

COACHING WIZARDS SEMINAR
HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN SIX-FIGURE COACHING BUSINESS
Dan Janal with Susan Friedman

Dan – Welcome to the Coaching Wizards seminar on How to Build Your Own Six-Figure Coaching Business. This is Dan Janal, The President and Founder of [PR Leads](#), and I'm delighted to welcome my guest today, a good friend of mine who I've known for many, many years, Susan Friedman. Susan is known as The Trade Show coach, but if you've been in the National Speakers Association for any length of time, you'll remember her for her great contributions to NSA, now as a board member. I first knew her when she was the editor of the Voices of Experience CD's that all the members get every month, so she had a chance to interview hundreds of top speakers at NSA and find out what makes their businesses run better, and I'm sure she's benefited from that. In the same way, we're hoping that you'll benefit from Susan's experiences today on this seminar. Welcome Susan.

Susan – Thank you, Dan. I appreciate that.

Dan – I'm glad that you're here and I'm glad that you're my friend and I'm glad that you're taking time out of your busy day to help us learn how to become better coaches and build our coaching practice. By way of introduction, could you tell us what the focus of your practice is?

Susan – The focus is, as you rightly said, I'm know as The Trade Show Coach, and I actually niche market myself so I specialize in the trade show industry. All of my clients are either exhibitors at trade shows or show organizers.

Dan – What is the primary benefit that you clients receive from your coaching?

Susan – I would say confidence, primarily the exhibitors, because they are the ones that I coach one-on-one over the phone. They really don't feel confident in terms of what they're doing. Once we work together and they feel a lot more confident that they can do

what they need to do and get the outcomes that they want from their trade show experience.

Dan – How long have you been a coach?

Susan – I sort of thought about that and I was like how long have I been a coach? I've been in business for myself since '89, so I'm like, probably as long as that and probably before that, but not officially. There's a lot of unofficial and the official.

Dan – What do you mean by that?

Susan – I feel as if I've been coaching people for many, many years, not necessarily in the trade show arena, but officially I've had my business since '89, and coaching is a growing portion of my business. It's not full-time because I do a lot of training as well, but it's an aspect of my business.

Susan – Why did you want to be a coach?

Susan – I think I'm doing it all the time. I don't know that I said one day that I want to be a coach. I use the term and have built my brand as The Trade Show Coach just because I feel that that's really what I do. Even in my training, I'm doing coaching. It depends how you interpret coach.

Dan – What is the most rewarding part of being a coach?

Susan – I enjoy helping people get the results that they want and looking at doing it a little differently. I always look at how can I help them do something a little differently, things that they hadn't thought about, and as I mentioned before, giving them the confidence to do what they do.

Dan – What is the most frustrating part of being a coach?

Susan – When I do it over the phone, it's that I'm not able to go to the show to see how they can carry out the skills that we've worked on over the month prior to a show. That for me is like, "Oh, I

haven't quite completed working with them.” I feel that that’s a big gap. However, there are clients who I do work with on site so I can get to see them.

Dan – Very interesting. I assume that if you don’t see them they become follow-up clients? Do you deal with them again? Do you follow up in some way? Or are they just a one-time client and that’s the end of it?

Susan – Well, now I do have them. I’ve got one client who’s been to a show for a couple of years and each time in preparation for the show, we have four or five coaching sessions, leading up to the show. I like to follow up with my telephone coaching clients after the show, find out how did they do, what would they have done differently, and knowing what they know now, what would they have done differently. I always like to hear that because you can always learn from that, and obviously, they can because there are no two shows that are the same. Even if they go back to the same show the next year, their experience isn't going to be the same one they had this year.

Dan – Let’s talk about how you started your business. Many people morph into coaching from some other job and it sounds like you have as well. What were you before you were a coach?

Susan – My background, Dan, is PR and marketing. I had worked shows myself and I’ve worked with clients at shows. When I was working with a PR agency, a lot of the work we did was with industrial clients and they went to shows and so a lot of the PR that I did was trade show related. I found that I was in the trade show arena a lot, so morphing into that as something that I did full-time for myself was a good fit.

Dan – How did that background help you to become a good coach?

Susan – In PR, as you know, Dan, because that’s your area of specialty, asking questions is such a key skill to have and one that I’m constantly improving. But I feel that being able to ask the questions to the client, means to be able to ask the questions that

sort of help get under the skin., That is a skill that I feel has really helped me considerably in this arena.

Dan – I'm going to ask you the next question, but I'm not quite sure it's applicable, so tell me if we need to rephrase this. How long were you a coach before you started making a full-time income from coaching? I know you do several other things, so maybe the question should really be what part of your income comes from coaching, what percent of your time is spent on coaching?

