



MOM'S HOUSE HOME STUDY COURSE

INDUSTRY INTERVIEW

TRANSITIONS EXPERT

Full Certification Program Available

[APPLICATION LINK](#)

JEFF BALLEAU - TRANSITIONS EXPERT

Phillip Vincent:

Jeff, thank you for joining us today. We've got investors from all over the country that are learning what I do here in St. Louis and how we've worked together. So why I wanted to interview you today is to talk about your job and why you and Sharon got into your business and what your day to day activities look like and what ways that we can help people like you with what your goal is to do, which is to get people placed. So that Sharon story, back in... Go ahead.

Speaker 2:

Phillip, maximize your screen, please.

Phillip Vincent:

Yes, sir. Going to maximize you. There he is.

Jeff Balleau:

So let me start with the why.

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

My dad, in 2009, had Parkinson's for a number of years and was married to his second wife, and they were happy going down the path of aging. So he had Parkinson's, he took a fall, hit his head, ended up in a rehab hospital, but before they took him to rehab, as he lay in the floor, his wife walked around his body through his blood for six hours. That was the day we understood that she had dementia and we just didn't recognize that. They were 1,000 miles away. Now, as certified dementia practitioners, we know the whole backstory. So we sent him to rehab, he was getting stronger, going to move back home. And then right before... Well, 48 hours before discharge, they said, "Your dad can't go home. He's not safe at home," and we weren't prepared for that.

Jeff Balleau:

So we speed dated all the communities, tried to find a place for my father. Long story short is, a lot of misguided advice; a lot of the market, they wouldn't talk about or would discourage me from going to, and I could just sniff out it wasn't serving my dad well. They sent me to six places. All six places said my dad wasn't appropriate, where'd I get the information, and I said, "The experts on TV told me this is the place to be." And they said, "Yeah, they've never been here. They don't know anything about us." So I came back and told my story to friends, and they had the exact same experience. These big agencies and the national companies is the same nightmare experience. So my why is, the current marketplace only talked about the places where they could make money from referral fees.

Jeff Balleau:

That's how I'm paid. I'm free to families. I help older adults find senior living, independent, assisted and skilled. When I say 'I', it's my wife, Sharon, and I. She's actually the A Team. So when a third or fourth of the marketplace, wasn't represented to us because those referral agencies couldn't make any money, they withheld the information. ABC senior living may do a great place, but they wouldn't pay the agencies. So what we do differently is we explore the entire St. Louis region market, we'd go to any place in St. Louis, even the 25 to 30% that don't pay referral fees. So we work free 25% to 30% of the time.

Phillip Vincent:

Wow.

Jeff Balleau:

Okay? Much like you work free when you come out and see your clients and they decide not to take your offer. You've put all that effort and time in, but you've done the right thing, your due diligence. So we're the same way. To your second question, if I'm out of order, interrupt me here.

Phillip Vincent:

Go ahead, sir.

Jeff Balleau:

Second question is, "How do you help our families, and how do we help you?" When our families need to go into senior living, many times it's crisis mode. Not always, but many times it's crisis mode. More often than not, they have not updated their houses. More often than not, they need the equity out of their homes. A lot of times, it's their biggest investment. And they don't have a way to bridge that financial gap to help them be safe, which they need resources to do, but the kids don't have the money to fork out for their folks. So how you've been super helpful, you and your team, is coming and taking a look at the house. And the real estate side, I think, is the easy side of this.

Phillip Vincent:

I agree.

Jeff Balleau:

I think where you bring value is how you approach my clients, you knowing they're in crisis, you know that they're at risk, you know that they're at a weak point in their life, and rather than be a financial predator in that area, you're fair. And you told them, "Your house is worth \$200,000 if we put \$30,000 into it. Plus you have to pay \$20,000 in a realtor fees, plus you've got a couple of grand in closing costs, plus it'll take two to six months to get the close because you've got to fix the house," all those things you guys already know. When you walk it through them and say, "Here's what you would net," or, "I can get you close to that net, and we can close in 15 days." And then you don't pound on the door 15 times. You say, "Look, if you have questions, you call me." You follow up one time. If they say, "No," you shake hands and you walk away. That is so valuable because your marketplace is not seen in the market as... Because of some of your competitors and how they operate, it seems-

Phillip Vincent:

Talk about that. Yeah, you can talk about that, Jeff. Please talk about my competitors.

Jeff Balleau:

Oh, they're predators. They're financial predators. And because of that, our clients are scared to death of them. When I can tell a client, "If you don't want to pay 5% to 7% commission and you don't want to fix up and paint your house or replace the carpet, you don't have to wait four months to get to the market and another 90 days to close. I have a guy that can close in 15 days for cash, and he's the most moral, ethical guy you could ever deal with. It's so much easier that way for them.

