

Andrew: This session is about how to turn adversaries into allies. And it's based on this book, my notes from this book, "Adversaries into Allies: Win People over Without Manipulation or Coercion." The book is written by Bob Burg, which I'm happy to have back here on Mixergy. I'll help facilitate. My name is Andrew Warner. I'm the founder of Mixergy. Bob, welcome back.

Bob: Thank you, Andrew. Always great to be with you. Thanks for having me back.

Andrew: Do you have an example of the mistake that we're trying to avoid here, with what we're talking about and what you've written in the book?

Bob: Well, when it comes to mastering people skills and influence, and what I call ultimate influence, there are certainly things not to do. And we have examples of that in the book, and one of them is the time I was driving with a friend of mine who had just recently moved down from Massachusetts. And he was driving, and got stopped by a police officer. And it was something, and I... you know, it was so long ago, I hardly remember what it was. But it had something to do with a four stop, you know, and maybe he didn't wait till someone else went through. I'm not sure. But anyway...

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: ...the police officer told him what he did wrong, and my friend actually said, "Well, that's not the law in Massachusetts." And, you know, I was just waiting. Was the police officer going to say, "Oh, well, I'm sorry, I didn't realize that," you know? "Oh, well I didn't realize that's not how it was in Massachusetts." Or was he going to say, "Well, this is Florida," you know? "This isn't Massachusetts." And of course that's what he did, and he gave my friend the ticket. And my friend was absolutely flabbergasted that he got a ticket.

What he did was he established a very negative frame with this police officer. It was very adversarial, even though he certainly wasn't trying to be adversarial. He just really said the wrong thing.

Andrew: I've done that, too, actually. Especially moving from New York to California, you just say, "Well, that's not the way it's done over there. Why are you catching me here?" So how would he have handled it right? If he were to have read your book, and have been in the right frame of mind in the moment, what's the proper way to handle it?

Bob: Well, he would have apologized. He would have said, "I'm very sorry. I did just move down here from Massachusetts, but I need to respect the fact that I'm in another place, and in that case, this being the law, I was absolutely wrong. I apologize."

Andrew: Do you have an example of someone who turned an adversary into an ally at business that we can use as an example of what's to come?

Bob: Oh, it's done all the time. It's almost to come up with an example is something I'd have to think of. I mean, any time that you are working with someone who

maybe, let's say, has an objection. And what so many people try to do is simply answer the objection. Actually, they try to overcome the objection.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: And I tell people you can't overcome an objection, because to overcome... the word "overcome" comes from the same Latin root as the word "convince," which is "convinciere," which means "to conquer."

Andrew: To conquer.

Bob: And [??] your prospect doesn't want to be conquered. [laughs] So it's probably not going to happen. So you can't overcome an objection. But what you can do is you can work within the context of the objection in order to complete the transaction.

What it comes down to, more often than not, is not necessarily having the answer for the objection. Let's face it, there's the other four, five, six objections we typically get, you know, in your business, and you're going to probably hear them during your first or second conversation or presentation.

So you usually know what they are. And so you'd imagine that once you hear it once or in training, you know what it is or how to answer it. The person asks it; you answer it. Okay. Case closed. Sale made.

And yet it usually doesn't happen like that. And the reason why is because typically, the answer to the objection isn't the issue. In fact, often the objection itself isn't the issue. In fact, often the prospect doesn't know what the true objection is, only because they don't know the process as well as you, the professional salesperson, does.

So they might say they need to think it over, or they might say the price is too high, or they might say... only because to them, there's something that isn't quite right. In other words, in their mind, even on an unconscious level, the value is here and the price is here.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: Well, when that's the case, they're not going to buy. But so what I like people to do is, rather than try to just answer the objection, is to really get to the root of what that objection is. And you do that by focusing not on making the sale. You focus on providing value to that person, and understanding what it is they need, want, and desire, or what the challenge is they're having, and you ask questions.

For example, if you want to just use an example, you know, the person says... A realtor shows a home, the person really seems to like it, but then says, "I think the house is too, you know, far from town." Well, someone who's just trying to overcome the objection might say, "Actually, it's only 10 miles away. Not really far at all."

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: "Well, I like to be close to where everything is." "Not a problem. It's a 25-minute ride on a bad day, and without traffic you can make it in 15." "Well, I don't know." "But you like the home itself, right?" Well, you know, that's not listening. That's debating.

