**TBP 198 Edited\_Transcription**

[Daniel Hill] (0:05 - 24:08)

Welcome to the Blueprint Podcast. In these episodes, I'm going to share with you my life's work boiled down into simple blueprints that I used to build a 10 million pound portfolio and retire with financial independence at the age of 35. You can listen to these podcasts in any order, and I guarantee you that when you execute them in practice, you will see that success and failure are both very predictable.

Let's get into the next blueprint. In business, you find there are only two categories of people. There are those that are easy to do business with, and there are those that are easy to fall out with.

I can honestly say that there's probably less than a dozen people that I've known through my whole business career that fall into the category of being genuinely easy to do business with. The majority of people at one extreme or the other fall into the category of being challenging to do business with, and in most cases, actually easy to fall out with. In this podcast, I'm going to take you through what it requires to move from the category of the masses who can be quite challenging to do business with into the very select chosen few that are easy to do business with.

If you're easy to do business with, you will get the best deals, you will get the best opportunities, you will work with the best people, and by default, you will actually end up making the most money, but the reality is the majority of people will never get there. I'm going to take you through what you need to be and how you need to do it. The sobering reality is that in business, there's two categories of people.

There's those that are easy to do business with, and there's those that are easy to fall out with. If I'm completely honest, in my whole professional career, I would say there's less than a dozen people I've met, known, liked, and trusted who fall into the category of being genuinely easy to do business with. If you're somebody who's easy to do business with, you will find you get the best opportunities, you work with the best people, and by default, you actually make the best money, but the reality is for lots of reasons that we'll explore in this episode, the majority of people do not fall into that category, and for one reason or another, actually fall outside of that and are not necessarily the easiest to do business with. One of the biggest challenges in business is that we're human beings, that we have personal challenges, agendas, initiatives, and emotions, and what we're going to look at in this podcast is how we can use those, understand them, and leverage them to be somebody that is easy to do business with, attracts the best people, and goes out there, does the best deals, and makes the most money. As we go into this episode, one of the things you'll notice that at a high level, a big part of this is about how you approach your business, how you approach your relationships, how you approach your transactions, your negotiations, and how you actually go out there and do deals.

At the headline and the extreme, obviously there's lots of different ways that you can do this. What I tend to find is the people that are easy to do business with are people that focus on the business and the economics, whereas where it can be more challenging to do business with people, they tend to focus more on the personal and the emotional. Now, in business, the reality is you need all of that to enable a business, a culture, a community, an organization to work, but practically, if you want to work at the top of the pile, you do need certain skills and attributes that enable you to move away from the personal and the emotional into the business and economics.

I'm going to take you through just a high-level overview of these in the hope that it progresses you more towards somebody that's easy to do business with rather than somebody that's perhaps easier to fall out with. Now, there's a whole spectrum of this, and what I'm saying here is at the extreme, there's a very small, less than a dozen people that I know, that I've met over the last 20 years, who I would say are genuinely easy to do business with. I look at a deal, and I sit down with them, have a conversation, I do a deal with them, and they fall into this category, and it really is that sort of top 1%.

It's very business, it's very strategic, it's very professional, it's very logical, as you'll start to see. The reality, though, is most people will fall outside of that, and what I'm saying here is that not everybody is then going to be... If you're not easy to do business with, not everybody then is easy to fall out with.

I'm saying that to sort of exaggerate the sentiment, but in some capacity, most people fall into the other side of it, where certain characteristics, certain traits, certain attitudes, energies, approaches, in my experience, in the deals that I've done, make it harder to do the best deals and get to the best outcome. So a lot of this is about logic versus emotion. It's about business versus personal.

It's about economics rather than emotional, and I'm going to take you through the characteristics. So if you want to be someone that's easy to do business with, in my experience, speaking from the relationships that I have, I would say the first thing is being pragmatic. So pragmatic means you're not necessarily looking at the contract, you're looking at the context.

So there might be a clause or a term, and a lot of people will take that and beat people around the head with it, whereas if you look pragmatically at the situation, yes, this is a contract, this is a term, this is the agreement, but being pragmatic just means looking at the bigger picture, being pragmatic, being realistic, looking at the whole terrain, not just the technicality. And just having a pragmatic approach is actually very rare in business. There's very few people that I know that have a pragmatic approach to doing deals and doing business.

The second is dynamic thinking. If you want to be at the top of the pile, you need to have that ability in a meeting or a negotiation or a challenge or a relationship to be dynamic and think about not just black and white, what happens in the gray, or not just this is a problem, how do you dynamically find a solution? They tend to have that dynamic thinking ability where they're looking outside the box, they're looking for solutions, angles, ways to make things work, not just, oh, we've got a problem, this isn't going to work, this is the issue, black and white loggerheads.