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah. Thanks [crosstalk 00:05:21].

Jeff Balleau:

Does that answer what you're asking?

Phillip Vincent:

Jeff, yeah. I couldn't have written that better. Thank you.

Jeff Balleau:

Okay.

Phillip Vincent:

We've talked a lot about how do we overcome, when we work with senior living communities, that we're not a predator. We've been talking about this, the question the directors asked me, "Do you just low ball?" They'll ask that question. Really, their defenses are up. I want you to expound upon a couple of things, not only my competition, we'll save that for a second. But you were hinting around, and I'm pretty sure you were talking about a place for mom, right? Is that what you were talking about before? That they-

Jeff Balleau:

Yeah, that's who misguided my...

Phillip Vincent:

Misguided. Right.

Jeff Balleau:

[crosstalk 00:05:58].

Phillip Vincent:

So guys, we're worried about being good people. In this industry, the people that are trying to direct them to the best care, aren't. The leaders in this aren't giving them the best care. They're trying to steer them to where? The place where they get paid. Right? That's who our competition-

Jeff Balleau:

And own it.

Phillip Vincent:

And own it.

Jeff Balleau:

And only that place.

Phillip Vincent:

And only that place, right? So maybe expound upon... So was your dad at a different... He needed a different level of care, and they just didn't have arrangements with the care that your dad needed? Is that what happened?

Jeff Balleau:

No. So my dad needed assisted living, a pretty basic, standard level of care. It varies a bit, state to state, but he needed some assisted living. He needed to be out of his home. And rather than take them to ABC senior living, which does a great job, they would only take them to 123 senior living one because that's who they had a contract with. When I asked about ABC senior living, they said, "I wouldn't put my parents there. Have you checked the safety record?" Well, I'm a pretty smart guy so I go check the safety record and I come back too, I call them back and I go, "It's not unsafe."

Jeff Balleau:

"We didn't say it was."

Phillip Vincent:

Wow. So they put a [crosstalk 00:07:12]-

Jeff Balleau:

"Wait, wait, wait." I said, "You said you wouldn't put your dad there. You wouldn't put your parents there, why not?"

Jeff Balleau:

"Oh, they live in Seattle."

Jeff Balleau:

"Well yeah, but you knew where my dad lived, why would you... I don't understand." And then when I finally asked about it being unsafe, they said, "Well, we didn't say it was unsafe. We said, 'Did you check the safety record?'" But you put those two phrases together, you put the "I wouldn't put my parents there" and "Have you checked the safety record?" and it leads me to believe it's unsafe.

Phillip Vincent:

They knew what their intent was.

Jeff Balleau:
So I had the same-

Phillip Vincent:
Yeah. They knew what their intent was.

Jeff Balleau:
What was that?

Phillip Vincent:
They knew their intent.

Jeff Balleau:
Absolutely.

Phillip Vincent:
They knew.

Jeff Balleau:
Absolutely.

Phillip Vincent:
Putting it out there.

Jeff Balleau:
I had the same problem in my industry as you have in yours.

Phillip Vincent:
Talk to me.

Jeff Balleau:
I have bad actors that taint the marketplace that give people the wrong perception. It took us a long time to overcome that. I tell people that I am the antidote for those agencies. I don't mention the brand, obviously, in the marketplace, but I say, "I fix everything that's wrong with referral and placement. I go into every location." I think you had Richard Winters with you yesterday, right?

Phillip Vincent:
Yeah. Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:
They do a fantastic job, right?

Phillip Vincent:
Yup.

Jeff Balleau:

I will hand-walk my clients in to Garden View Care Centers and tour with them, just like a real estate agent might tour with the house. So I fix everything that's wrong with the... But I have the same problem. My marketplace has predators like yours do. So the question is "How do you overcome those things?" Right?

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

I think the best thing you can do is, when you have folks in the industry that have a great reputation, and that's the key, have a great reputation that say, "Guest, if you need help selling your house, call Phillip. If you need help looking at senior living, call Sharon and Jeff."

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

Those types of personal referrals are our goal.

Phillip Vincent:

The key. They are.

Jeff Balleau:

[crosstalk 00:08:51].

Phillip Vincent:

I have a question from the audience, being about that. What is the best advice to our students on how they can approach placement agents? If we were in a different market, how do you want me to find you and tell you what I do? What's the best way to reach you? Did I ask that weird?

Speaker 2:

Yeah. What's that conversation like?

Phillip Vincent:

What's that conversation like?