Andrew: So how do you get, then... I could see doing that. Someone gives me a logical reason why what I'm offering doesn't make sense. I want to respond with logic. And I feel like, all right, at that point, I've responded, and we've eliminated the problem. If that's not the answer, if it's not to say, "Hey, let's pull up Google Maps and I'll show you how even Google says you're not so far from town," what is the right answer, then?

Bob: Okay. So let's look at that, and see what the right answer is based on what the actual objection is.

Andrew: Okay.

Bob: And one of the things we're going to talk about within the five principles of ultimate influence is the clash of belief systems.

Andrew: Okay.

Bob: And that is we think, as human beings, that everyone sees the world the same way we do, but they don't. And so we need to ask the right questions to figure that out. So when the person says, "I think the house might be too far from town," then you might say... you might say, "Could be. What are you thinking?"

Andrew: I see.

Bob: Now, [??] "could be," you're not saying, "It is, and let's move on." No. But you're saying it could be. You don't know. And it's up to them. It could be too far from town. "What are you thinking?" So let them now kind of go and just, "Well, you know, we love the home itself, but we really like to be close to where everything is." Well, again, that's a little better, but it doesn't really tell us what does that really mean.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: So we might say, "Sounds like that's really important to you. If I may ask, when you say 'close to where everything is,' are there some specifics you're thinking of?" "Well, yeah. With our, you know, little girl on the way, and a couple more kids over the next few years, we want to make sure, you know, we're near the, you know, restaurants, and entertainment, and shopping.

Well, you know, my spouse and I, we grew up in the city, where everything's so close. So to us, 10 miles might as well be a lifetime away. And heaven forbid we have to get our kid to the hospital, right?"

Andrew: I see.

Bob: So at that point, I say, "Ah, well, that makes a lot of sense. So if I'm understanding this correctly, as much as you love the idea of living in this home, we need to balance that with your and Pat's comfort level, being this distance from town."

Andrew: I see.

Bob: "Let's focus on that. Because, see, we grew up 100 miles from the city, so to us, ten miles is very close. What's she talking about?" Okay?

Andrew: [??]

Bob: But to her, you know, she and her husband grew up right in the city, so to them, ten miles might as well be a lifetime away. Unless we ask the right questions, and unless we ask it in a way that's tactful and empathetic, and we control our emotions and don't get defensive, but instead we let that person... now we're turning a potential adversary into an ally. She feels comfortable with us.

Andrew: Alright. Then let's look at these points that you've got in your book. I'm going to bring out a big board. The first one, as you said earlier, is to control your emotions. So I came across this article earlier in the week... excuse me, earlier in the year. This is from a few weeks ago. Look at this. A man shot and killed in a parking dispute in West Philadelphia. They get into an argument, one person loses his temper, boom.

And I've never gotten to that place, but I've gotten frustrated there. You've also been in a situation like that, in a parking lot, where suddenly I think you guys were arguing over a parking spot, you said in your book?

Bob: Well, it wasn't quite arguing, but it was... what happened was I was about to pull into a parking space, and I wasn't paying attention as well as I should have, and I nearly clipped the guy with my car as he was getting out the driver's side of his car. It was my fault. And he looked at me, gave me just a, you know, nasty look. You know, argh, you know, if looks could kill, I'd have been a dead man.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: And what happened was, he reacted to that based on emotion. Hey, who can blame him? He was scared, you know. And he unconsciously set a frame of anger, and of hatred. And had I bought into that... first of all, had I been reactionary, right?

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: Had my emotions been in control of me, instead of me being in control of my emotions, and had I bought into that frame, you know, I might have said... and had my ego gotten, I might have looked at him and said, "Well, what are you looking at?" And he'd have said, "Watch where you're going," right?

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: And nothing would have happened as did in West Philadelphia. But hey, you know, stranger things have happened, and we hear about those things all the time. At best, it would have been very uncomfortable. At worst, you know, who knows what would happen. But I didn't buy into his frame, and I was able to control my emotions. And what I did is I, you know, put an apologetic smile on my face, I gave him a wave, and I went, "Sorry." And he

immediately went, "No problem."

