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INTERVIEW SERIES

**Success Secrets For Women
in Business:**

An Interview With Linda Hollander

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I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of HardToFindSeminars.com.

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

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Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

Michael Senoff

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Success Secrets For Women In Business: An Interview With Linda Hollander

It wasn't that long ago that *Bags To Riches* author, Linda Hollander, was just a typical person unhappy with life. She hated her low-paying job, the people she worked... even the guy she was seeing. Then one day, she had an epiphany – she didn't have to live like that – she could take control of her destiny. She kicked her boyfriend to the curb, quit her job, and started a business that was so successful she teaches others how to do it too. And in this audio, you'll hear the success secrets that got her there.

Linda says most women let fear stop them when it comes to starting their own business but all they really have to do is know how to feel that fear, turn it into excitement, and deal with it. And she says, as a woman, you already have what it takes for success in business – innate, built-in skills of nurturing and relationship-building that go hand-in-hand with sales.

You'll Also Hear...

- How to capitalize on your "women's intuition" and other feminine traits as an entrepreneur (and a quick analogy that points out just how powerful they can be)
- Why Linda says you need to think "octopus" instead of "elephant" when it comes to your marketing, what that means, and the three areas you should apply it to
- An overlooked marketing strategy you may want to think about (because so many marketers blow it off as "old school," it's become fresh and responsive again)
- The two things you should try to picture when going out for sales – that will keep you focused, excited and on track
- The one task Linda says you should do as soon as you wake up in the morning – so you feel a sense of accomplishment no matter what happens the rest of your day
- A quick look at how to build capital and business credit for your dream start-up
- The little-known business lessons you can learn from Estee Lauder

Linda says you have to be the one to fight for your own dreams in life, because no one else is going to do it. But the key is action. If you start taking consistent (and persistent) action toward building your dreams, you'll probably find it's a lot more rewarding than just going through the motions every day with the same-old-same-old. And in this audio, you'll hear the success secrets that will help get you going.

Hi this is Kris Costello and I teamed up with Michael Senoff, to bring can bring you the world best health-related interviews. So if you know anyone struggling with their weight with cancer, diabetes, ADHD, autism, heart disease or other health issues send them over to Michael Senoff's [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com).

Kris: Today, we are excited to have Linda Hollander, author of Bags to Riches, Seven Success Secrets for Women in Business. Linda, thank you so much for joining us today.

Linda: Great to be here, Kris.

Kris: So Linda, you have worked with some amazing clients over the years.

Linda: Absolutely, I have. You know, I have worked with Disney, I have worked with Nissan, I have worked with Sears and Ocean Spray and Warner Brothers, and you know, when I was doing the Comedy Club Circle, me and my girlfriends would go to the clubs and we saw young comedian and he worked clean and he was just amazing and I said boy that guy is going to go far. He has star quality and that guy was Jerry Seinfeld. And we did work for his show, Jerry Seinfeld, and I got his autograph because we printed it on a bag when I was doing the bag business. So entrepreneurship has been just the most amazing ride for me. As far as our clientele, we worked with lot of the entertainment business, a lot of health and fitness businesses, and a lot of leading edge companies that everybody knows.

Kris: So, your book is fantastic. I have got to say I really, really enjoyed it and one of the thing you talk about, you give a really good road map on how women especially can build a successful business.

Linda: Absolutely, because I feel that one of the ways to women to get truly empowered is to learn about entrepreneurship, to learn how to start a business, and how to succeed in their own small business and I have been doing that and teaching that for over 20 years.

Kris: First, let us tell people a little bit your story because it is a really interesting one. You started out kind of an artist-type person, right?