Speaker 2:

[crosstalk 00:09:13].

Phillip Vincent:

I've been talking a lot about the Breakthrough Coalition, because Breakthrough is not a nationwide company. Did we lose him?

Speaker 2:
Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jeff Balleau:
Right. I think I lost video feed. Can you still hear me okay?

Phillip Vincent:
Yes, sir. Did you hear the question, or should I repeat it?

Jeff Balleau:
Nope. I think I got it. Let me see if I got it. So networking groups like Breakthrough, yes, are key. The first thing is, if I want to work with somebody, I spend the majority of the conversation, me asking about them and who they are. And the reason why I do that is, and I'll be happy to share a story of-

Phillip Vincent:
Go ahead.

Jeff Balleau:
... when you rely on another partner who doesn't fulfill the need, how damaging that is. So I will tell you that when... I spend the majority of my time listing and taking in who somebody is, what they're about and understanding their why before I decide if I want their referrals, because I cannot get out of a bad bed with a bad partner. I made that mistake recently, and again, you came in and saved the day. So I spend, first of all, the majority of my time vetting my people. You don't need everybody feeding you. You need the people that have a great reputation and a great moral compass. I don't care who does the volume, it'll come back and get you, right?

Phillip Vincent:
Yes, sir.

Jeff Balleau:
So that's number one. Number two, if you're interviewing people from senior living in [inaudible 00:10:38] town and you're saying, "What networking groups have been most valuable to you?" Let them talk about themselves, let them talk about their networking groups, and then afterwards say, "Gosh, are there folks that need to know what I do and how I help families? Are there folks in those groups that need to meet me?" And then you'll find out, is it a limited or is it a good apical group like Breakthrough is? I didn't ask that question early enough when we started this nine years ago. I didn't do enough networking in the space to find out about folks like you, really. So that's probably what I do from a local basis. Let me share two stories.

Phillip Vincent:
Go for it.

Jeff Balleau:

We've had folks that had a house that wasn't upgraded for 30 years, the one down in Fenton. You came in, you bought that house. It had a big lot next to it. I think it was a full gut. If I remember right, that might've been the ones that had the raccoons nested in the attic [crosstalk 00:11:27].

Phillip Vincent:

16 raccoons in the roof, in the attic, for years. For five years, I think they lived in there and made babies.

Jeff Balleau:

All right. Yeah. That was a fantastic success story from the word 'go'. We brought you in early, the family got bought out early, they got moved, they got safe. The kids were so thankful. You were able to subdivide the property, I think, and sell the lot separately-

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

... rehabbed the house.

Phillip Vincent:

I haven't told them that story. It's probably one of my best stories ever. I'll tell them that story. Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

I think you made a decent return on your investment as well.

Phillip Vincent:

You could say that. Yes, sir.

Jeff Balleau:

But from my perspective, I had happy clients. That's what I count on you for. Now I want you to make money, but that's what I counted on, is that they were happy and they were thrilled. You also took care of us. It was a wonderful thing. Then just flip to the one we had in the floodplain recently.

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah. This was like a month ago?

Jeff Balleau:

Yeah. Six weeks. Yeah.

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah, six weeks.

Jeff Balleau:

Yeah. Well, right before Christmas time. So yeah, six or seven weeks. So a girl calls up. She is clearly unsafe in her home. She's in rehab and she is not going to be allowed to go home. I called Philip up and his team gives me a number. I'm like, "Fantastic." And the family's like, "Gosh, we really want a second number." I'm telling you, Phillip goes to the market, he knows the numbers. "I need a second number." I should've stood my ground and said, "This is my guy. This is what I know. He's been fantastic for me." Instead I caved, and they said, "Well how about John Doe, a real estate agent who also claims he does great rehabs and investors and flips." That's not really a sweet spot. "Oh, but you know what? We really want a second." So I bring him in, I [crosstalk 00:13:03]-

Phillip Vincent:

And can you say who that... You don't have to say his name, but I just want to point out, he's a realtor with an SRES designation who helps seniors in our space in St. Louis, the person you brought in, right?

Jeff Balleau:

And on top of that, he's a certified real estate... So he has the CSA, a Certified Senior Advisor. He also has the real estate senior certification behind that, and his sweet spot is senior space-

Phillip Vincent:

Sure. That's what he specializes in.

Jeff Balleau:

[crosstalk 00:13:30] he like to-

Phillip Vincent:

Yes. Go ahead.