Susan – Again, it depends how we interpret the coaching. If it's a one-on-one, maybe about 30-40% and I'm looking to grow that more. However, the training is what I do full-time. As I said, I feel as if I'm coaching all the time because if a client has me do a training session prior to a trade show, and then has me be on the trade show floor, I do one-on-one coaching with the staff members to make sure that they are doing what they need to be doing in the booth.

Dan – Are you promoting your coaching business differently than your training business? Or is one an outgrowth of the other?

Susan – It depends on the client. Some clients can't afford for me to train them, so the next best thing is to have me do coaching sessions over the phone with them. However, even a client who can pay my training fee, we do coaching as well. Am I promoting it differently? Not really. I look at what the client wants to achieve and obviously how I can fit into the budget that they have.

Dan – So coaching is a very flexible part of your business. I think that's an important thing for our listeners to realize, that there are some people who coach full-time and there are other people who look at coaching as part of the services they provide, and it depends on the right fit for the client.

Susan – Exactly. It's a different model. I never do things the way everybody else does them in any event. I'm a non-standardized product.

Dan – Great. And that’s the reason why you're on our show today. We’re going to get into some of those questions about how you do things differently in terms of marketing and pricing and growing your business. Let’s focus on those areas now. In terms of marketing your business, what were some of the biggest mistakes you made when you first started your business?

Susan – I think the biggest mistake was not asking for help and feeling that I need to be able to do it all myself and I should know how to do it. Hey, I’m a marketing and PR expert; I should know how to be able to market myself. It’s probably one of the hardest things to do is to really market yourself. Being a little fearful of asking, especially my colleagues, for help, that took a lot for me to do that. Obviously, once I did do it, it was like, “Wow! Why didn't I do this earlier?” If there was one thing I would say to your listeners is absolutely ask for help. There are so many people around. People are willing to help. When people come to me and say, “Please, can you give me help in this area?” I’m more than willing to. In the same way, so many people have done that for me and I’m very grateful for that.

Dan – What mistakes did you make in running your business?

Susan – Again, the same thing, thinking that I could do it all. I always worked on a shoestring budget so I always thought I can't afford to have somebody. I was doing a lot of things that I really shouldn't have been doing because they weren’t cost effective for me to be doing.

Dan – Like what?

Susan – The paperwork, the drudgery stuff. When I found somebody to help me with that, again, it was a relief. Again, when I want to think of doing a project, asking people to help me with that—I feel I have to learn it all and I really don’t. It’s not a cost effective use of my time.

Dan – Beyond what you've talked about already, what would you consider some of the best moves you've made regarding your marketing?

Susan – I think it very much of niching myself and being a big fish in a small pond.

Dan – Let's define that. What do you mean by niching?

Susan – I've literally found an industry where I've become an expert in that arena. Again, it makes it so much easier when it comes to marketing that you niche yourself in a certain area. Now you're marketing to a targeted audience versus throwing it out there to the general public.

Dan – Did you just fall into this because you'd done PR marketing for companies that were exhibiting at trade shows?

Susan – Yes. Many, many, many, many, many years ago, I used to work with my dad and we did shows. That was one of the things that we did to market the products my father was selling. These were consumer shows, these long home and garden shows. There's one in England; it's called The Daily Mail Home and Garden Show. It still exists today and it's a two-week long show. It starts at ten in the morning and goes till nine at night. That's a real whopper of a show. I used to work that with my dad, and when I had a bit of time off, he gave me some time off, I'd walk around the show and I'd look to see, and I thought, "My goodness, these people just do not know what to do. One day, when I have the opportunity to run my own business, I'm going to teach people how to do this." This was just something that came out of I don't know where. I thought I could do this.

Dan – That really is fascinating that this is really a life-long training; something you've really been primed and prepped for.

Susan – It was just funny how so many of the things that I did constantly brought me back to the trade show arena. I took this PR job and I didn't think about trade shows, but then I worked with a

lot of industrial clients and they all went to trade shows, so I became involved . I worked with a marketing manager in another environment and there were trade shows that we put on, like little mini shows, and I was in charge of that. There was always a trade show aspect in the work that I did, and it wasn't something that I was looking for specifically, but it just sort of followed me.

Dan – I'm hearing that theme in a lot of the interviews I'm doing. It's basically you stick with what you know and you're taking it even further to even niching it to the point where this is all you do. That's really very fascinating.

Susan – Absolutely. Something I'll share with you and your listeners is that I'm actually in the process of writing a book about niching and how to take what I've done in the trade show arena and say, "Hey, this is duplicable in any industry."

