of reach out or want to connect super socially? And what can we do about this both within the work context and outside?

Lou Diamond: So I have two thoughts on this. There is a difference in the way the generations do act. I will say it's important to know that this is all coachable and fixable things. It's not like, oh, they're permanently stuck because of when they were born.

Robert Glazer: They're broken.

Lou Diamond: There are some behaviors that each one of us elder generations can learn from younger generations and be able to benefit from many of the things, ways you can use the technology to expedite things, but also recognize the importance of connecting in person. To your point about the depression thing, that's really in the loneliness part, sorry for saying depression, but feeling lonely. If you think about the way they ... I don't know how old you, Robert how old are you?

Robert Glazer: I am 43 I think. You know you stop counting when you're in those in between.

Lou Diamond: Okay. I'm not quite yet 50 but I'm really close and what I will tell you is that you and I grew up in a generation of speaking on the phone. As we're podcasting here, which is basically like talking on the phone, we would actually have laughed if you would've told me at 16 years old that when I was on the phone with some girl named Jennifer that that was actually job training. But I actually was learning to converse and connect with people because the phone and video chats and podcasts like this and these interviews formats is two way communication. A lot of those devices are as amazing as they are, are really just one way communication, texts, email, even the Snapchat component. It's not like live feeds. They're sending pictures off and they're off there. So they're still not really having two way chats and conversation in those environments.

Lou Diamond: So there's something, and I'm not a data psycho or sociologist to be able to pull this stuff together, but what I can tell you from observation is I think that's part of it, is the one way communication that's caused a lot of this. I actually speak about this in connecting on how to let these devices not divide us because they've disconnected us. I've got a couple of rules about how you're supposed to use text, email, phone calls, in person meetings. A lot of that art craft has been lost. You know, these devices are incredible, but it seems we've lost the user manuals for them. Like when we get those texts messages that are six screens long because somebody wrote a really big bubble, which should be in an email and emails that are too long that we scroll through them and phone calls that really should be in person meetings after a certain point in time.

Lou Diamond: So knowing how to navigate that is really important because if you use these devices effectively, you can use them as aides to connect you faster. Not any, just like we're getting those inappropriate LinkedIn in mail messages which kind of push us away. All these ways that we can communicate and connect can actually bring the generations together even faster. It's never going to be easy. Nothing and I repeat nothing can substitute in person meeting, but we can't do that all the time. What's done a really good job is the way that we just began our conversation before we went to audio only was we got to see one another. Being able to understand and see and react and have that two way communication is so important and I stress that every day.

Lou Diamond: If you have those organizations that email just every single thing that they do and they are two feet away from each other and they can just have a quick conversation and resolve it, that's part of connecting. So all of that can be resolved Robert and all of it can be done in ways that bring us together, not

push us apart. Just know that that's the goal of what these devices were meant to do. Don't use them against the purpose of what they were meant to support.

Robert Glazer: Wise wisdom. All right. Last question for you, and this can be a singular or repeated, but what is a personal or professional mistake that you've made that you've learned the most from?

Lou Diamond: Can I get both?

Robert Glazer: Yeah, the extra credit.

Lou Diamond: Okay. I'll give a professional is to not laser focus soon enough. I think I tried to go too wide of a net. When you talk about connecting, my general theory was, well, anyone can talk about connecting. They all need to learn to do it, but in the way that I do it, which is really in that business marketing leadership buckets for certain types of companies, financial services, marketing and professional services, that's my niche. Those pieces, those are really smart people who you need to connect a little bit better. I don't go off and do construction, but I will do real estate professional sales people, they're awesome. They're always in rooms together. That's one of the things that, and the professional thing is when you know your lane, stick it and stay in it and swerving doesn't necessarily get you there any faster.

Lou Diamond: So that would be my professional lesson was probably trying to go too wide as opposed to picking that narrow lane. And personally, I don't think it's a mistake, but I think we can get so bogged down in work and things that it is really important to know where your core is. My core is my family, my wife, my kids, my parents and siblings, one step away from my immediate family. That's where everything for me matters. Spending any time with my family is way more important than just randomly going off and doing a cool speaking gig further away or whatever. So to make sure that my priorities are always aligned that way, I think I've always had that and necessarily haven't made the mistake, but trust me when I have to choose between the two, sometimes it's hard. I want to be in a position where I'm always choosing what I love.

Robert Glazer: Good answer and I'm sure your family would agree with it as well. And Lou, where can people find more about you and your work?

Lou Diamond: So everywhere in social media you can find me at thrive loud, T-H-R-I-V-E L-O-U-D. And thriveloud.com is the website where you can learn all about my company Thrive. And you probably can also find a little bit more about loudiamond.net which I think is linked to all of that. So thriveloud.com, loudiamond.net. And of course listen to the Thrive Loud Podcast where it all happens, where we're connecting you to those that are thriving in their lives, their businesses, and their passions each and every day.

Robert Glazer: All right, well Lou thank you for sharing your story with us. There's probably no greater skill that people need today than building authentic connections with others and I really appreciate your expert input on this important topic.

Lou Diamond: Robert, truly enjoyed the conversation. A lot of fun, got me thinking and I hope your listeners appreciated it.

Robert Glazer: Great. Well, to our listeners, thanks for tuning in to The Elevate Podcast today. We'll include links to Lou and his work on the detailed episode page [robertglazer.com](http://robertglazer.com). If you enjoyed today's episode, I'd like to ask a huge favor and that is to leave us a review as it helps new users discover the show. If you're listening in Apple podcasts, you can just select the library icon, click on elevate, and scroll down to the bottom to leave your review. It only takes about 10 to 20 seconds. If you're listening on a different app, you can find links to different reviews on the podcast page at [robertglazer.com](http://robertglazer.com). Thank you again for your support, and until next time, keep elevating.