

Andrew: This session is about how to connect with influencers so you can accelerate your startup's growth. It is led by Selena Soo. She is the founder of S2 Groupe, a consultancy group that focuses on marketing and publicity. I'll help facilitate. My name is Andrew Warner. I'm the founder of Mixergy where proven founders, like Selena, and as you'll see she is really proven when it comes to making connections, where proven founders teach. Selena, welcome.

Selena: Thank you, Andrew. I'm so happy to be here.

Andrew: It's great to have you here. You and I went to the same school. I went to undergrad here. You went to business school at NYU, and they always had us do these presentations in front of big groups of people. What was your experience like when you did that?

Selena: Oh God. I mean, I'm someone who, for basically all of my life, had been afraid of the spotlight. I've always been that behind the scenes person supporting these big leaders. So being in business school and having to get in front of the group and talk about myself or even introduce myself in front of small groups at orientation was always extremely nerve-wracking for me. So even with the most basic thing like an introduction, you know, my legs would shake and I would just be so embarrassed. And fortunately over time I've gotten better at that, but public speaking is not something that I am naturally comfortable at.

Andrew: And you've gotten really good at not just talking to people now but connecting them with each other. You helped us here at Mixergy make good connections. I'm looking at your website using what you've learned. I'm looking at the bottom here. You launched this site with quotes, with testimonials from Marie Forleo, Danielle LaPorte, an editor from O, the Oprah Magazine. You've gotten a lot of connections. Can you give me one example of a connection that you built because of what you're about to teach us?

Selena: What is it?

Andrew: Or did I just give them all away here?

Selena: Sure. I mean, let's see, so Danielle LaPorte. She's someone who I've admired for a long time. And I've been in touch with her a little bit over email, and I reached out to her when her book was coming out, "The Fire Starter Sessions" because I thought, you know what? She should really connect with the people at Oprah Magazine. They need to know what she's doing. So I just reached out to Danielle and said, "Hey, I know your book is coming out. Have you been in touch with the people at Oprah because I

would love to reach out on your behalf and let them know about your work." And she was just like, "Yes, please do." And so I put together a beautiful care package for them.

Andrew: Hold on. We'll actually show it in the session here, but as a result of that, what happened to her?

Selena: So, yeah, she developed connections at Oprah Magazine and other places that really helped with her book launch.

Andrew: All right. I want to get into the details of it. I didn't interrupt because I don't want to hear it, I interrupted it because I want the process of doing it and I want it not just for myself but also for my audience. This is really important stuff. If you're going to build a business, you need to know how to connect with the people who are going to help you build it stronger, faster. That's our goal here today. And the very first thing we're going to talk about is deciding who you want to connect with. And the problem here is that, what? How do most people do it?

Selena: You know, a lot of people come to me and they say, "You know, I want to connect with these influential people, but I have no idea where to start. I don't even know who these influencers are." Or maybe they're thinking, "Okay, influencers, you mean Richard Branson or Oprah Winfrey?" And they're trying to get the attention of those people, and that's really the wrong way to think about it.

So when you think about influencers, you know, there's really three categories of people that you want in your network. One is mentors, so these are people who are ahead of you in their careers. Two are colleagues and referral partners, so people in your industry or related industries who are already working with your ideal clients and are their trusted advisors and who can basically send business to you. Those are important people to know.

And then the third category are people who have reached, so this could be people in the media that have a large platform, or it could be another expert or colleague with a really big online audience. But it's really important to think about, you know, who do I know or who do I want to connect with in those three categories. And I always tell people to start with thinking about who would be great mentors, people who are where they want to be.

Andrew: And there's something about just being clear about who you want to meet. In fact, there's someone who came to one of your events. Do you recognize this photo?

Selena: Yes.

Andrew: Who is this?

Selena: That's my client, Daphne Chang.

Andrew: And Daphne came to your event, and she said that she wanted to meet with whom?

Selena: Yeah. So Daphne is a vegan chef, and, you know, I had this exercise for the group. And I had them write down what were their most important goals. In their business, in their personal life? And then looking at those goals, you know, who did they want to meet? And so Daphne wants to have a book, and she wants to open up her own restaurant. And so she made a list of these really popular vegan chefs that she would love to meet one day, and this was actually a small group that I was with, a group of 10 people. And she shared the names of people she wanted to connect with, and two people in the room said, "I know these people. That one person you mentioned back when I was doing book publishing, I helped publish his book." Another person in the group said, "Oh yeah, that guy's a family friend. I'd love to connect you two." And so it's just amazing that in just a small group of people, but as soon as it got clear on how she wanted to meet, people were like, "Oh, let me put you in touch. That's easy."

Andrew: I just interviewed Ryan Hoover, the founder of Product Hunt, and in the interview I did some research on him. Actually within the interview I really did. I started Googling him, and I found this one post that he did about a year and a half before our interview which listed the 13 people he wanted to meet.

Selena: Okay.

Andrew: And sure enough, I was on the list and he got to meet me, of course. But I think more than half the people on the list over the last year or so he got to connect with. It was incredible, and it's all because he started to get clear about who he wanted to meet.

Selena: Yeah, that's so great. For me, you know, I don't know. I kind of know different people that I want to meet, but I also don't feel like I need to rush it because in my mind I'm really clear about who they are. I even share that with people, and I know that when the time is right I will connect with them. But I think when people aren't clear, then it just doesn't happen.