Jeff Balleau:

That's where he likes to reside. So I bring him in because he has... "Jeff, I have access to guys that you don't have access to. Trust me on this. Give me another shot. We haven't tried this for two or three years together." So I bring him in, and one of the guys trailing behind him is one of the same investors that you had already brought in that had looked at the house. And he was so gracious. We'd seen him 10 days ago. He walks in, shakes my hand like he'd never met me before, "Hi, Jeff."

Jeff Balleau:

"Hi. How are you?" So awkward. He was so cool about it, because he could have said, "I've already seen this once. I don't know why you're calling me..." You know. So we go through this. The real estate agent puts an offer together with his investors verbally.

Phillip Vincent:

With his commission on top.

Jeff Balleau:

Plus some commission on top.

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

I tell them what the parameters are that the client needs to get to, if we can, rather than putting that back into the package, because the pot could get a little sweeter if we could make it faster. Rather than putting that back in the pot for my client, it was going to go into the real estate agent's pot, which means my client gets nothing more out of the house, he's delayed two more weeks, they give him a verbal offer. They then back that down by what? Seven or 10 grand?

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

I think it was. [crosstalk 00:14:44].

Phillip Vincent:

This was after the inspection period. They tried to then renegotiate.

Jeff Balleau:

Well they came back two weeks later and said, "Well, this is in a flood plain." I said, "I told you when I called you."

Phillip Vincent:

It's like, "No shit. We told you that from the jump."

Jeff Balleau:

I told you on the first phone call it's in a flood plain. The two houses behind it had been torn down by FEMA. This wasn't a maybe.

Phillip Vincent:

It was obvious.

Jeff Balleau:

It's in their backyard.

Phillip Vincent:

Yes. I remember. Yes.

Jeff Balleau:

All roads lead back to Phillip. I should have told the client, "This is the best thing to do." The end of the story is they gave him a written offer. The real estate agent then backed down from the written offer, so now I look awful. Remember my conversation about vetting out who you do business with and who you got in bed with. I violated my own rule, and it bit me. I had to go back to my senior family and say, "I'm really sorry they wasted two weeks of your life. I'm sorry they gave you false expectations. I'm sorry I brought them to the table. I feel awful about this."

Phillip Vincent:

How'd that feel?

Jeff Balleau:

And I called you back because at this point, you were out. You were like, "These folks can't make a decision." I [inaudible 00:15:45]. So I called them back and said, "Phillip, I need a person on this. Can you renew your offer?" And he's like... I can't remember what you told me, 48 hours or 72 hours, "Jeff, it's either now or never. It should be yesterday."

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah. I knew this guy needed a little nudge.

Jeff Balleau:

And I call him back and he answers, "Yes." He closed in, I don't know, 15 days?

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

My client's safe. She's living in a place that she loves. You did a great job.

Phillip Vincent:

Thank you. We have more questions, and Jeff you've been great so far.

Jeff Balleau:

All roads lead back to Phillip.

Phillip Vincent:

Thank you. What's the biggest mistake that our students... And when I say 'students', these are real estate guys just like me, and they're vetted. These are not rookies that we're talking to today. These are guys doing from 10 to 100 deals a year, so they're like a faster house in their respective markets. So what's the biggest mistake a student... When I say a student, these Philips could make when approaching you? Do you want to expound upon that? What would turn you off? You said in the beginning, when you network, you want to get to know who they are as a person, like their moral compass. So what's the biggest mistake we could make when we're networking with guys like you?

Jeff Balleau:

I don't think you get wealthy from being a taker. You get wealthy from being a giver. If you are doing the right things and you have a good business model, [inaudible 00:17:02] have a good moral compass, [inaudible 00:17:05] which offer this deal. Get rich off of a lot of deals [inaudible 00:17:08], and be as much of a giver as you are a taker. And [inaudible 00:17:14] be a hard business person and still have a very compassionate... people with a caring tone. You might capitalize really well if somebody's stressed for a timeframe, but I can bring you a lot more volume if I know I can trust you with my families. I don't have to be there when you're there, Phillip.

Phillip Vincent:

That's true.

Jeff Balleau:

I don't have to wonder what you're going to say. I don't have to worry if you're going to pressure people. I will tell you that, and this is for every referral, anybody I refer, I ask my client every single time, "How did that go? How were they for you? How did you feel about that?" I don't ask what they got out of it. I ask how they assess you. So don't be greedy on a deal. Be greedy on the next 10 years worth of deals by treating every client... I know it sounds really schmaltzy, but there's too many people that think you have to be abrupt to get a deal to close. You can be compassionate and still stand your ground.

Phillip Vincent:

Yes. I preach that a lot, about being a happy person and just... We know that problems that the family is going through at the time, and just being a resource for them to try to throw them life vests when they're drowning. And I think the coupling of what you do and what I do, we're just getting rid of that friction point to get them into the best care, which, by the way, is the most important thing, is the care. And I keep stressing to the investors that the senior community network all the time with each other, and their goal is how to help the most.