Now, the interesting thing is he was walking into the hotel, and I was fiddling with some things in the car getting ready. I walked in the door, and I didn't expect to see him again. But I saw him standing outside, I guess the meeting room where he was having his own meeting. And as I was walking past him, I was going to say, "Hey, I'm really sorry. I should have been more careful while I was parking." Before I could even say anything, he said, "Hey, I'm really sorry. I should have been more careful getting out of my car."

Well, you know, what happened was we just took what could have been a very uncomfortable situation and reframed it, and reframed it from adversaries into allies.

Andrew: What about this, though? Sometimes it's not so easy to catch yourself. I'll give you an example. I once walked into my office, and I had a temp in here, and I looked, and she had all the things in our drawers over there on the floor. And she said, "Look, I can put this in..." What did she say? "In shelving units that we can buy and make it easier." And all I saw was, those are my files. Some of them are pretty personal. That's a hard drive. I wanted to just be really upset. And I don't remember what I said. It wasn't yelling, but it was rude. And I caught myself later on, and I said, "Why did I do that?" And frankly, this stuff is not that personal, and I do need someone with an outsider's point of view to shake things up. And if that means tossing things out of the drawer, that's good for me.

I only recognized that later on. In the moment, I was rude. In the moment, I was angry. How do you catch yourself in the moment, and keep from turning someone a little hostile? Turning an ally into an adversary? How do you catch yourself in the moment, is the short question?

Bob: And it's a great question. And the answer is, you don't wait until that moment to happen to try to change yourself, okay?

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: You put yourself into... really, you change your brain, in a sense. But it's a lot easier than it seems. The first thing is understanding why it's just simply not helpful to lose your temper and not be in control of your emotions. And that's the key. See, it all starts with controlling your own emotions. It's only when you're in control of your emotions that you're even in a position to be able to take a potentially negative situation and turn it into something positive. As human beings, we are emotional people.

Andrew: Right.

Bob: And we'd like to think we're logical, and to a certain extent we are. But we're pretty emotion-driven.

Andrew: I know I am, at least.

Bob: Yeah. And, you know, emotions are a great thing, and I don't want anybody to ever think that I'm thinking, oh, you should be an unemotional robot. No. Emotions are great as long as we're in control of those emotions.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: I love what my great friend, Dondi Spumacci, says. She says, "By all means, take your emotions along for the ride, but make sure you are driving the car."

Andrew: But so how do I do it if... when you say get your emotions in control ahead of time, what does that mean? Does that... what does that mean? What could I do so that in the moment, when something that's unexpected happens, I am in control of my emotions, instead of just reacting to the experience I'm having?

Bob: Yeah. First, it's understanding why it's not a beneficial thing to stay the same way. Which obviously you've done.

Andrew: I get it.

Bob: And I did at one point, too. I had to, because I had a very anger... you know, I had some real anger challenges. Then it's deciding that you're going to now be in response mode rather than reactionary mode.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: Then it's rehearsal. It's practicing a situation in your mind's eye. It's seeing that situation that would normally push your buttons.

Andrew: I see.

Bob: And we all have situations that would push our buttons. It's, you know, we can... if we can't think of one, think back to a situation like that. And see what happened, okay? And then go back to it, and picture yourself handling it perfectly.

Andrew: Got it. Got it.

Bob: Then...

Andrew: So maybe on my walk home later today, I might think of the time that she just had all the stuff out, and think, what's a better way to handle it? It's to say, "What's going on here? What are you trying to do?"

Bob: Yeah.

Andrew: But in that mind's eye, just keep practicing it that way.

Bob: Yeah. And there's one more thing. And I want you to think of astronauts. An astronaut that, before they go up into space on a mission, they might simulate it 100 times.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: Why? Because they want to get to that point that by the time they're up there in space, when the real situation happens, if something comes up, they've been there and done that. You might say, "Well, it's not quite the same." No, it's not quite the same, but it's close. And as you know, of course, because you teach these things. The unconscious or the subconscious doesn't know the difference between what has actually happened and what is a very strong suggestion.

Andrew: Alright. Let's go to the big board. The next big idea we want to talk about is to understand the clash of belief systems. In your book, you tell the story of... what are their names? Dave and Margaret are two business partners. Dave says to Margaret, "I need these proposals soon," and that causes a problem why?

Bob: Well, because, you know, a belief is simply a subjective truth.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: It's the truth, it's subjective truth. It's the truth as we understand the truth to be, which doesn't mean it's the truth. It means it's our truth. Our beliefs as we...