Andrew: I see. So don't make a list and then go out hunting for them and start to really sweat them. Give them space, but just be aware that when you put it down Do you want us to be clear about the names of the people or just the kinds of people that we want to meet?

Selena: I think that you want to be clear about both because you don't want to just get so fixated that you need to meet these top two people in my industry and that's it. You also want to think of people who are also maybe just a couple steps ahead, maybe two or three years ahead. So let's say you want to have a book deal. Tim Ferriss isn't the only person who could, you know, be a mentor, although you probably can't get him as a mentor. There could be other people that you know who are going to ... book writing workshops or who maybe know book agents or publishers. And so it's really important to think expansively versus just the top two people in your industry.

Andrew: All right. Back to the big board. The next big thing that you want us to be aware of is we should think friends not business contacts. And you actually had somebody who you met. Is it ... Am I pronouncing the name, right? Abbe Wright?

Selena: Yes.

Andrew: Who's Abbe Wright?

Selena: Abbe, so she is an editor at Oprah Magazine. She recently moved over to Glamour, and this is just, I really think, an important point because I think when people are looking to build their network and grow their business sometimes it's approached in a very transactional way. And the truth is that people do so much more for a friend that they care about than someone who is just a formal business contact.

And so Abbe, I met her at this event. There were a lot of people there, but we managed to talk for a little bit, and then I sent her a followup email. And rather than just focusing on business, I just said, "You know, hey Abbe, I loved meeting with you, and I would love to get to know you better. You know, I'd love to take you out for dinner and I picked this really amazing restaurant that would be really fun" and she said yeah. She's like, "Yeah, that would be great."

And the thing is these magazine editors all day long they have people saying, "Oh, will you write about me? Put me in your magazine. Will you get on the phone with me or have a cup of coffee?" And it just becomes another to do on their to-do list. So I just wanted to make it a really fun thing where I could get to know her on a personal level. And we talked about everything from family and our career ambitions and even dating. And so it did really go very deep and develop a friendship but in a formal business setting we wouldn't have had that. And so that one on one dinner was just really, really powerful, and it ended up being really great for my business because I do organize these events for my clients where I bring together media influencers. I really feel like they should meet because they'll accelerate their careers.

And so Abbe is a friend of mine now, and so she comes to these events, and she brings her friends from all these other magazines, like Oprah and Glamour, and all these great places. And so now I have an expanded network of influencers that connect my clients with. And I think that, you know, if I didn't take the time to just develop that friendship none of that would have happened.

Andrew: You know, I'm wondering how you did that. So I remember I met Rich DeMuro at a conference, and he was the tech reporter for KTLA-TV. He came to cover the tech conference. I talked to him, and then we went out to lunch and we got to know each other. And then our wives and we became friends, but I remember what I did to start that conversation was chat with him and then say, "Hey, do you want to go to lunch? I'm curious about how you do your work, and I can tell you a little bit more about what's going in the tech scene over here because that's what you're covering."

I don't know that I could always come up with the reason for doing it. Sometimes I just want to get to know the person because maybe we'll hit it off. Maybe frankly, there will be some work for us to do in the future, but I can't just say that. It's a little creepy. Maybe we'll hit it off. Do you want to go out for lunch?

Selena. Yeah.

Andrew: How do you say it?

Selena: I think that, you know, you really want to establish a personal connection. I mean, in that case, I had met her at an event so we had a little bit of a connection there. But I think when you're reaching out to anyone, you really want to make it feel very personal. And that it's just not a copy and paste that you're sending to all the magazine editors or influencers that you want to become friends with. If you can reference something like, you know, I was reading the latest issue of your magazine, I really loved that article about this and this or when we were at the event you mentioned that ... I thought it was so cool. You know, I see synergy. If you dig deeper and know something about their personal life or their goals, then always bring it back to that. But I think if something is just very kind of bland, like meet with me or appear business, it's not exciting for people.

Andrew: I see. So here let me take a look at her Twitter feed. So you might do something like, come back home, look at her Twitter feed, see what she's into. If she's got a website, maybe there's something I could help her with that, and maybe she into reforming the criminal justice system, I don't know. Equal pay, so I'd look for something here, look for something in our conversation and use that as a hook as a reason for us

to go and have lunch. I don't know that people can see that. I should have zoomed in.

Selena: Yeah, and you know I have a quick story around that because Twitter is a great way to connect with influencers. And there was this magazine editor. She's at Elle Magazine, I've been following for a while. I actually pitched her before, and she didn't respond which is not a big deal because they get hundreds of pitches, but she was on my feed and she posted one day, "Oh I'm so tired. I'm feeling like going to yoga." And I just responded to her tweet and I was like, "Oh, yeah, I'm getting ready for yoga too, something like that." And she was, "Oh, that's great." And then she looked at my Twitter profile. I mentioned that I write for Huffington Post and Forbes and that I support visionary entrepreneurs. And I guess my Twitter profile intrigued her and she's like, "Do you want to get drinks?" I was like, "Yeah". So I think for her, she gets so many emails all day long that it's just like if you send these people an email, sometimes it can seem like another thing on their to-do list to get to versus Twitter is kind of her mental break. And it wasn't even about work. And it just kind of happened more organically, so yeah, social media can be pretty powerful.

Andrew: All right. The bigger takeaway though is the friendship part.

Selena: Yeah.

Andrew: You get to know somebody. You look for ways to connect as friends with them, and one way is dinner with them. I don't want to overstress the dinner, but I'm always curious about how you can take a stranger out. We have other ways, and we'll talk about it in a moment. But first, let's go back to the board and the next one is to add value above and beyond. And here's where that Danielle Fire Starter story that you were starting to tell really fits in. Can you remind us what you wanted to do with Danielle?