Dan – Why don't you gives us the top three bullet points and explain those on how any of our listeners can really find their target market or their niche.

Susan – First of all, look at experience. What experience do you have? Have you got experience in healthcare? Do you have experience in education? Do you have it automotive? What industry do you come from that you have some experience in? Then look at where you could fill a gap in that industry. What do they need? It takes a little bit of research. Maybe you'll know straight away and you're like, "Ah, they need this," maybe they need healthcare, they need to know how to work, be less stressed." Look at the arena and the industry and look at where you might able to fill a gap and where you could become known as the expert in that industry, easily, where perhaps there's only a few other people or maybe there's nobody. The best scenario is that there's nobody doing what you're doing. Very naively I went into doing what I do thinking there's nobody else doing this. I was in business barely a few months and then I suddenly found out, "Oh my goodness, there are other people doing it," not very many, but there are a few other people doing it.

Dan – One of the best things I’ve heard about business, comes from my business coach, Mark LeBlanc, who will be one of our guests in a few weeks, and he says if you have [7%] of a market, there’s more business than you can possibly handle.

Susan – Absolutely. I would agree 100%

Dan – So who cares if there are five or ten other people in the business, I mean, there’s a lot of world out there to conquer.

Susan – Exactly. It’s really sort of keeping your eyes and ears open and being a little savvy about where can you go where other people are not. If everybody’s zigging, I zag. If people say, “You have to do this,” my gut reaction is to say, “No I don’t. I have to do something else,” because if everybody’s doing this, I’m going to get lost in the crowd, therefore, I’ve got to do that. I’ve got to do something different. How can you be different? That’s going to help you stand out. And how can you become an expert in what you do?

Dan – Can you give us an example of where you zigged when everyone else zagged?

Susan – I remember when I started in the NSA, National Speakers Association, the big thing was making cold calls, and making all the calls, sometimes 60 calls a day trying to get business. I hated it. I absolutely hated it. I would do anything to avoid picking up the phone. So I said there’s got to be another way to get to people. I went back to my PR background and I said let’s use my PR expertise and go out there and get articles published and go about it differently. My goal was to have people come to me rather than me to have to go to them because what I do, when I go out and try and sell what I offer, people say, “We don’t need it.” But when they’re in enough pain, they hunt me out.

Dan –. Great marketing advice. Getting back to running your business again, in the early stages, beyond doing all the paperwork yourself, what other problems did you have that you overcame? What was the best move you made regarding running the business back in the early days?

Susan – It was to find somebody to help me, somebody who I could afford. I just put the word out locally. At the time, virtual assistants didn't exist. I put the word out and Cathy, who's been with me now for maybe at least seven or eight years wanted something part-time. She comes in on a Saturday or on a Sunday or on an evening after her work and she works for me, I think it's about 20 hours a month. Some of the work she does at home. It works fabulously. She loves to do what I hate to do and that makes us a great match.

Dan – We'll talk more about the administration part of the business later in this interview. Let's move to pricing your services. How do you charge your fees? Hourly or project or some other way?

Susan – If I'm doing telephone coaching, I'm doing either an hourly or I much prefer to do a package where I do five for the price of four. I bundle it. I give them incentive. Obviously, I want them to pay up front up if they do that. What I'm doing with them, one session is not going to do very much. If they just want a few ideas, yeah, okay, we'll do one session. But really, to do this properly, we need at least four or five sessions. Sometimes the fifth session is the debrief after the show; sometimes we use it before the show.

Dan – I'm not going to ask you what you charge for your prices—that's a personal decision—but I am going to ask you how you respond to your prospects when they first hear your prices, which let's face it, they've never hired a coach before, they don't know what to expect, and then you come in with that price and then you're saying, "This will cover five sessions," so it's five times one unit. That's got to shock them to some degree. I'm curious what you say to get them back from shock into reality and justify your prices.

Susan – I don't justify it, because they need my help, they need my help. They've come to me. They're in pain, and when people are in pain, they want to get out of pain. One of the ways is to pay a coach to help them. That's where I come in. I don't try and justify it at all. Either they can afford it or they can't afford it. If they can't, move on. There's somebody else out there who can.

Dan – You don't feel that they're shopping around coaches at that point.

Susan – Not for what I do. No. You see, there are so few people doing what I do, and even my competition, I don't even think that they do the hourly coaching over the phone; I don't know that they do, so I really am the only one. Interestingly enough, I just signed a new client up yesterday to do five sessions. I said to her, "How did you find me?" She said, "On the website." I said, "Well what did you type in?" and she said "Trade show coach. I didn't know if anybody did this, but I just went to the web and typed that in and low and behold, your name came up."