We actually are run by an operating system. I call it our belief system. Our belief system is a combination of upbringing, environment, schooling, news media, television, movies, popular entertainment, popular culture, cultural mores. Everything we see, and touch, and taste, and smell, and hear, all these things. But, it starts when we're very, very young. We get this information fed to us. We're not thinking of it critically. We're not checking premises. We're not asking why this is true or why it's not. As we grow up it's the same thing. So, we tend to take in all this information which forms our beliefs, the way we see the world.

Now, the other person who you may have a potential conflict with, same with them. They're also run by a belief system they're not even conscious that they have. Here's the next thing, though. We all as human beings tend to believe that everyone else sees the world basically the way we see it. How could it be any different? We don't know any different. We just know our way is the way the world is.

That's, by the way, Andrew, why you hear people saying things like oh nobody likes that. Or, everybody feels that way. Or even I would never say that to someone. Well, no, because it's your belief system.

Well, it's the same when it comes to misunderstandings like that. Somebody says it needs to be done right away. What does right away mean? For one person it

means drop everything. It's the next thing that happens. It's got to be done overnight. It means I've got to not go to the ballgame with my kid like I was going to because I've got to do this and get it done. And then you bring it in and you've done your part. The other person hasn't come through. Why not? Well, right away next week, you know.

What you can do is basically you need to ask people what they mean, but in a nice way. You need to ask them to define their terms. It might be something like Dave, just for my own clarification... Because that's a tactful way to say it so it's not a you message that puts them on the spot and makes them defensive. Dave, just for my own clarification, when you say right away, is there a specific date you're thinking of?

Andrew: I see, yeah.

Bob: Now, it's also the same when you make that point, when you say something has to be done right away. You need to make sure to say by the way, just so there's no misunderstanding, just so I don't confuse the issue, when I say right away what I mean is within the next two days by the clock.

Andrew: Got it.

Bob: Then that works, you know.

Andrew: I see, yeah. I find myself doing that all the time in this specific type of example where someone just started here working in the office, Anne Marie. I said can you, Anne Marie, figure out how we can, what was it, raise the volume on our interviews.

I said can you see how to raise the volume. She went and she raised the volume. I came back and I have someone actually check everyone's work. I said look, the wave is kind of low.

I realized it's because to me raising the volume means go all the way up. The green line needs to be at the very loudest. People can always lower it when they're listening. To her, it means something different. It just means higher than where it is.

Bob: ...[??]

Andrew: So, we need to define our terms. Always go back to that. If there's an argument I might say what did you think I meant by raise the volume.

Bob: Exactly, exactly.

Andrew: Okay.

Bob: Of course, the best thing is to handle it before it happens.

Andrew: Right.

Bob: When I say raise the volume... Here's what I do...

Andrew: Yeah.

Bob: ...and you bring up a good point. When I hear a term, when someone uses a term, says a term, or I say a term, I try to remember to ask myself how many meanings could that possibly have. First, based on someone's, different people's belief systems and their interpretation. Also, different words do literally have different meanings.

I can't tell you how many times, on a more serious note, where someone brings a challenge to me and they ask me this and I'll question them. Because the first thing I'll say to them is, you know, based only on what you've told me I don't have enough information to provide an answer based on knowledge. So, there's going to be more questions.

I can't tell you the times I've heard, and I cringe when I think of it, people being asked questions that were really important to someone, and they just answered the question. But, they answered it based on their belief system.

Andrew: I see.

Bob: See, what our belief systems cause us to do is to fill in the blanks...

Andrew: Right, right.

Bob: ...based on what we believe the world is. So, we make major decisions based on very limited information. Two people can think they're talking about the same thing when they're actually talking about two different things. While all these principles are important, if you're going to be an effective communicator you've got to make sure both parties understand what the other person means and where they're coming from.

Andrew: All right, let's go back to the big board. The next big idea is to acknowledge their ego. You were at a... You were talking to a customs officer where it was an issue over your profession. What happened there?

Bob: Well, I was at the Toronto airport and...

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: And I was doing a program for a financial services company the next morning and when I went through immigration, when I went into immigration, I was stopped and they were checking, like they do, and she was very nice. She was very kind, but when she asked what I do, I said that I'm a speaker. And she said, "Oh." And I was thinking, oh-oh. That wasn't exactly the response, but she said, "What kind of speaker?" And I told her and I said, "A business speaker" and she said, "On what topic specifically?" She was asking questions that I knew there was a little bit more behind it.