Selena: Yeah, sure. So Danielle's book was coming out, and I just thought that more people needed to know about her work. And so I asked her if she would like for me to reach out to the people at Oprah Magazine. And she said, "Yes." I think that's important. I just want to emphasize I didn't say to Danielle, "How can I help you" when she was in the middle of getting ready for her book launch? But rather I identified proactively how I could add value.

Andrew: Why is that important? Because a lot of people do say, "Hey, how can I help you? Is there any way that I can help you? What can I do to help with what you're working on?"

Selena: Yeah, I'm glad that you asked that because the thing is with someone who's

really busy, if you're asking them how you can help them, you're actually adding another to-do on their list. You're actually taking up their time. And the other thing is they're thinking, you know, can I really trust this person. Like, you know, is this going to be a waste of time? Because a lot of time people offer to help me and then they have never followed through or they've done a bad job. Or why would you tell a stranger what your priorities are and needs are? So with Danielle, it just showed that I was someone who was proactive, who was exciting about supporting her. I already had an idea, a plan, I was ready to go, but I just wanted to make sure that it was cool with her. So that's a real way of adding value.

Andrew: So, of course, she's going to want the book in Oprah's magazine, in O. So what did you do to help her get that?

Selena: Yeah, so what I did is I put together a care package, got a copy of her book, and put it in this brown bag with red fire paper bursting out, Fire Starter tattoos, yeah.

Andrew: That was it, huh?

Selena: I bought some nice stationery, some orange flower stationery. I bought a chocolate fire chili bar. These are just all of my ideas. And then I hand delivered it to Hearst Magazines, and then I also wrote a really thoughtful pitch that was just, you know. There was so much heart that went into it that it couldn't get ignored. And so they thanked me for that. I forwarded the pitch to Danielle. I also took a photo of the package and sent that to her. And she was just so happy with it. She sent me an email just saying, "Selena, thank you so much. The pitch is impactful every single word. You're so in your zone, and just for the love of God, thank you." And so that was a way that I built a relationship. It was really coming from just a place of passion and just kind of connecting the dots between people and opportunities.

Andrew: Did you get to know her because of what was it called? Inspired Coach Magazine.

Selena: No, actually I got to know Danielle many years ago. I think it might have been eight years ago when she had this business called Style Statements. And you would take like this task, and they would give you these two words that described who you are. And I just reached out to her saying it was really cool and offered some help. I don't remember exactly what I did. I was just like, "I want to help you with something." And we just kind of ... You know, we were on each other's radar. So I reached out to her long before, I guess, she is as big as she is now. But she just always knew me as somebody who is helpful and never really needed it or wanted anything but just believed in what she was doing.

Andrew: I see. And then you had a client, Julie Parker, who wanted to work with her.

Selena: Yeah.

Andrew: What was Julie Parker doing at the time?

Selena: Yeah, my client, Julie, she's amazing. So she is a life coach in Australia who has a coaching certification school and also her own magazine called Inspired Coach Magazine. That's a pretty new magazine. It's been around, I think, for about a year now, and she wanted Danielle to be on the cover of her magazine because a lot of life coaches look up to Danielle. But the thing is, you know, it's one thing if it's a huge national magazine with millions of people reading it to reach out to Danielle. But if you've got a podcast or an online magazine, there are quite a lot of them nowadays. Danielle just can't say yes to everything.

Andrew: I get it.

Selena: Yeah, you get it. A lot of people want to be on Mixergy, for example, but it's just not everyone can be on these shows and get these opportunities. So with Julie, we worked together on an email, and one mistake that I see is when people are ca-ching. The emails are all about them, like oh my podcast is so great. And then it comes with a copy and paste thing where you're just kind of adding the person's name at the top. And it's not personal at all, and for Danielle to say yes, it really needs to be all about her. You know, why is this going to be a benefit?

So we really spent some time thinking about how we could get Danielle to say yes. And so while Julie doesn't have magazine circulation in the millions, she does have a niche audience of coaches in the thousands. And Danielle LaPorte is actually launching a desire map licensing program which is this big offering that she's rolling out in 2015, and that's a major priority. And so we wanted to make sure to really focus on that. And so Julie, when she reached out, let Danielle know that she wanted to do an interview with her about the desire map licensing program. And she wanted to promote it to all the coaches. Also mentioned that she runs a Facebook community with 800 life coaches who are really the target market for becoming a licensee. And so just really focusing on how this would be good for Danielle's O launch and then also letting Danielle know that she's been following her for years, bought her products, is part of her Facebook inner circle. And so this is not just an email that she's sending to the top 10 people, it's really a very heartfelt personal email and that she would really love to support Danielle in whatever is a priority for her right now.

Andrew: And it led to this. It's a great cover.

Selena: Yeah, it's such a beautiful magazine cover and, yeah, it just generated so much excitement and a lot of new people who hadn't heard about Inspired Coach Magazine ended up jumping on Julie's email list. So Danielle ended up posting this on Instagram, and I believe that Instagram feeds into Twitter and Facebook. What ended up happening ... I haven't really seen this happen before, but just from that social media post 600 people signed up for Julie's newsletter.

Andrew: Wow. And so the big point here is that you want to make it about the person who you're trying to recruit. In this case, Inspired Coach didn't have hundreds of thousands of readers. In fact, very few magazines today do.