It's just very pragmatic, it's very dynamic, very logical thinkers. The people I find I do deals with, they're just very logical thinkers. They understand, well, this seems logical.

One of the questions I'll often ask a lot when someone says, oh, yeah, but we need to apply this because they've read it in a book or for some reason, this needs to be considered or discussed or raised or incorporated. I'll often say, well, where's the logic in that? Can you tell me the logic?

Where's the logic? Oh, because we've always done that or because so-and-so says we have to do that. Yeah, but where's the logic?

Oh, but this is a general rule of thumb. Everybody normally charges this, but where's the logic? How does that apply to the conversation we're having?

We're not just plucking things out of thin air. It's logical, dynamic, pragmatic thinking. Mature, just being a very mature person.

You're just approaching things maturely, professionally, like an adult, not getting upset or offended. It doesn't mean you can't have challenges and have disputes. Of course, I have some fantastic disputes, challenges, negotiations with people, but it's done it on a mature level where it's not about being immature or proving a point or sucking your thumb in the corner.

It's a mature, pragmatic, intelligent, strategic, logical conversation. It's very different to what you'd expect in your personal life, in your friends, in your family, but that's what you want in a business relationship. Smart and savvy.

You want to get to the point where you can sit at the best tables because you're a very smart person. You've read around the topic. You're experienced.

You've made mistakes. You've got wisdom. You're smart and you're savvy.

You've got solutions. You've gone away and thought about it. You're looking at the big picture.

You're trying to come up with the solution and the objective. You're smart and you're savvy. What I find also makes you really easy to do business with is two ears and one mouth.

The amount of times I'll be in an environment where I'm trying to do a deal with somebody or trying to have a conversation about an opportunity. And actually, all they really want to do is talk. They want to talk at me for 20 minutes, 25 minutes.

And there's not very much value in that. It's like they want to tell you a story and they're all the nitty gritty bits and pieces. It's like a conversation is two parts, like a game of ping pong.

It's like one side to the other. Send it back, send it back, send it back. It's a conversation.

It involves active listening, actively contributing. It's not bullshit baffles brains and hair dryer technique of like, let me tell you why I'm so amazing. Let me tell you why you should do this.

It's a conversation. It's a collaboration. It's mature.

It's intelligent. It's well considered. When we talk the thing about negotiation, it's like it's having this...

If you want to be someone that's easy to do business with, it's really focusing and prioritizing what the other person wants. Now, what do they actually want? What are they actually trying to achieve out of this?

And then building something around that. So when I sell companies for people, I sit in the middle. Although I'm representing either the buyer or the seller when I'm negotiating, I'll often say to both sides, we just say, I'm operating in the best interest of both parties, which might sound like a conflict of interest or backward.

But it's like, if you want to get a deal done, and not just a deal that gets over the line, a deal that actually gets done, as in like the deferred payment comes through, they don't fall out, you don't end up with claims. I'm sitting in the middle trying to figure out how do I make a win-win deal that actually works for both parties, understands their objectives and puts them together. Whereas a lot of people won't do that.

You want to think about how can I make this a win-win for everyone that's involved, not just how can I get what I want. And that's a very rare trait to find that in people you do business with. And that is ultimately what dealmaking is.

Win-win is dealmaking. A real good dealmaker who's got a good... I've been doing this for 20 years, consistent, I've got a good reputation.

I don't ever promote... I don't ever like... You can't go online and find my deal packaging or negotiation or company selling services.

They're not online. You know, I just win work from my reputation because I've been around for a long time. I've done good deals.

I've looked after everybody. And most importantly, everyone else has done well out of it. You know, it's been a genuine win-win.

Speaking openly and transparently, if you want to have a good relationship and you want to be easy to do business with, you need to share your frustrations. You need to share your feedback, your thoughts, your perspectives. But you need to do it in a way that it's not emotionally charged.

It's not aggressive. It's not defensive. It's just shared.

Because when you can share it, you can find out that you're wrong or you haven't got all the information or the other person can just take on board. You know what? That's a really good bit of feedback, really good bit of advice.

I appreciate you sharing that. It must be a business approach. I know people say business is a people game and you need to have emotion and we're all humans and you don't want to be a robot.

Absolutely. I get that. But equally, if you look in the houses of commons where they're emotionally shouting at each other and screaming at each other, you don't get that in a boardroom.