She asked if I was receiving a stipend or a fee? And a stipend meaning a little bit of money and a fee being a lot of money. I got the feeling she probably would have been happier if I had said stipend, but first of all, I don't like to fib. And also if she had checked she would have found out it was not a stipend but a fee. And so I said it was a fee, and she goes, "Well, we might have a problem here." It was so very obvious to me that the problem wasn't so much that I certainly speak enough in Canada to know what is needed and so forth. And they're always lovely people. They're wonderful people.

So I could tell this was a personal thing, and there was something going on. Well, I knew, first of all, I had to respond and not react. I had to be in control of my emotions rather than my emotions controlling. Remember if this didn't go well, I could be sent right back home and my client would have been pretty ticked. I wouldn't have been so happy myself.

And so I had to also understand that we were coming from two different belief systems. There was something going on. I also got the feeling - and I didn't know this for sure - but somehow the ego had something to do with it. She was offended by something somewhere that I do, something going on. And obviously the correct frame had been reset somewhere in a negative way. So I knew I had to utilize tact and empathy and do my best to speak respectfully and kindly which I would always do, but also had to be really empathetic and try to find out what was bothering her.

Well, it came up fairly naturally. After a while she asked if I was familiar with a well-known American speaker, and I said I've never met him personally but I do know of him. And she goes, "Well, he was the rudest" and she went on a litany about this guy, about how rude he is. Well, that was it. That was the problem.

Andrew: Ah, okay.

Bob: I'm an American. I'm a speaker. He's an American. He's a speaker. Well, that was enough right there to trigger something. Remember, as human beings we are emotional creatures. And often our egos run us. And so that's what it was. So I certainly couldn't say anything negative about the other speaker, of course. It would be gossip, but what I said was, "Well, I'm very sorry you had that experience. I'm very grateful for your help in doing what needs to be done to help me get through so that I can respect the law and do my best." She was fine after that. She was wonderful but I felt bad that that had happened.

Andrew: I've had that in business where I feel like especially in the tech world there are levels of greatness. Some people are considered better than others. I remember early on when I did Mixergy people would want to meet with me. We'd set up an appointment and then they'd just bail, and I thought they just don't see me as a high enough level. They don't see me on their level. They think that I'm too junior. They think that I'm not successful enough and they would just dismiss me.

And I realized only later on that that was my ego. They had issues just like I sometimes have issues, that they have problems. It's not about me. In fact, what made me realize it was one person who bailed on me I found out later on he and his partner were splitting up. So it had nothing to do with me at that moment. There

was no way he should have talked to me, but here's the problem though.

I'm sorry. I've become much more understanding where anything that people do I've become very understanding of. Someone copied my website. I said, "You know what? Maybe it's not me. I'm going to be understanding. And someone did something else. I was very understanding. Finally I had a friend of mine, Rami Sethi, over for dinner. He said, "Aren't you upset that this happened to you?" I said, "No." He said, "You're being way too understanding. You're starting to become a doormat. You've got to stand up for yourself." At what point does my ego need to be expressed too?

Bob: Well, we'd first need to know. Is it the ego or is it something else? I mean, when someone does something like steal your intellectual property, steal your design, I don't consider that a good thing. But that's just me. That's my belief system. It's not something that in my belief that I believe is right and I'm assuming your friend felt the same way. It just may not bother you or it may bother you, but you're wanting to so control your ego... I don't think it's a matter of ego, I think.

Andrew: At what point is it a matter of ego or anything...

Andrew: Excuse me. At what point is it my ego and so it's wrong to react that way? And at what point is it just the right reaction because I'm analyzing things properly? How do you know the difference?

Bob: Well, I think you have to continually question yourself if that's the case. The good thing is being aware and conscious that it's something you should question. Most people will just go along and have feelings of either resentment or allow themselves to be walked on or their ego will be out of hand and they will insult someone else necessarily.

They'll never be questioning themselves, asking why am I doing this. Now I want to go back to something that's very important with your friend, saying that you're being a doormat. Being a nice person should never be confused with being a doormat.

People often ask, "Do nice people necessarily finish last? No. Of course not. Well, "Do they necessarily finish first? No. Not that either. Finishing first somewhere, I think what they mean is being successful. Being successful is more than just being nice. Being successful is doing the right things in the successful process that allow a person to be successful and finish first.