Selena: Yeah.

Andrew: But they realize that by doing some research that Inspired Coach had the right audience, and that's what you're trying to get us to do, to think about our needs from the other person's point of view. Sorry, what are the needs that the other person has that we're trying to get will help them with.

Selena: Yeah, and the truth is a lot of times we do have something to offer people that people aren't taking the time to really identify that and communicate that to the other person. So not that Julie would ever do this because she's a thoughtful person, but if she had just sent a quick copy and paste email, even though she had the perfect audience for Danielle and it was really synergistic, if it was not communicated in the right way, she would not have gotten Danielle on the cover.

Andrew: All right. Back to the big board. The next one is to get testimonials from influencers. All right. So now in this case you got Danielle to help out ...

Selena: Yeah.

Andrew: ... one of your clients and you also got this. This is a quote from your site. I'll read it because I think it's a little bit small here the way that I've posted it. But it says, "Selena, this pitch is impeccable, every angle, the whole spirit of it really is so good. I'm so impressed. You're so in your zone. For the love of God, thank you" in capital letters. So how did that come about?

Selena: Yeah, so that testimonial, along with a lot of other testimonials, came about because I'm somebody who just naturally enjoys helping people. And with Danielle, as I shared with that story I pitched her, and she sent that email in response to the update I

gave her with the pitch and the photo. And I was doing this for Danielle before I had a business. But I was graduating from business school, and I realized I'm ready to start my own company and have a website. And I knew how important testimonials were for a website. And so I reached out to Danielle and I said, "I'm launching a website for my new business. I'm so excited, and I would be so honored if I could include a testimonial from you." I said, "I know you're really busy, but I was wondering if perhaps we could use these two or three sentences from the email you sent me. Let me know if that might work," something along those lines.

But I basically did the work for her because asking someone to write a testimonial is another thing on their to-do list. I personally am someone who ... I'm a slow writer. I've had people ask me to write LinkedIn recommendations and things like that. I like think about it. I'll put it off. I write something. I'll rewrite it. It takes like a week, it's a law. And so if you can simplify it by providing them with some points, drafting something if that's what they want, or maybe even giving them some sentences that they can use that they have given to you. And all they have to do is just say yes, then you're going to get a lot more testimonials.

Andrew: Aw, it's such a big help. You're right. People who are good at this often will send back something that I've said before, maybe with a little bit of editing and say, "Do you mind if I use this as a testimonial?" Or here's a couple of things that I think you're feeling. Feel free to either write your own or do nothing at all, but here are a couple of samples. Because you're right, I do the exact same thing, especially with testimonials because I never know how long do you want it to be. Do you want it to be a paragraph, two paragraphs? Are you looking for just one sentence, two words, you know. And then I have to sit and make sure that I say something that's both meaningful and also feels powerful for you. I'm not that kind of a writer. It's really tough.

Selena: Yeah.

Andrew: Yeah.

Selena: It is happening.

Andrew: So you're saying write it for them or give them a couple of samples. Make it easy for them and that's what you did.

Selena: Yeah, you obviously have to do it in the right way because if it's someone who you're just like, "Hey, want a testimonial from you and I've already drafted something up." Then they're going to be like, "Whoa." So you have to kind of say it in the right way, but in Danielle's case she had already given me these sentences. Usually, for someone

else, I might say, "You know, I want to make this as easy as possible for you, so let me know how I can help, whether that is drafting something up for you, sending some ideas or giving you some samples, just let me know." So it's always in their court, but I make it as easy as possible.

Andrew: I had somebody be upset because I asked them for a sample of what he's looking for. He said, "No, if you don't know what to say, then you're" ... I forget, "If you don't know what to say, then forget about it. You must not really care."

Selena: Oh my God.

Andrew: I guess I don't care then. Now I don't care. Not with that reaction, I don't care any more.

Selena: Yeah, I guess that person has just really a lack of perspective and not understanding the bigger picture. I mean, because a testimonial is so valuable. And yeah, again, I don't think it's probably going to get that many testimonials then if that's the attitude he has.

Andrew: No.

Selena: What he's saying to people.

Andrew: And you also don't know, again, like I said, what size. I've had publishers push back on some of my testimonials because they were either too long or too short. They wanted them to be consistent with what others were saying on the back of the book or whatever space they had allocated. All right. Really good advice. I'm glad that you're saying it. It would help me if anyone who heard this actually used this advice with me.

Selena: Yeah.

Andrew: All right. Back to the big board and get back away from me and on to the person who's listening, who's the most important person in the world to me. And here's our next point for them. Consistently build your network before you even need it. I know a client of yours who is a health coach, helps women stop hating their bodies.

Selena: Mm, yes. So I have a client. Her name is Isabel Foxen Duke. She is an amazing health coach, and her work is just so important. I really feel like everyone needs to know about who she is. And so we started working together. She had moved to New York relatively recently, and while her work was really powerful not a lot of people knew who she was. And she felt like she really wanted to become friends with

the other health coaches and life coaches and influencers in New York City. And also with people in the media. And so that's why we started working together and she became a coaching client. And one thing that I said to her is that, you know, you really want to be systematically building your network. You want to build it before you need it. And she knew that she was going to have launches coming up where she would be looking for partners, and that's not when you want to start beginning a relationship.