Jeff Balleau:

Sure.

Phillip Vincent:

Notice, I didn't say "How to make the most money", whereas at some of our real estate investing meetings, we're talking about how to make the most money in the senior world. I'm just going to use some generic terms like BNI. They're nationwide. For the networking, I've not done well in telling them exactly what searches to do to find their local... like our SRTs that we do, and the Breakthroughs, what would be the thing... You said you wish you would have done more networking out at the beginning, nine years ago. Right?

Jeff Balleau:

Right.

Phillip Vincent:

Me too. So things like Breakthrough are great, but what other things should they be looking for in their own respective markets?

Jeff Balleau:

So BNI, I believe, is nationwide. We've not dabbled in that market, and then the main reason why, BNI is really hardcore, but you have to make every meeting. If you miss a meeting, you send a representative. If you miss two meetings, you're out.

Phillip Vincent:

Yes.

Jeff Balleau:

Ours is a crisis-driven business where, sometimes, if I have to pick between a family and a BNI group, BNI is going to lose. I'm going to take care of my family. So we haven't done that. I'm not saying it's bad for us. I haven't touched my toes in those waters.

Phillip Vincent:

I'm sorry, Jeff. I don't think we should go to BNI. I'm saying networking groups that are senior based.

Jeff Balleau:

Okay.

Phillip Vincent:

BNI is a waste of time for us, actually, just like you're saying. But is there any networking groups that are nationwide or seems more local, like what it is in St. Louis?

Speaker 2:

Keyword, [crosstalk 00:20:09]-

Jeff Balleau:

So folks like Richard Winters... When I started calling on those folks, I would ask them, "Who gets together on a regular basis in your industry I can learn from?"

Phillip Vincent:

Asking questions.

Jeff Balleau:

I don't ask, "Where can I get referrals?"

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah. Right. "Where can I learn? Where can I get better?"

Jeff Balleau:

Where can I learn from? Where can I grow from?

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

Great. And those folks go to plug you into... Go to some folks that have a couple of gray hairs. Go to some folks have been in the business for a while. Ask them, "Where do you find the greatest education and networking for your industry?" [Brian McCray 00:20:46] likes to ask a great question about it. I'll pose it to you. If you're thinking of someone who has all the best resources for buying a distressed property, who's your expert? He calls that his green-light question. Well, if they say, "Well, it's Phillip Vincent." Fantastic, I'd love to meet Phillip Vincent. He sounds like a guy I need to meet. If I'm asking about my industry, it's a green-light question to say, "If he doesn't have a guy, guys, I'd love to get to know you better to see if I would be that right fit for you."

Jeff Balleau:

I would ask the same kinds of questions with folks have been in the space for a while. Where do they go? Who do they hang out with? Now we'll tell you, and you've got to be a little careful. You can go to networking events three times a day and never get anything done.

Phillip Vincent:

I have been telling them that. Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

Okay. But there's case-manager networking groups, there's social worker networking groups. There are senior living [inaudible 00:21:36]. They're the ones that the folks that live in the retirement communities associate with. But again, where I [inaudible 00:21:46] is when I'm starting to ask people, "Who do you go to on a scheduled basis, that gets together and talks about your industry, that I could learn from?"

Phillip Vincent:

Simple.

Jeff Balleau:

Don't ask for their referral, ask how you can be smarter. And most folks love to tell you how smart they are and love to mentor people. Ask them for coaching. How would you coach me on that? What would you suggest?

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah. Great answer. So when you said-

Jeff Balleau:

They love to talk about themselves.

Phillip Vincent:

Oh, they do. They do. And you said you wish you would have networked more. How have you found it to work with the senior living communities with the service you have? Because do they say, "No, thank you. We already have a place for mom"? Or do they want to talk to other options? Because you're a marketing channel, you're a funnel for occupancy, right? They want to work with you, so I don't think... How does that conversation go with senior living, and what have you found the best way to open that door at the senior living communities?

Jeff Balleau:

So let me answer that two ways. We didn't make a nickel for 24 months.

Phillip Vincent:

Wow.

Jeff Balleau:

We starved. The reason why is they hated referral and placement, hated them. They hated them because the big companies... The families hated them, they didn't bring qualified people, they would take a family's name and give it to 40, four zero, different communities on the same day. Now can you imagine 40 senior living communities calling your mom while she's in distress? You should come visit here. So they hated what I do for a living, so I had to pivot. I went to each one and I said, "I want to fix this. What do you hate about referral and placement?" And I made a laundry list. We designed our business around that laundry list to address every issue they had. We did the same thing with families. We talked to them and said...