Linda: I was the farthest thing from a business owner you could get. I was an art major because everybody who saw me draw or paint as a child said, "my dear you have to become a professional artist" and so that was my area of study in college. I took no business classes. I thought business was completely boring and I studied art and then came out of college and could tell you everything about Rembrandt and the old masters and painting techniques, but I had no business sense whatsoever, but then I had to support myself and I supported myself by getting sales jobs in art galleries and with these sales jobs I learned that I did have a talent for sales. I did have a talent for marketing and I really enjoyed it and then I found that business could be every bit as creative as art is. Business can be every bit as stimulating and is dynamic as art is to me, so that was kind of the epiphany and the beginning of my realization that hey business is kind of cool and for women it is kind of cool too and before I started my first business because I am a serial entrepreneur. Before I started my first business, I was working in a terrible dead-end job, I mean my soul was crying out, I had to fight Los Angeles' traffic to get to the office in the morning. I had to work with people I did not like, did not trust, and on a personal side I was in a relationship with an abusive man and that lasted for 4-1/2 years and that was because I had absolutely no self-confidence, but one day I had another epiphany and I said I do not want to live like this anymore. I do not want to be a victim, so I fired my boss and dumped the abusive boyfriend and 3-1/2 weeks later I met my adorable supportive husband and we have been together for a while and making that choice to strike out on my own was the start of all the good things that happened in my life, I was able to travel, I was able to teach, and I was able to work with my best friend, remember I said I did not like working with people I did like and did not trust, so I was able to build my dream team and it has just been an amazing ride, so I thought wow I want to share and impart this information to other women that you can be the master of your own life and your own destiny.

Kris: In you transition story, it was pretty interesting from the corporate world, one where your boss came in and basically announced that he will be sharing your cubicle with you there and looking over your shoulder, that was any corporate workers' nightmare and 2 you simply announced your friend that you are going to start this business, right?

Linda: I did. I called my best friend in the world, her name is Sheryl, and we kind of developed the concept of BFF before anybody else because we have known each other since junior high school and we talk about best friends forever and we started the business together and the business was a business making shopping bags, which is why I have the brand name of Wealthy Bag Lady and we grew it to a multi-million dollar business because we had clients like Sears and Ocean Spray and Nissan and it was a great business. The shopping bags that we make you see in malls, you see at trade shows, and then while I was in that business, a lot of women came to me and they said, "Linda, I do not get it, how do I do sales, how do I do marketing, how I do build my business?", and I would give advice, and so I started a coaching business. I wrote the Bags to Riches book that you talked about and then from the Bags to Riches book I did a book tour.

Kris: You are obviously a lady that is walking the talk, I mean you started a business and it was hands on, you were doing all the work yourself and you built it into a multi-million dollar business in all these other exciting things that you are doing around it, so what are some of the things that you think are critical for women to focus on if they are going to have the successful business?

Linda: Okay, there are few things that out go over a couple of the success secrets in the book, Bags to Riches and the first success secret is that you have already got what it takes and you know what I can't really teach you anything; I could pull out the greatness that is already inside of you and I want to capitalize on your feminine strength if you are a woman in business. Your feminine strengths are your intuitions, we've have all had that gut intuition that told us not to do something or told us to do something and when we did not listen to that, I mean think about the last time you did not listen to your gut, I mean how

that turn out for you not that well, so we have this great intuition and if we do not always listen to it. The other thing that we as women bring to the table is relationships. We are the relationship tenders of society and business even with all of the tech and all of the information that is out there and I have watched it develop from no tech to high-tech is still about relationships, maintaining relationships, keeping relationships, and starting great relationship. It seems so simple, but if somebody refers business to you, picking up the phone and thanking them, sending them a quick e-mail. I refer so many people to each other and I hardly get any thank your and when I do, I will refer more business to that particular person. So basically you know you got to fight for your dreams because we are in some really challenging economic times, but I think having your own business is the best defense against the economic because you do not have to depend on an employer for your livelihood. You do not have to depend on somebody else to establish what you are worth. You know, in fact, when I was working as an employee, I kind of thought to myself, I thought dare they put this price on what I can earn. I can earn an unlimited amount of money depending on my ambitions and how smart I am and that is what you can do in your own business.

Kris: So, Linda, obviously some of the challenges for women in business, you just mentioned, your sales, okay, and there are so off a lot of women that do not want to talk about sales. They do not feel comfortable selling things. What are some of the mistakes you see women making may be that you even made yourself early on?

Linda: While that brings us to another one in the "Wealthy bags Lady's Secret" and that is number 5 and that is sales is nurturing, so do not think of sales as something you are doing to somebody. Think of sales as something that you are doing for somebody. Think of it as the ability to serve somebody. Sales is nurturing and I say that because as women we are the nurtures also and you know just think of when your kid comes to you and they have skinned their knee and you have bandage it and put something on it to clean it up or your best friend wants to talk to you about a problem or your husband says let us get away for the weekend and he wants some nurturing or your animals or

whatever that is what sales is. The new paradigm of sales is that a client, a potential client comes to you and they are coming to you with pain, they are coming to you with problems like that kid with skinned knee, and they are asking you for brilliant solution, which you will offer, so you will listen more than you talk in the new paradigm of sales and if you cannot help that person, you are going to be honest and say, "you know what I cannot help you, but this is somebody who can", so you are going to be attached to them making a decision of some kind, but not quite attached to the outcome of them buying from you and that's a little challenging when you first starting out, but you realize that this way you are going to attract only your ideal clients. And you know what there is nothing like the euphoria of closing a sale, it is the ultimate high and it is not because it makes your bank account bigger, but it is because you get to be of service, you get to help that person, make their lives better because we are all in different businesses, so we are all in the life changing business. We have something that is going to transform our lives from where are to where they want to be and that is really what sales is about.