And so one thing that I tell my clients to do is if they're really looking to expand their network to make it a point to connect with one new person a week. Because if you do that consistently over the course of the year you'll have 50 powerful influential people in your network. And if you want to double up and do that two times a week, then you'll have a hundred ones in your network. It's really not that hard to do when you make it a practice and you make it really systematic.

And so what I tell them to do is when they make their list of who you want to connect with, and I had given people the three categories earlier; the mentors, the colleagues, the people who you have reached. Also referral partners, super connectors that ... developing that list and then reaching out to them.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Selena: And when you meet with them, you know, at the end of the meeting you can say something like, "I loved our conversation together. I'm so inspired by what you do, and I feel like we have so many synergies. I'm just curious. Based on everything I've shared, is there anyone that you think I should meet? Anyone who you think that we would just really hit it off?" Or you could also ask, "Just curious. Who's the most connected person you know?" That's such a good question because then people are going to connect you to all of the super connectors in their world. And basically the super connectors, I mean, their favorite thing is just natural is to connect people with other high level people.

And so when you do that, it's very easy to get one meeting a week, whether it's a phone meeting, a coffee meeting. And by the end of the year you'll have a hundred powerful people in your network.

Andrew: You said be systematic. What is the system for doing it? Are we talking about almost a CRM-like system that you have your funnel for getting to know people, or are you talking about something simpler than that?

Selena: Oh yeah, way simpler. I mean, just an Excel spreadsheet where you just put down the names of all the people that you would like to meet with. And then with every

single meeting you go into say, "You know, who are two or three people that you think would be good for me to know about to have on my radar or to connect with?" And then they're going to give you three names, and then the list is just going to grow and grow. And then every week either reaching out to someone or ideally having that person that you just met with connect you to that new person. So the system is having that Excel spreadsheet with a list of people that you continuously add to. And then when you do connect with the person, you know, at the end of the conversation say, "You know, who else do you know that I should connect with?" And then having them connect you to them, and then that's all you really need to do to get those 50 to 100 people.

Andrew: Let me ask you. Let me take a step back away from our agenda here and ask you ... I see a photo here of you and some people who have really big reach, big audiences. Is that you there?

Selena: Yeah, that's me in my apartment.

Andrew: Oh, so they're all coming over to your house. First of all, it's impressive, but what's the point? What do you get out of getting to know people like Lewis Howes?

Selena: Right.

Andrew: Getting to know people like Derek, Ramit?

Selena: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, you know, for me I connect with people first and foremost because I'm passionate about the work they're doing. If someone was to say, "Oh Selena, I can introduce you to Beyonce or Katy Perry or some really famous person." It doesn't really mean anything to me because there really isn't any synergy or commonality. I mean, they're amazing and cool, but I'm not really drawn to meeting with them or trying to meet with them. But there are certain people who I find really inspirational, who I really believe in, and who I want to support. I want to help them reach their goals.

And so with all of these people, these are people I've developed friendships with, and that I've, in many cases, identified ways I could help them. I've just started helping them and being a valuable person. It's not like I'm thinking, "Oh let me help them so that then they're do something for me." The kind of mindset is really that, you know what? They're amazing. They're inspiring, and the opportunity to help them is the gift. I don't need anything else. And I think that sometimes people forget that. I've had people get very angry when maybe, for example, there's an influencer that I know, and her book came out. And someone was like, "I reached out to her. I offered my support. I did some stuff on Twitter and in my newsletter, and then I reached out to her to do something for me

and she said no."

And it's like, okay, when a person launches their blog, they're kind of leveraging their entire community. And so it's not like she can repay in kind to, you know, hundreds of people and send solo mailings. And I think if that's your intention, that's the wrong intention. It's not going to work. And people are kind of repelled from that. And so I think with the people that I develop relationships with, they know that I don't really need anything from them. I just value their friendship, and what usually ends up happening is there are such powerful synergies that good things do come from these relationships. But I'm really thinking about them and how I can give. And so, as a result, these people enjoy having me in their world, and that's why I have these friends and mentors.

Andrew: I see. I get not thinking about it as an IOU with an unspecified requirement, an obligation. I understand that there are a lot of people who help out with this idea that at some point I'm going to need something in the future, like the Godfather. And I will come to you and you better give me, or else I'll break your legs or maybe I'll walk away upset. I get that that's the wrong attitude to come into it with. But to just say, "I'm going to help people because I enjoy it" feels like it just doesn't make enough business sense, right? Shouldn't we at the end of this say, "There will be some good that comes to my business, and I know it will be there. And I know that I can't predict it here, but I can depend on it in a certain way. And I can learn how to call back on it."

Selena: Yeah. I mean, that's the other part to it. So I think for the people that I'm passionate about, that I want to support. There's a reason why I'm passionate about them. It's because there is someone who is doing amazing things, who's going places. And in my mind I can see the synergies. I can see the possibilities. But I don't need it to happen today or right away, but I just know that it is there. And when I get to know these people, it's not just giving to them, it's also them getting to know me as well. Then getting to know what I'm up to, what my goals are.

You know, when I started my business I had a point where I wasn't really happy. I was doing work as a publicist, and I knew that I wanted to make a switch and move into coaching and consulting. And so I invited people, like Ramit Sethi and Derek Halpern, to come to my place and we had a mini focus group with them and some other people. And so I also, you know, I give, but I do also ask sometimes like, "Would you be willing to help me?" But I also say that you have been such an important mentor to me, you really inspire me, and I know that your time would make such a massive impact." And they're happy to say yes to these things. That's usually because one, I've added value first. Second, they know that I'm someone who is hard working, and I'm actually going to implement their advice. And then we also have a friendship.