Jeff Balleau:

They said [inaudible 00:23:35] began working for free a long time. They said, "I called a place for mom. It was awful." I said, "Well, tell me what was awful about it," and I made a list of everything that didn't work, so I addressed both of those things. So to answer your question, initially, they hated us. Now, nine years later, they love us. I only bring them qualified people. I only take families... Unless they need to see more, we generally take families to three to four communities at the most.

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah, three or four.

Jeff Balleau:

So now, rather than being a one out of 40 chance of getting their business, you're one out of three or one out of four. I have a 33 to [inaudible 00:24:07] percent chance of getting my client if we're right fit. And you'll be the right fit, because I know them. I'm trying to think of how this relates most to the folks in your audience right now. I think that finding out who's the most respected power players in each niche of their market, whether that's senior living in placement or that's a traditional real estate agent or that's a community. Because these clients, they get to communities that don't come through me. They get right to Richard Winters, which is fine.

Jeff Balleau:

They do a great job. I'm glad they're getting great care. But for you to be a resource to them when their admissions person says, "These people need to move. They don't have any money, but their house is worth 300K. I guess they'll move in six months." That's no good. They need it in two weeks. So I think finding those players in your market, in each niche, rather than just in a single niche.

Phillip Vincent:

Thank you.

Speaker 2:

Who's got questions, specifically?

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah. We're going to ask some questions to the audience, so if you just want to hold on one second. No one? Oh, wow. No, we got one.

Speaker 3:

Yes.

Speaker 4:

Okay.

Phillip Vincent:

Here we go. I'm going to have to hear. There's a microphone that's being passed.

Speaker 4:

Outside of the networking, where else would we meet his expertise?

Phillip Vincent:

Outside of the networking, where else would somebody find you? Do you mean, like a direct call? If somebody was just... You mean just physically call him or... What else? What do you mean?

Speaker 4:

Sometimes they work with facilities, so the facilities can provide that, but obviously, a lot of those people tend to be contracted with them. They've built relationships directly with them. But what are the different avenues that we can look into to finding more individuals so we can build relationships with the right ones that are willing to work with us? Do you want me to rephrase the question?

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

I think I get the question, Phillip.

Phillip Vincent:

Oh, did you? Go ahead. Okay, good.

Jeff Balleau:

I think so. Let me recap and make sure I got it.

Phillip Vincent:

Yes, sir.

Jeff Balleau:

How can they find referral and placement folks like us that they can network with? Is that what her question was?

Phillip Vincent:

Sure. Yes, definitely. How can we find more Jeffs? Yes.

Jeff Balleau:

Okay. So let's broaden that a bit. I'd like to think that there's some good franchise owners that still do a good job out there that are my competitors, so let's include them in this net, because that's help to your investors.

Phillip Vincent:

Sure.

Jeff Balleau:

So the first thing I would do is understand what brands are out there that are my competitors. I'll make it easy for your folks, because they want to learn today. Places like Care Patrol, Oasis, senior advisors, senior living locators. Now what you want to do is find out who the franchise owner is or, really, who the marketer is because... Let's think about this. Why are they going to refer to you if you can help them with their business process? There's very few independents like us out there. There's very few. There's one in Omaha. Every town has usually one maybe, but there's not many independents out there, so to broaden your net, you have to include the franchises, like my competition. And when you meet them, what's the question going to be again? Who do you associate with in our industry on a regular scheduled basis that I could learn from? They're going to take you to who else is in the space. What you're looking for is the granny goose. Have you talked about that at all?

Phillip Vincent:

The granny goose? Tell them-

Jeff Balleau:

So there's the goose that lays the golden egg, right?

Phillip Vincent:

Okay.

Jeff Balleau:

We all want the golden egg.

Phillip Vincent:

Sure.

Jeff Balleau:

The goose lays the golden egg. If I can get to the goose, I get more eggs. If I get to the granny goose that has all the geese that lay the golden eggs, that's where my volume comes from.

Phillip Vincent:

I like it.

Jeff Balleau:

So [crosstalk 00:27:44] get in with these folks to find out who they get to. You want to get to the granny goose. That's who you want to get to, right?

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah. Totally agree.

Jeff Balleau:

So when you ask people in this space who they know that you could learn from, and you invested a little time... But here's what you've got to be careful with on the question, how do I find [inaudible 00:28:03] where folks in referral and placement is... One or two of the big companies own about 500 URLs. You'll think you're looking at different companies and download a PDF of top 10 reasons for moving into senior living or seven pitfalls of nursing homes, or... And really, what they're doing is capturing your data. So you want to get to the people. Online would give you an idea of the brands, but you need to go out in this space and ask the Richards. Go there and say, "Who do you folks get your referrals from that are the referral and placement agencies in my town? Who do you respect out of those people?"