Dan – Excellent. That's, again, part of your niching.

Susan – That's part of my niching. Absolutely. That's what I continue to market is the fact that...I market myself that I'm doing this; I'm out there doing this.

Dan – I guess I should have said that's one of the benefits of your niching, where you own the term so to speak.

Susan – Yes, I'd like to think that in some respects that I do. Obviously, my competitors would argue with that, but if you go to the website and you look up different trade show terms, trade show training, trade show marketing, trade show coach, and if you'd look up my name, you'll see how many times I come up. It's thousands of times.

Dan – Let's talk about how you grow your business. How do you get new business?

Susan – A lot of it is through either referrals or through my ezine that I do every week, and I have for about four years now. I'm constantly in front of people even on the web. I do two articles a month that gets posted on the web.

Dan – PR LEADS can help post articles on the web for experts. Contact me at 952-380-1554 or go to www.prleads.com/101prarticles.htm for more details.

Let's dissect those three models. The first thing I'm sure most people are saying is, "How does she create that much content in a month?" That's amazing. How do you get your ideas?

Susan – My articles?

Dan – Yes.

Susan – I look at what's needed out there in the industry. I know the industry very well. There are certain things that are needed. Now I've got to the point where I feel I've covered so many of them that a lot of my articles are refreshing something that I might have done four or five years ago. I might take the same concept and just give it a different twist. The material that I tend to put out is very what I call "evergreen" material. That means it's going to last. If you read my material—and any of your listeners can go onto my website and they can download there about 50 or so free articles there—it's all relevant stuff, even though you don't know when I wrote it. I might have written it five years ago, but it's still relevant today. Did that answer your question?

Dan – It's part of the question. I'm going to go back three times and talk more about each one of those points that you raised. The ezines—are you taking the same articles that you're writing and putting those in your ezine, or is that different content?

Susan – They are tips from the articles. Let's say I've got a 1,000 word article and it contains ten tips. I might put two or three of them up.

Dan – You're being very judicious in recycling and repurposing your content, so if you write it once, you can it many times.

Susan – Yes, or it might be something a little different that I haven't necessarily written a whole article about, but something like the

one...this went out this morning was on word of mouth marketing. I think I've got an article on word of mouth marketing, but I'm constantly reading things that come in my mailbox and I'm like, that concept might make a good idea. I heard from one of the show managers who wrote to me last week and said, "You know, it would be good if exhibitors talked to show management," so next week's tip's all about asking show management relevant questions. It came as a result of this guy and I obviously quoted him and said he brought to my attention this and he'll be thrilled to bits that he's got that publicity.

Dan – Then you mentioned referral marketing. How do you get referrals?

Susan –It's more third party than direct referrals. I'm not so good about asking for referrals, although I know...and I just listened to one of our NSA speakers who was talking about getting referrals, and I don't always do that. That's something, that I know that I need to improve on.

Dan – You said it's because they have seen you, but they obviously don't see you if you're doing coaching one-on-one, so where are they actually seeing you?

Susan – No, but every year I do trade events, like there is a trade show for the trade show industry. I will be a speaker at that and so people will see me there. Then they will approach me or they'll give me their card, I'll put them in my database, and they'll receive tips from me and maybe they can't afford me this year, but next year they can, or they move to another company and they still get my tips and then they call me and they say, "You know, I saw you two years ago at this show. I couldn't afford you then, but I'm now at another company and I can afford you and we need you. Ya-da, ya-da..." and that's when they would hire me.

Dan – That goes to all of our audience members to realize that it may not be a quick turnaround here when you're doing your marketing.

Susan – No.

Dan – It may take months or years for it to really take affect, but you're making an impact every day.

Susan – Absolutely. I think the biggest tip that I can leave your listeners with, Dan, is be in front of your audience, your target audience, constantly, be it through these tips, be it through articles, different web exposure. Look at whatever ways you can get in front of that audience.

Dan – You mentioned that you spoke at a trade association. Did they pay you for that? Or is this a marketing expense? I know in NSA, there's a general feeling of don't take free events, but there are times when it makes sense to do so, so I'm just curious.

Susan – Absolutely. When you're in front of your target audience, it makes sense to do it for free. I had one trade association that paid me and then they sort of had a budget crunch and they said they couldn't pay me anymore. I said to them, "You know, I want to be in front of your audience. That's much more important to me than getting a few thousand dollars in a fee." I get much more mileage by being in front them, so yes, just put me in front of them. Sometimes they pay my hotel, sometimes they pay my airfare, or they give me \$250 to go towards airfare, sometimes they don't at all and I'm on my own and I have to pay everything; they'll just give me free admission to the show. So it just depends.