So it's not that I never lean on my network for support, but it's just something that I know that they will be there for me, and I'm also not afraid to ask. I think a lot of people are afraid to ask. I think I know how to ask in a way that's very kind and respectful and ...

Andrew: How do you ask in a way that's kind and respectful and gets the results?

Selena: How do I ask in a way that's kind and respectful?

Andrew: Yeah.

Selena: Well, I think first, these busy people get invitations from so many people, right? I mean, everyone can benefit from their help. And so you want to make them feel like they're the most important person. So as an example with my focus group, I reached out to Ramit and I said, "You know, hey, I'm going to organize this focus group. Would love for you to be there. And also if you can't, if you're willing to help, like let me know if any of these dates work for you because I'm going to organize the focus group around you."

Andrew: I see. That's flattering to him that it's organized around him.

Selena: Uh, yeah, and it shows him how important it is that he's there specifically. So then he'll come to my focus group and then I'll reach out to Derek who's also a friend and a good friend of Ramit's as well.

Andrew: Like you said, if Ramit will be there, Derek is more likely to want to be there.

Selena: Exactly. And then, you know what? I'm also going to organize dinner, have lots of nice food, lots of cool people there. And so I just make it a win and win and invite more people. Hey, Derek and Ramit are going to be there. Now everyone wants to come to the focus group.

Andrew: I see. So they all know you're putting together an event that makes sense for them. Even though they're coming for you, they are also getting there to get to know the other people who are coming to the event. All right.

Selena: Yes.

Andrew: I think that brings us up to the next point that we should talk about which is organizing your own events. You say if you want to connect with the influencers, it helps a lot to organize your own events for them. I agree with that completely, and I think we just saw a way that you do that. Bring one people in like the anchor tenant. Then you start to follow other people around them, and if they're all good people for the anchor

tenant, as Keith Ferrazzi expressed it to me, then the anchor tenant's happy because you've done all this work to get him together with a group of people he likes. And all the other people are happy to get together with the anchor tenant. That's how you do it.

Selena: Yeah, and that's always how I do it when I do my [inaudible 00:35:20] events, for example. I'll reach out to the most high profile people first, the person that Oprah Magazine or the Today Show. I'll make sure that they're coming and then I reach out to all the other media. Because media, they also want to become friends with other people in the industry. You never know when you're going to need a new job or just wanting to build your network. So always have those anchors first because that's really part of the marketing, and that's part of the invitation. These are the types of people who are going to be there.

And earlier me and you talked about building that network of 50 to 100 people over the course of the year and being systematic. But after you have those one on one phone calls and one on one meetings, it's not like you can meet up with those same people one on one, you know, two times again over the course of that year. But you do want to keep those relationships alive. And so a really powerful way to do that is to organize events, and I think you should also think about making that systematic, whether these are monthly happy hours, quarterly gatherings, weekend champagne brunch. So just name that as regular on the calendar.

And then invite 30 people, 50 people to a single event. And what's really powerful about that is that you're reconnecting with all these people, and you're adding even more value to their lives because you are now introducing them to your network of friends, mentors, clients. And so they're reconnecting with you, but they're meeting all these amazing people in this very curated way. And people love that. They love going to these events knowing that in just one evening they're going to be able to meet 30 amazing people that you've curated for them.

Andrew: Who pays for the event?

Selena: So it depends on what kind of event it is. It also depends on what your situation is. So if it's, you know, drinks I think it's nice for the host to buy appetizers for people and have that out there, and then people can buy their own drinks. You know, if it's something that you're hosting in your home because I've hosted brunches in my home and dinners or things like that, and definitely you want to provide the food. But I don't want people to think, oh because I don't have enough money to pay for 10 people's dinners that I can't hold these events. You know, you need to think about, you know, what makes sense. Sometimes a casual brunch, which is more affordable, may be better or just drinks.

Andrew: Yeah, that makes sense. I tend to overpay. I want to pay for everything, for some reason, but it creates a bad dynamic with people where they're coming to my event instead of all of us getting together for a mutual event. I like happy hours where people get to pay for their own drinks. And, yeah, even if I buy a round, then at least I've not bought everything for everyone.

Selena: Yeah.

Andrew: I do love dinners at my place.

Selena: Well another thing that people can also do is they can co-host with someone. So if you want to expand your network even further, it's you and someone else who just knows a lot of people. And then you can bring everyone together. When you're working with a co-host though, sometimes a co-host might be like, "You know what? I don't want to pay for anything." And then it becomes a little bit complicated.

Andrew: Right.

Selena: So you really want to establish what makes sense, but if it's a potluck where everyone is like bringing something and the hosts are announcing we're going to have the entrees, you bring the appetizers, or whatever. There's ways to do it so that it's cost effective.

Andrew: All right. Happy hour, simple way to do it. Get together with a bunch of people. It doesn't even need to be as many as you said. Even five people for happy hour, brunch, even dinners. I've noticed people will pay for their own, and you create a nice atmosphere when you take people out to the right place for dinner. Anchor tenant is the important thing for us to have, right?

Selena: Yes.

Andrew: What else? What's one more thing that we should think about because I do events all the time. I feel so comfortable doing them, but I think a lot of other people have a lot of hangups about it. What if they don't find the right place? What if people aren't happy meeting each other? What if only one person shows up? I've learned if only one person shows up, that's fine as long as I pick the right person.