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah. Good question. Who do they like to work with?

Jeff Balleau:

If you didn't know the industry and you had to have your mom talk to somebody, absolutely [inaudible 00:28:43]. Who do they respect? Right?

Phillip Vincent:

Right. Which is what I've always [crosstalk 00:28:48]-

Jeff Balleau:

I think what you folks do is an incredible service. You folks are an incredible service for my families, but that's because you've never one single time ever, ever burned me, ever. I don't forget those things, right?

Phillip Vincent:

Yup.

Jeff Balleau:

When someone's at 100% on the mark, that's the first and usually the only call I have to make.

Phillip Vincent:

And Jeff, the reason why we're doing this-

Jeff Balleau:

Just [crosstalk 00:29:11] to give credit here.

Phillip Vincent:

Thank you. And that-

Jeff Balleau:

Just, really quick-

Phillip Vincent:

And what I'm trying to do is-

Jeff Balleau:

... [crosstalk 00:29:15].

Phillip Vincent:

... stress that to these people, that you get that one shot, and if you burned that bridge, it's over. And so me having these leads coming in at a nationwide capacity is great, but it's only as good as the people working them. And I'm fearful of the bad actors in every city, so you're saying exactly what I'm saying, that I'm trying to work with the best of the best that are going to do the right thing. So we have a question from Mr. Erik? Go ahead. Hold on one second.

Mr. Erik:

[crosstalk 00:29:41], so a kind of a [inaudible 00:29:43] question. You built your business through referrals, through networking, which is awesome. Talk a little about the culture of that. I don't do a lot of networking. I would be afraid of knowing what's appropriate or inappropriate. But what works? Is it the little gifts? Is it dropping by with cookies? Are you doing coffee? Are you doing lunch? Are you doing dinner? Are you taking them on vacation for a week? What level of-

Phillip Vincent:
Let's go on vacation.

Mr. Erik:
Yeah.

Phillip Vincent:
Hey, don't put things in Jeff's mind.

Mr. Erik:
I know.

Phillip Vincent:
We would go on a vacation.

Mr. Erik:
So now, in reality, what's actually appropriate and expected when you... Because this is a business that hundreds of thousands of dollars are being made in, and this is business. What do people really expect? And what have you figured out doing this over nine years?

Phillip Vincent:
Did you hear that, sir?

Jeff Balleau:
Yeah, I think. Before I hit that, let me hit one thing. I may be the guy on video this morning, but my wife Sharon is my business partner and my wife, and she was the A Team when she was here [inaudible 00:30:38] available, she'd be answering a lot of these questions. We have a prior engagement, being a grandma and grandpa this weekend, so she's got the fun job. So I just want to share some credit here in what we do. To answer the question, you have to be a little careful in certain venues. So if I'm calling on hospitals, I can bring by notepads and pens and cookies and goodies. I really try to get in at stressed levels. Lets say I'm calling on accounting firms because when they see their clients once a year, they see a decline in grandma and grandpa. And they do mom and dad's taxes and they go, "Hey, your dad seemed really forgetful and doesn't... Is he okay in his house?"

Jeff Balleau:
So on those folks, I bring stress relievers at tax time. I don't ask to see them. I come by and see them February and March, drop off some things. I know you guys are burning the candles at both ends. Here's some protein bars, some bottled water with my brand on it. I hope you get through the tax season. Take care. We love what you do for our families. I don't ask for a referral. I just want to get my brand in front of them and tell them I'm sorry they're going through the most difficult time of their business season. If it's senior living communities I go to, then yeah, I'll bring some snacks and stuff by to them and I'll ask them, "Is it okay if I leave this? I want to make sure I'm [inaudible 00:32:04] ..." And it's a very open ended question, "Is it okay?" They'll tell you, "No, this smells like you're trying to get our business."

Jeff Balleau:

"Oh no, I was just... I was thinking about you guys. I want you to remember our brand." Vacations, higher-end stuff, paying somebody a percentage, I'll let Phillip speak to that, if he shares revenue at times. I don't do that, but I think we're perceived a bit differently in the real estate market. I've got to be a little careful there. We drop off coasters and insulated mugs and just branding stuff. We do a lot of that, and we have a marketer that does that. We intentionally divide that. Our marketer drops that stuff off. When they call us for a referral and placement, it is a different person who is meeting with that to get the information about the client. So we have a branding person and we have the two of us that do most of mostly referral and placement.