If you want to be in a boardroom with genuine seven and eight figure individuals doing seven and eight figure deals, you want to be sitting there and actually talk business. It's not personal. It's not emotional.

It's business. And I find it's a lot easier to do business with people who are there to do business and they're not personally, emotionally charged. Take responsibility for your part and your place in the negotiation.

Take responsibility for you need to represent yourself. You need to bring this part to the table. If that's your mistake, your issue, your challenge, take responsibility for it and actually resolve it.

Don't take things personally. You need to take feedback. You need to take people's thoughts, views, things that contradict what you say or conflict with your views.

But you need to not take it personally. At the end of the day, if it's somebody's opinion, it's their opinion. It doesn't mean it's a fact.

It doesn't mean you have to agree with it. But you have to be able to take it on board and consider it and process it and think about it. And I'm not saying it's easy.

When I get feedback and it hurts, and immediately I'm like, it'd be so easy to get defensive, explain why I did that. But I choose not to. And in my head, I'm thinking, right, well, this must be good feedback if it's offended me or it's hurt me.

I'm like, wow, this is what I really need. That's where the value is. I don't take it personally.

Or if I do, I don't show it. I'll be like, oh yeah, okay, that's interesting. Process it, get value from it, be mature, pragmatic, rise above it.

And then give before you get. And if you're doing deals, and this is the last point for this, is if you're doing deals, you want to give before you get. And there needs to be a consideration.

And the main thing is playing long game. But the reason there's less than a dozen people is if I have done a deal with somebody who's matched these characteristics, they've come and they've gone. In the reality of doing long-term, you want long-term thinking and long-term relationships with long-term people.

And this is about giving before you get. It's about playing the long game. And it's all a long game.

You're always taking 70% rather than 100% because 70% now gets you to the next level. And then you take 70% again and it gets you to the next level. You know, it's all about long-term thinking, long-term relationships from long-term people.

The alternative is the opposite, which is what most people would fall into the category of. And if you're thinking about the things you want to avoid, like here's a list of the things that I would say make it harder to do business. And when I said about easy to do business and easy to fall out with, the people I tend to fall out with in business is normally because there's one or two, if not more of these traits that fall into it.

And these are the things I would encourage you to tune into, increase your self-awareness. And when you see yourself doing it, tune out of it. So the first would be focusing on yourself.

And you're going into a deal and all you're thinking is, what's in it for me? How high can I ramp the price? How small can I push their margin?

And you're negotiating and squeezing the pips. That's short-term thinking from short-term people. Don't go in there thinking, what's in it for me?

Thinking how? You want to think, how do I get the deal? Take, take, take and no give, give, give.

I want this and I want that and I want that. And there's no give. It's like, I want this, I want that.

And it's just very hard to do a deal that's win-win when the other person is just looking for what they can get. A lack of logic. The amount of times I go into a deal and someone's like, yeah, I want this price or I'm not moving on this term.

I'm like, that's fine. To me, that doesn't seem logical. It doesn't seem to make sense.

Can you give me the logic? There's just a lack of logic in their head. They're like, I want this price or I want this term.

It's just a lack of logic and start to tune into that and think you want to be presenting. There's only one way a deal will work and it's with logic, it's with professional, it's with logic, it's with economics. It's like, how do we make this work?

That's all we're looking for. You know, we're just looking for that and it needs to be logical. It needs to make, it needs to make sense.

Again, like I said earlier, like where's the logic? I'll ask that all the time. Okay, well, that makes sense.

I appreciate you've raised it. Where's the logic? How does that apply to what we're talking about?

And most of the time it doesn't. They're just thinking, oh, I need to table this. This will sound obvious, but lies, so lying about stuff or covering up the truth.

Somebody will ask you a question and then you'll dodge the question or you'll come up with some extrapolated answer to try and dodge the bullet or try and cover up the truth behind it to try and mask the fact that you've made a mistake. You haven't done what you need to do. Just to tune into this and give you some insight, if you want to be doing deals with smart people, smart people see straight through that.

They won't tell you and call you out and embarrass you, but they'll sit there and think, I know exactly what you've done. I know exactly what you're doing. And they'll see straight through it.

If they're smart people, they'll see straight through it. Don't do that sort of thing. Excuses and reasons why you can't do things.

I can't do that because of this. And they're just excuses. They're just made up.

They don't actually have any weight. That's not going to make you easy to do business with. In the same way that I said, two ears, one mouth is someone good to do business with.

It's not talk, talk, talk. You know, I'll be at events quite often and somebody will grab me on the way to the toilet or on the way to a break and they'll talk at me for 10 or 15 minutes. And that's it.