Selena: Yeah. Oh, then let me give you a few more tips because, yeah, this is an important topic.

Andrew: Yeah.

Selena: So whenever I'm trying to get people to come to events, I'm not someone who does mass emails. I mean, definitely not in the beginning, at least. So what I'll do is get my anchor tenants. I'll individually email, let's say, 20 people and have them come. And then if you want to do a mass email, then you can invite more people once you know you have that base of 20 people. Although I have to admit that I actually email every single person individually, but usually I'm working with an email that I just modify slightly. So if you do that, people will show up. I've got your anchor tenants and they feel that you actually care that they'll show up because you took the time to write a personal email. Then they will be there. So there's no surprises. So that's powerful.

And then the other thing that I think about, which I imagine you think about too, is that your events ... You want to make sure that people are connecting. You don't want to just show up, and then everyone is in their small groups, and this person feels like uncomfortable, unwanted, and then you're kind of in a conversation. And so what I do at events because I'm always at the door greeting people as they come in. So even if I can't have a 20 minute conversation during the happy hour, at least, as soon as they walk in the door, I can give them a hug, "I'm so happy that you're here. By the way, Jennifer is here. I think that you should meet her. She's in that corner. Say that Selena told you to say hi." And so I just have that personal touch in the beginning.

Andrew: Yeah.

Selena: That makes it everyone feel so much better.

Andrew: Yeah, Mixergy started as events organized by a handful of co-hosts with me. One of the things that I would always say to the co-hosts is, "Let's have somebody greet a guest at the door because if they come in and they're not comfortable, if they come in and they're unsure of the environment, then it makes it so much tougher for them to get out of their own heads and go and talk to people afterwards," right? Because then they've gotten into this whole self-critical judgment mode, and it's hard to snap out of that. So, yeah, meeting them at the door helps. Introducing them to each other helps. Cool.

Let's go on to the big board here. Next thing you're suggesting is we should attend specialized conferences. Now you had a client, Dr. Tara. How do you pronounce Dr. Tara's last name?

Selena: Yeah, Tara Cousineau.

Andrew: Cousineau. This is her right here?

Selena: Yes, that's her.

Andrew: How did this happen?

Selena: Yeah, so that's her Awesomeness Fest. So Tara, she's a clinical psychologist doing amazing work but really wanted to get out there in a bigger way with the book and more media. So we started working together, and she's a busy mom. So she doesn't have a lot of time, and what I really recommended for her to connect with these influencers is to go to specialized events and conferences. You know, events that maybe it's a couple thousand dollars a ticket, but it's way better to do that and go to one event where you meet, in that case, there's really hundreds of influencers there versus going to three events or \$10 events which it's really hit and miss. And you're kind of doing that every week and not meeting anyone.

And so she met this person there. His name is Dr. Bob, and he is a media personality and has a book. And they connected, and he said, "You know, I love what you're up to. Here's my personal email. Let's stay in touch," and he's becoming someone who is like a mentor and a cheerleader for her work. But she wouldn't have found him at a \$10 event. So I really think that, I mean, one of our most precious resources are time, and so we can go to one event a year or a couple of events and meet tons of people. Do that instead of thinking that, "Oh my gosh, I need to go to two networking events per week in order to connect with the right people.

Andrew: Yeah, that makes sense. I've heard so many good things about Awesomeness Fest, but I also understand the resistance to go. It costs money. It takes a lot of time, but for the end. They also have a screening process, right?

Selena: Yeah, I mean.

Andrew: You could apply and they could reject you.

Selena: Exactly. Because I'm someone who has planned a lot of events myself, I understand what goes into an event. So with an event like the Awesomeness Fest, I imagine that they are planning this event one year in advance, and they're spending a lot of time and money on the marketing and on the team to put this event together. And they're getting their amazing keynote speakers and inviting all these influencers back, and they're spending an entire year curating this event just for you. All you need to do is show up. If you try to create that own event for yourself, it's like, do you know how long it would take you and plus if you don't know these people, it's probably be very hard to

get those 100 influential people to show up.

So I think that people don't always see the real value of these events which is why I really want to bring it up because it can be a game changer to go to a couple of these events per year.

Andrew: All right. On to the big board for the final point which is to express gratitude when people help you, even publicly. I'm going to do it right here. Can I say the name of the person who you helped us introduce to?

Selena: Yes.

Andrew: So we met and you said, "I know Tony Robbins' people. Can I introduce you to them?" And we said, "Can you? Of course, we'd love it. What do we do for you? How do we ..." So we said yes, thank you. I think we might have actually been a little less effusive, but we definitely said thank you. And internally we were really just excited about it. You introduced us to his people so that we could ask him to do an interview, and we've talked to him. And so far, no interview yet, but boy, it was such a great introduction and so considerate of you to have offered that before you even came on here. You didn't know if I was going to be a jerk to you or not.

Selena: Well, I mean, the thing is I'm familiar with Mixergy. I know how your interviews are great. I mean, so many people have said to me, like, Andrew is the best interviewer that I know. He is born to do interviews. So I also felt like it would be a great opportunity for Tony to be on this show. So it seemed like a huge win-win, but before kind of making any introductions or doing outreach, I always like to ask for permission first because I don't know if you're already in talks with him or if he's not the ideal guest. I never know what's happening behind the scene, but I'm glad that that's the kind of person that you want to connect with. And I really hope that it works out down the road.

Andrew: I do too. Thanks and your reach is impressive. Now I'm glad that I said this now because I know what it's like when people don't do this. In fact, you had an experience recently where someone said that she was looking for a job. And how did you help and what happened?