Phillip Vincent:

That was actually one of the... [G 00:33:02], that was your question yesterday. Could you have a separate marketing person from the actual doer? And he's saying that's exactly what he does.

Jeff Balleau:

Now we did that for two reasons.

Phillip Vincent:

Tell us.

Jeff Balleau:

My wife hates to market. My wife hates to market.

Phillip Vincent:

Your wife hates the branding side. Okay.

Jeff Balleau:

She's a fantastic marketer, but she does not enjoy it. It is painful for her. I do some of it. Also, we happen to have a marketer that only wanted to work part time, which is fantastic. She costs us 30 grand a year because she only wants to work part time. And she's great in the industry.

Phillip Vincent:

How did you find her?

Jeff Balleau:

She was working in this space, and they changed their strategy and had social workers start doing the marketer, which was a huge mistake on his part. We [inaudible 00:33:49] the second day she was on the market.

Phillip Vincent:

So what you just said is, a community got rid of their marketing person?

Jeff Balleau:

They did. They did.

Phillip Vincent:

I've been telling them that. They don't like paying that salary. They're old school thinking, they don't think they need it, but they're just... It's another reason why a place for mom took the market share that they did, because they aren't good at marketing. They're good at care, that's their lane, they're just not good at marketing.

Jeff Balleau:

I could not agree more. That that is not their strong suit.

Phillip Vincent:

And it's a fragmented market too. Any other questions? Jeff, thank you. It's been great. I appreciate you very much, always. We've got to get together soon. We'll go ride the razor again. It's [crosstalk 00:34:27].

Jeff Balleau:

[inaudible 00:34:28] you said that you were taking me on vacation [crosstalk 00:34:29].

Phillip Vincent:

I know. I'll talk to Eric later. He's paying. We're going to go to Milwaukee, that's what he doesn't know. That's where he lives. We're going-

Jeff Balleau:

Ooh.

Mr. Erik:

There's a farm by the river.

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah, we'll go to the farm. You want to go to a Cardinals game? I've never been to Miller Park.

Mr. Erik:

All right. Come up. We'll host [crosstalk 00:34:45]-

Jeff Balleau:

Phillip, let me pass one more nugget, then I'll [crosstalk 00:34:49].

Phillip Vincent:

Give us all the nuggets.

Jeff Balleau:

I think one of the biggest questions that your investor should be asking is how can they help a referral and placement agency find people?

Phillip Vincent:

Oh yeah.

Jeff Balleau:

If you want to get some referrals from those folks, and Phillip, you've done this with us, "Hey, I've got this family. I'm not sure how far they are in the process, but I think they need what you do."

Phillip Vincent:

Yeah. That's magic.

Jeff Balleau:

If you do that for me, it's not because you put money in my pocket, it's because you're thinking about how you can help other people. Those are the folks I want to work with. Okay, so if you want to find a referral and placement agency, you find out who are the ones that are most respected, and the first time you have an opportunity to refer one... And here's how I suggest you refer, and here's what I try to do with Phillip. I do not give them Phillip's business card because... Guess who he calls. Nobody. It's overwhelming, it's stressful. Instead, while I'm with the family, I'll say Mrs. Danner, I have a guy that I trust intimately. You'll have to pay 5% to 7% commission, you don't have to fix your house up, you don't have to wait to put it on the market, and he has cash in his pocket that he can share with you within 15 days for closing. Do you mind if I call him right now?"

Jeff Balleau:

And while I'm with the family, I kick it on speakerphone. "Hey, Phillip, I know you're super busy. Can you give me two minutes of your time? I'm here with Mrs. Danner and here's her situation. I'm not sure if you can help." And then I let you say, "Jeff, if I can help, I will. If I can't, then we'll shake hands and walk away as new friends." If I do those referrals, the conversions are almost 100%.

Phillip Vincent:

Yes. It's that.

Jeff Balleau:

If I give them your card, it's hard to call.

Phillip Vincent:

Right. And I like... you took away the awkwardness of the phone call and they don't know what to say. And so you made that easy on them. I appreciate those, always. Thank you, Jeff, very much, and I appreciate it. I can't wait to hang out again. Talk to you soon. Can you see me? Oh, you're getting claps.

Jeff Balleau:

Feel free to show [crosstalk 00:36:50].

Phillip Vincent:

I want to see if you can see everybody. Hold on. Do you want to see all these people? Look at this. Everybody wave. We appreciate you, sir.

Jeff Balleau:
Hey. I love it.

Phillip Vincent:
Tell Sharon, "Hello."