For more interviews on health, mind, body and spirit go to Michael Senoff's [hardtofindseminars.com](http://www.hardtofindseminars.com).

Kris: So, one of the things, Linda, that people struggle with is getting the word out about their business and marketing that kind of thing. What kind of advice do you have for people on that?

Linda: The advice I have on marketing is to do a multi-pronged approach to marketing and the secret that talks about that, the secret in the book is that the octopus is mightier than the elephant and if you think on the 2 animals, there is an octopus and there is an elephant, so let's say the elephant wants food and she takes the peanut from her trunk, puts it in her mouth, takes another peanut puts in her mouth. It is slow and it is very inefficient, but then the octopus is multi-tentacle, so it could do a lot of things at one time and this is what your marketing needs to be. It needs to be many different kinds of marketing, so of course, the buzz right now is social media, but social media is one form of marketing, e-mail is another form of marketing, telephone sales is another form of marketing, even

the old school thing of fliers and brochures is another form of marketing, high touch methods like public speaking and networking that is another form of marketing. So you have a lot of line in the water at one time. Most of these that I have mentioned are pretty low cost to no cost, so as a small business you can compete with the larger companies, you could be the David competing with Goliath because as a small business we can be creative and we do not have to pass everything to a committee. I can have an idea on Monday and put it into practice on Wednesday. And octopus marketing, it is elegant, it is efficient and you need to do 3 types of marketing, need to do high tech, low tech, and no tech marketing, all at the same time because otherwise your business is a house of cards that can collapse. Most people what they do in marketing, and women are especially guilty of this, is sitting and waiting by the phone. That is not a good marketing plan because what if a competitor moves into your territory, what if the business climate changes, and what if the economy changes. You know, all these things can happen and if you have a way of bringing people and bringing business into the door, making people know about you, then your business will weather any kind of economic storm.

Kris: It is so true, a lot of people are just totally relying on social medial and e-mail marketing these days and I think what a lot of people do not realize is the numbers involved in that are just huge to get a return unless you have already got a built up brand or recognition.

Linda: Yeah, and getting things like, this is going to sound so old school, but direct marketing, direct mails, sending mail out because you know what you do not have hardly any competition there anymore because everybody has gone to e-mail because of the cost factor, it is easy, it is fast, there is no cost or low cost, but try something else, just try a few things do a small test. If your small test works, then you could take it wider.

Kris: It is a miracle these days to get a letter isn't it.

Linda: It is.

Kris: So Linda, another thing a lot of people and women especially struggle with and hear it on tele-seminars all the time, you hear it on events, anywhere that women are in a room together. The whole concept of fear and getting past your comfort level and you talk about in Bags to Riches, wow this is the challenge for you too at one point. What can you tell people? How can they get pass that fear?

Linda: Kris, it is a challenge every day and you are never going to eradicate your fears, so just know that you will always have some level of fear. Success is knowing how to feel the fear and deal with it, so you feel the fear and you turn it into excitement because fear and excitement are very close emotions and when I first started to do public speaking that is what I did. I was so fearful, you know, I had to hide my hands for the first few minutes I was on stage because they were shaking. I put them behind my back. I turn the fear into excitement. Another way of getting passed your fear is to have something like, you know, are girl power songs that I play. It could be a little like that. It could be something that takes you to an altered stage like the way music does. I play, I will survive. You know, it is kind of my story and I used to play that when I was driving to sell big companies, a pretty big purchase order. Another way to feel the fear and do it anyway is to image the reward at the end, image how satisfied that particular person is going to be once they have your product, once they have your service. Image the life change that's going to happen for them because remember I said we are all in the life changing business. Image what it is going to do to you and your inner circle in your family the financial rewards that it is going to bring to you and know in the comfort zone absolutely nothing will happen, like your thermostat in the comfort zone, but when you get past that comfort zone that is when things happen, that is when you build those memories, that is when you really have what we know as peak experience that change our life forever and once you do a few of those feared things, you will do even more. And what I think and what I talk about is that you should do your feared things first, the thing that you fear whether it is making a sales call or whatever and we could just make that a feared thing, make that sales call that has you worry that has you anxious, make it the first thing in the morning at 9 o'clock, then you will

have a feeling of accomplishment all day that you did that thing rather than in building up all that psychological baggage in your brain by procrastinating.