But what happens is sometimes we confuse being nice with being a doormat. Oh, that person's so nice they got taken advantage of. No, they're not getting taken advantage of because they're too nice. They're being taken advantage of because they're doing things in such a way that allow them to be taken advantage of. If you were taken advantage of by the people who took your website which, again, I don't believe they were correct in doing that. I don't think that's a good thing at all. That's your intellectual property and you did the work so it's yours.

Again, if that's something that you want to do because you want to give someone your word, that's up to you, if that's your belief system. I don't think it has so much to

do with ego as what's congruent with your value system. So we have to keep all of that in mind when we do things.

Andrew: Alright. Let's go on to the big board. I know we have just a little more time left and two more points to cover. The first is we need to set the proper frame. What does that mean?

Bob: Well, a frame is simply the foundation from which everything else evolves.

Andrew: Mm-hmm.

Bob: A quick example that I share in the book. I was in a Dunkin Donut store and there was a little boy, probably two years old, a little bit older, and he was walking toward his parents and he suddenly fell to the floor. I don't think he was hurt, but he was obviously a little bit shaken up and stunned only because he intuitively knew that that wasn't supposed to happen. So immediately he looked toward his mom and dad for their interpretation of the event. What happened happen but he was looking to them to see what happens from here.

And I really believe, Andrew, had the mom and dad panicked and started to get upset, "Oh no, my poor baby. You must be so hurt." I think he would have started crying, but they handled it just beautifully. They clapped and they smiled and they laughed, "Oh, what a good trick. That looks like so much fun." He immediately started to laugh and have a great time. Well, what the parents did is they set a very productive frame.

Andrew: Okay.

Bob: We can do that. Whenever we are about to interact with someone, whether it's that person at the customer service desk, the government bureaucrat, or the person with whom we are about to be in a negotiation, when we go in with a genuine smile or a friendly hello, when we're in a group and someone comes over, it's a matter of opening up our body language to welcome them into the conversation. All these things create a good frame. The key though is resetting another person's already negative frame.

Andrew: How do you do that?

Bob: Well, let's go back to the person in the parking lot. That was a good example. I did not buy into his frame. Instead what I did by controlling my own emotions and decide to determine, not buying into his frame but determining my frame, I was able to reset his frame. And most people will react/respond what you do because remember they're not necessarily conscious of it. If you're conscious of it, man, you're nine steps ahead of the game in a ten step game.

Andrew: Okay. Alright. Actually you know what? There's one other story that I heard recently that is similar to one of the stories in your book. This guy, Larry King, when he started on radio I recently heard him say he was really nervous. And this audience is going to judge me and this audience is going to be critical. I need to do something.

And he said what he ended up doing was going on mic and saying, "This is my first day. I've never done this before. I'm not sure how I'm doing this. We'll figure it out together. And he said by framing things that way they were on his side, and they couldn't hold any of his mistakes against him because he said this is my first day. I'm trying to figure it out, and they were rooting for him to do well.

And he said that kind of openness is what set the frame for the rest of his career.

Bob: What a great story. And we have that on a similar level in the book when I talk about my fourth grade teacher, Miss [??].

Andrew: Who did the same thing.

Bob: Right. She addressed the class and she said... You know, where we're all looking at her and wondering what she was going to say. She said boys and girls I just want to let you know I'm only 23 years old. I just graduated from college. This is my very first class, and I'm scared to death.

What she did is she welcomed us into her world. She let her guard down. She let us know she was fallible. Yeah. She let us see her sweat.

We've had that commercial for a long time 'Don't let them see you sweat' by the antiperspirant commercial which is on two levels. One is don't let... The antiperspirant will help cover up the sweat stain. But, the other intention is that well if you let people know you're nervous the dogs and the lions will be upon you and they'll pounce on you.

Most of the time that's not the case. Most of the time if you are yourself, and you are fallible, and you let them into who you really are they're going to be rooting for you. Now, let me just say a couple of things very quickly to this.

Andrew: Yeah.

Bob: Things are situational and in context. Sometimes, not letting them see you sweat is the absolute right thing to do. So, you've got to choose the situation. But, usually, nine times out of ten, no, let them see you sweat. Be yourself. You're more relatable that way.