And at the end of it, I'll say, that's great. Well, best of luck. What's the value there?

You've just talked at me for 15 minutes, whereas the people are good to do business with come up to me. I've got a question. Can you help me with the answer?

One mouth, two ears, and then get some value from it. Not just talk at you for 20 minutes. Another thing that can be very challenging is when people write their own narrative.

And this is quite an advanced thing when you understand how it works. But basically, people will write their own narrative. What that means is they want this.

In their head, they think, I want to earn this amount of money or I want to pay this price. And they'll create a whole story and stats and figures and justification as to why what they want makes sense. The problem that, again, if you're dealing with smart people is they'll see straight through it.

What you're doing there is manipulating statistics to write your own narrative as to why this happens. Whereas as a smart person, I can see all the logic, the economics, the reasons around it that mean that that doesn't make sense and is not very well considered. Granted, if you do that, to people who aren't that smart, aren't that savvy, they'll fall for it.

They'll go for it. You'll convince them. Of course they will.

It works. That's why salespeople tell stories. It works.

But what I'm talking about here is if you want to be in that top 1% of people that are good to do business with, don't write your own narrative. Look at all the facts, all the figures and find the solution. In the same capacity as that is changing things and making up stories.

And then in the same capacity is writing your own narrative, actually believe in it. Some of the people that I find it most challenging to deal with have created their own stories, reasons, excuses, and they actually believe it. They convince themselves that it's true.

But again, as a smart, intelligent person who's pragmatic in business, you look at it and you just think, that's not true. Factually, that's not true. That doesn't make sense.

But because they're looking at what's in it for them, or they're focused on the outcome, not the objective, and they're just trying to write their narrative, they convince themselves that it's true, which is a real limiting cycle, mental cycle that you want to get yourself out of. Few more, emotionally charged. So it shouldn't be emotional, shouldn't be aggressive, shouldn't be defensive.

There's no time for that in the business. It doesn't need to be emotionally charged. Don't take things personally.

Don't get upset. Don't get offended. Don't send this emotional energy out in emails, keyboard warriors, messages, conversations, in a negotiation.

You just don't need that. Remember, you need this law of logic. And when there's a lack of logic, it just doesn't make any sense.

Again, if you want to do business with the people at the top, it just needs to make logical sense. You need to look at it and be like, this makes complete logical sense. It would stand up in a court of law.

The blame game, if you're not getting what you want in a conversation or a negotiation, it's everybody else's fault. It's everybody else's fault and they throw everything at you. It's just not, that's a very personal thing.

I would expect that in like a personal friendship or a relationship where you're emotionally charged and your emotions get the better of you. But in a negotiation or a deal or a business, you don't really want to be bringing that to the table. And a failure to look at the big picture is that you really want to look at the big picture, all of the information holistically.

How do you process it? Where are we? How does it work?

Not just, this is what I want. This is what I want to get. And hopefully from taking you through that, you can understand the two sides of it.

And the reality is most people are emotionally charged, emotionally invested, take things personally, out for what they want to get. Of course they are. But I'm saying here, if you want to get into that top 1% of being somebody that's easy to do business with, attracts the opportunities to do business with the best people, and then by default, get the best deals, the best profits, the best opportunities.

They're the character traits that I see from people who are easy to do business with. Those sort of people tend to find it easy to fall out with everybody else who falls into the other category. So take them on board.

Think about which ones apply to you, which ones don't, which ones you could take on board, and which ones could work. And just think, like I've been in this for 20 years. I've invested heavily in my relationships, my reputation, the longevity of what I'm building and what I've built because it's long-term thinking, long-term relationships with long-term people.

The alternative is focusing on, I want this. I want this now. This is why I'm going to get it.

I'm emotionally charged. I'm selfishly focused and driven. And that's just short-term thinking from short-term people.

And you want to try and expand that horizon and that thought process as much as you can, really. So hopefully that gives you some insight. Basically, it's business and economics against personal thinking and emotion.

It's a lot easier said than it is done. Just reading that out, I can already recognize myself when I fall into those traps. But there's a big difference between feeling it and acting it and observe your emotions.

Don't absorb them. Try and progress through the levels. And I guarantee that process will make you somebody that's easy to do business with, attracts the best people and the best deals.

And ultimately will do better, be more profitable and most importantly, go the distance and run it for the long term. So I hope you got value from that. Take it on board.

See what we can put into practice. And I'll see you on the next episode. I hope you enjoyed this Blueprint podcast episode.

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