Selena: Oh gosh, yeah. I mean, I'm glad that we're talking about this because I think this is something everyone needs to hear. I'll share this story first, and then they'll see what the big point is. But basically there was someone in my world, and she had been out of a job for quite some time. And she had reached out to me, and she described what her dream job would be. And I thought I know the CEO of a company who's looking for a marketing person. Basically, it would be her dream job. And so I reached

out to the CEO, put them in touch, and I was happy to do it.

And then weeks later, it might have even been months, because it might have been a bit of a process, but I see a post on Facebook. And she announces that she has gotten this job. And by the time I saw the post, it was like, 30 people had already congratulated her and I was like number 31, "Oh, congratulations." And it was a little bit of a turnoff because she never really thanked me for that. And she got a job. I don't know if it was a six figure job or what, but it was a big deal job. And it wouldn't have happened if I hadn't put her in touch with this CEO. I just kind of felt like I was the last person to know. And for me and other people who enjoy helping and connecting people, I mean, we're not looking for even a gift or you want to connect with a client. You don't need a referral commission or anything, I'm doing it because I want to help. But I think that, if I am to be honest, and maybe it's being a little bit selfish, but I kind of do want to feel that I'm being appreciated for the time and energy that I put into things.

And so I think it comes from a place where I'm so excited to make the connection. I'm so excited to help this person get their dream job. When I feel like they've just forgotten about me entirely and that I didn't matter to them, then I just don't feel good about it. So I think a lot of times people think, "Oh, how can I add value to these influencers and super connectors and mentors and all these people?" They think it has to be so complicated. And I think a lot of people just want to know that you appreciate their help, that sometimes just really that simple. And when people express appreciation, then you actually want to help them more.

You know, when people tell me, "Wow, what you did was so helpful. It led to this result" and they thank me. And when they thank me publicly, that's even better sometimes, you know. I just keep on helping them over and over again, but the people who act like they don't care or just have forgotten and didn't take that time to just say thank you in a meaningful way, I usually don't continue helping them.

Andrew: Well, that's a really good point and here's the way that you do it.

Selena: Yes.

Andrew: This is just simple and effective.

Selena: Yeah. So what happened here is my friend, Spencer, said to me. You know, I met someone who writes for a [inaudible 00:48:17] company. I think that she should do a story on you, and I was like, great. I would love that. So he put me in touch with this woman. Her name is Elizabeth. We had this amazing interview, and the story came out. And wow, I got so much attention for that story. I got new clients and things like that.

And I shared on social media. When I shared it on social media, I didn't just say, "Oh yeah, I'm in fast company. Look at me." I said, "Oh yeah, I'm so honored to be in this piece in [inaudible 00:48:47] company", and I kind of gave a shout out to the writer.

Andrew: Yeah, I see it.

Selena: Thank you.

Andrew: Thank you, Elizabeth, for interviewing me and Spencer for the intro. Right there at the top above it. And that's what you're talking about when you say ...

Selena: Yes.

Andrew: ... thank them publicly. I was starting to imagine this whole big public thank you, but know you're saying it's as simple as that.

Selena: One sentence. It's all it takes. It can make a big difference.

Andrew: If anyone wants to learn more, these are just a few ideas that you've taught me, that now we're sharing with the Mixergy audience. You have many more ideas, many more tactics to share. We'll, of course, include a link in the course notes, but here's your URL for anyone who wants to go directly to it and see what else they can learn from you. It's a tiny URL that you can use to go directly to the right spot. It's tinyurl.com/mixergyvip. And, of course, we'll include a link to it.

Wow, Selena, thank you so much for teaching all this.

Selena: Thank you. Yeah, this was so much fun, and this is my favorite topic to talk about. And so if they want to go to that link and check out the video there, I have a video called "Get VIP Access to Media Influencers and Online Stars," and I go deeper into how I built relationships with these people and the media. It's very specific tactics that they can apply to their own businesses so I hope that's helpful to people.

Andrew: I'm sure it will be. And I always say at the end of a session here or an interview, of course, anything. If anyone heard something that was useful, they should find a way to say thank you. I'm saying it because now people who have listened this far now understand how important it is for a person who does something to feel that, hey, this has helped. It's good feedback.

But also I've had interviewees who happen to be ... I remember one guy. I said he happened to be in China. Somebody reached out and said thank you from China, and

as a result they connected and they had lunch together which was fantastic. I remember somebody who saw me on Leo LaPorte's show, This Week in Tech, sent me a note and because of that we ended up, actually this was fantastic, at his vineyard in Argentina. That's where I happened to be at the time. He said, "Oh, you're here? Cool seeing you on there" and anyway the reason I'm saying that is you should never watch something or read something online and feel like there's an invisible wall separating you from the person who you just heard and learned from. You should always feel like they're reachable, and the best way to start interacting is to say thank you.

And I'm going to do it right now. Selena, thank you so much for teaching here.

Selena: Thank you, Andrew. One thing I'll just add is if anyone just wants to say thank you or hello, I mean, I love connecting with people. My personal email is hello@s2-groupe.com. People can just feel free to send me an email. I always love hearing from people and just connecting with people who resonated with my message.

Andrew: All right. I was actually starting to type it out. Here we go. This is what it looks like, hello@s2-groupe.com?

Selena: Yes.

Andrew: Super. Thank you so much for doing this. Thank you all for being a part of it. Bye everyone!