The other thing is that Professor Adam Grant in his excellent book "Give and Take" mentioned that in this situation where you do let your guard down and let them see you sweat you'll have more credibility providing they also see that you have a high level of competency. Because if they see you're nervous but you also don't show competence, no, they'll eat you up.

Andrew: Yeah.

Bob: But, it's when you show, when you communicate competence while at the same time you're letting your guard down, that's when it's really powerful.

Andrew: All right. Back to the big board for the final point here which is to communicate with tact and empathy. Lincoln had many moments where he should have just blown his stack, where people thought he was weak for not doing it, where they thought he was weak for not telling people off.

But, he kind of did. He used to tell them off in writing. But, he did something different. Can you talk about that?

Bob: Well, there are a couple of things. I think what you're referring to, and this is a great point, is that he would write scathing letters to people. I mean he would let it all hang out. He'd have every invective, and every insult, and every point of disgust, and so forth and so on.

He'd write it. He'd sign it A Lincoln. Then, he'd put it in an envelope. Then, he'd tear it up into a hundred pieces. It was never going to be sent.

But, he was able to get that out of his system. But, what he also did which was very tactful is he knew how to deflect. He knew how to take criticism and really deflect it and take the energy out of the criticism.

One time he was approached by a reporter who told him how a fellow member of the government had criticized Lincoln. What did the President have to say about that?

Lincoln said hey, you know, I have a great deal of respect for that man. If he feels there's a problem it's certainly something that needs to be considered.

Andrew: Wow.

Bob: Well, the thing is he took the energy right out of the insult. He didn't insult the other person. He didn't act offensive. So, he was fine. It's that sort of thing that really endeared people to him. Here's a guy who was really... The cabinet he hired. Most of us know the story that they were enemies. They were his competitors. They were his adversaries. He turned them into the greatest of allies.

Andrew: Doris Kearns Goodwin's book was about that. I'm listening to the audio book of her latest book, the audio version of her latest book, which is "The Bully Pulpit."

She tells a story about how when he was governor of New York there was this parade against him. It was there. It was mocking. It was insulting. Because people were so upset with him. He went to the parade. He cheered people on. He clapped at them, and he laughed at what they were doing. By the end of the parade he won them over. It's unbelievable.

Bob: Who was this? This was Lincoln?

Andrew: Sorry, not Lincoln. I apologize.

Bob: ...[??]

Andrew: This was...

Bob: Roosevelt? Roosevelt?

Andrew: Roosevelt. Teddy Roosevelt. Thank you, yes.

Bob: Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. I can see that.

Andrew: Yeah. Alright. Actually, I've got one more example.

Bob: Sure.

Andrew: We usually call these programs courses. You don't refer to programs like this as courses. It could have been such an argument for us where you thought I was taking advantage, where I thought well why is he being so difficult.

The way you handled it was one of the best experiences I've ever had. You called me up. You understood what was going on with us, how we communicate here on Mixergy. You handled it instead of with argument with such tact in saying hey you know what, Andrew. For me, a course means a whole other thing than what you're doing. You won us over. We changed the title. We... Do you remember that?

Bob: I do remember it now...

Andrew: Yeah.

Bob: ...that you bring it up. Yeah, but you all were very...

Andrew: ...[??]

Bob: ...nice about it, too. It was very, you know. I felt great about you all. But, I had the whole way, because the whole way everybody had done everything with class and with grace. So, to me I didn't think anything negative. It was just a matter of our belief systems were different - in that case...

Andrew: You know what, though...

Bob: ...defining the term.

Andrew: I guess maybe there's a part of me that's cynical. I used to believe that people would write these books, but in private they would act differently. That they would say be tactful, but in private they were aggressive.

One of the pleasures of doing this work here is interviewing entrepreneurs who say one thing in public, and then I see them in private and they're the exact same way.

In this case seeing an author whose books I've read for a long time, and getting the behind the scenes situation where you could have been upset. Where, believe me, other people might have been upset. I know other people would've been upset.

You just handled it with such tact that it makes me feel really proud to have you back on here and really proud to introduce your ideas to my audience. Thank you.

Bob: That means a lot to me. You just made my day. Thank you.

Andrew: Thank you. The book, I'm going to put it right here up on the screen, "Adversaries into Allies." Bob, thank you so much for doing this.

Bob: Thank you. Thanks so much again, Andrew.

Andrew: You bet. Thank you all for being a part of it. Bye, guys.