Kris: And how much is practice a part of it?

Linda: Practice is a big part of it, huge part of it, absolutely.

Kris: Another thing that is in 'Bags to Riches', Linda, is very interesting chapter on getting the financing that you need and that is another subject that women tend to and even some men tend to shy away from. How can you keep that from holding you back?

Linda: Most people when they are first starting their business, they get financing the wrong way and I totally did this too. They use credit cards, they use personal credit, they use family, they use friends, they use what we call bootstrapping to get the financing they need when you are first starting your business because it is a challenge if you are started to get that financing, most banks want to see you in business for 2 years and most funding sources do. What you want to do if you want to get a business credit score rather than a personal credit score, this called the pay desk and you get that from Dunn and Bratt Street. Dunn and Bratt Street is one of my sponsors, but they are a wonderful organization and they can show you how to get a pay desk score, so you will not risk your own credit, so you will not tank your personal credit as an entrepreneur, which happens like so much and so you can also go to family reunions because you know when you borrowed from uncle Carl, you can see him again at a family reunion and not be uncomfortable. Also, if you have private investors and that is how I started, I started with private investors that were family, that were friends and credit cards, and you know really, really did a large serious bootstrapping. If you have private investors, please pay these people back before you eat, before you put food on the table. You are going to pay back your investors, otherwise you will never be able to come to them again for any type of loan and you will totally, totally burn your bridges, but you pay them on time. If you pay them back well and some people may not even want interest in your family, they just want their loan repaid or

they may want repaid at the same amount they would have made if they kept it at a bank, the same interest that is the really the way to do it.

Kris: So, Linda, what else you think is really important for people to know?

Linda: Well, I can ask all the time, what is the difference between successful people and those who just dream of success. Can I tell a quick story about Este Lauder?

Kris: You sure can.

Linda: Okay, because Este Lauder is one of my mentors in business and a mentor can be somebody you know or somebody you have never met, so she is a mentor. She started her business in 1930s or 1940s. They were no women running global conglomerate companies at that time, but that is what she wanted, so she made her cosmetics at home on the kitchen sink and on the stove and she took them to the local salons and did what we now know as makeovers and she would try them on women and get them a little sample and she was the pioneer of get with purchase. She invented that whole program that everybody else copied and use now. But she knew that to take her business to the next level, she had to be in department stores, so she found out there was something called a buying office and if the buying office liked your cosmetic line, then can put you in department stores all over the country, so this is the really important meeting for her. She showed up at 9 o'clock and you know they would not even see her, can you believe that. She was just sitting there. She was the only women and a lot of men came and went and, you know, she is still there. She has got no cell phone. She has got no laptop. She cannot do Facebook. All she is sitting there. She is just like feeling invisible, probably was close to crying. They go to lunch. They come back. They are probably whispering like is that crazy woman is still here; 5 o'clock rolls around. She is there like a piece of furniture. Finally, the buyer emerges. She says, "Oh my God are you still here?" She says, "Yeah I am still here." She said, "You have been so patient, let us see what you have got." And that is what the meeting, the turning point of her

business. They got her into all the department stores. There is what is known as real estate in the department stores and if you notice, the next time you go into one, she has the best real estate. She has the Este Lauder line. She has the Clinique line. She has got the Bobbi Brown. She has got men's line and it all happened because of that one meeting because she had the vivid vision and she took action. So action is really the difference of what makes the successful entrepreneur, so no matter what you do after you hear this, take some kind of action toward building your dreams and toward building that dream business that you want.

Kris: And that is just a great story and even more great stories in 'Bags to Riches' about Este Lauder also that was just phenomenal and amazing story of her climb to success, so Linda we want to thank you so much for joining us.

Linda: Okay, thank you, my pleasure and it was wonderful to be here.

That's the end of our interview, and I hope you've enjoyed it. For more great health related interviews go to Michael Senoff's [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com).