Dan – In my high-tech PR days, I spoke at a lot of software publisher industry association events and the computer dealer events, and they would never pay because they new that every vendor there, or every person there, would basically try to want to speak so they could get new business. Of course, there's a good balance between giving information and trying to sell yourself shamelessly on the platform, but people really turn off to the sales approach. They like to see the information. If they're comfortable with the information that you're presenting, that builds your credibility. I generally would get two clients every time I spoke and

that would keep me going for another six months till the next convention, so it was a very good business.

Susan – Exactly. I know that I will always get clients when I speak for free at these events. I may not get them immediately, but I will get them. I spoke at one trade association and immediately I got somebody. I did an in-house training for them. They've asked me to develop some web materials for their exhibitors, which led to thousands of dollars worth of extra business for me. I just never know where it's going to come from, but I know I'm going to get it.

Dan – Have you written a book?

Susan – Several.

Dan – What role has book publishing played in the growth of your business?

Susan – I think the largest role is credibility, the fact that you are a published author. That also helps to stand me out from my competition because most of my competitors haven't published material. It really has been very helpful. Some of the things I've published I've self-published. I do booklets. I started off doing booklets. That's something that your listeners could do very, very easily. If writing a book seems very daunting, I would say just do a tips booklet. Put together 10, 12, 25, 50, 101 tips in your area and just write one or two paragraphs on that and you've got a nice little booklet that people will pay money for. It gives you some credibility. It's a nice giveaway. You could even have it endorsed by a company, especially if you're really targeting an area. I've done a lot of books for specific companies that they've given away, that they've paid me handsomely for just letting them use my material and writing it for them.

Dan – We've actually done a seminar on how to produce your own tips booklets with Paulette Ensign. If anyone is interested in that material, just send an email to me at Dan@PRLeads.com and I'll send you the link where you can find more information. This might be a good time to take a brief break here. If you're enjoying this

seminar, I'd really appreciate it if you'd send me a quick email to Dan@PRLeads.com just saying, "Thanks for a great seminar," or what you particularly liked about this seminar. It'll be nice for Susan to get a little thank you as well for your listening and for sharing all this advice.

Susan – Dan, I'm more than happy for people to write to me if I can be of assistance at Susan@TheTradeShowCoach.com. If they want more information on anything that I've mentioned, if I can be of assistance, I'd be happy to.

Dan – Thank you very much. That's very kind of you. Let's get back to the book publishing stuff. A lot of people listening to this seminar have either written their own books—they're okay with this whole idea—or they're beginning their coaching career and they haven't written a book and they just look on it as a big, daunting experience. You mentioned that tips booklets are a good way to just break into that field, to get some level of credibility. How important do you think it is to have one book? Is it really important? Is it nice to have or is it absolutely essential?

Susan – The advice that was given to me—a dear friend, when I was just starting out in my business, I said, "Give me a pearl of wisdom. What would you suggest I do?" He said, "Get published." That was his word of wisdom. I did everything I could to get published. I was turned down three times because my book exhibiting at trade shows is not a high-demand book. I did find somebody who eventually published it. One of my goals was to have a Dummies book and I had the opportunity to do a Dummies book, Meeting and Event Planning for Dummies. I would have loved to done Exhibiting for Dummies, but they didn't want that; they wanted meeting and event planning, so I did like three or four chapters on trade shows. Is it essential? Both yes and no. Would I recommend it? Definitely. Find some way to do something. You can self publish it. I wouldn't say you have to go with a major publisher. It's nice, but it's not totally necessary.

Dan – Let's switch gears here and talk about managing your business. How many hours a week do you work?

Susan – I don't count them.

Dan – Not enough toes?

Susan – I like to be disciplined. I feel that since I've done a 9-5 job for many years of my life, I always feel I need to be in the office 9-5. I've relaxed that rule a little bit and I'll go to an exercise class in the morning and I might go for a walk in the afternoon, but then I work in the evenings. I don't really know. I don't know that I can answer that question. I work to get the work done. That's really what I do.

Dan – Percentage wise how much time do you spend on clients or marketing or administration?

Susan – Again that was a difficult one. I don't assess it like that. The administrative stuff, as much as possible, I leave for Cathy. It's a very freeing experience putting papers in the in box. I do that and then when Cathy comes, the first thing she does is take my in box and just sorts it out and does whatever she needs to do with it. I told you that I, I mean, I do the articles and I do the tips, so they probably take a few hours during the month to do. The tips I do every week so they don't take me very long. If I spent an hour on it, it's a lot. That's a very tough question for me to answer. I'm not an analytical person. I don't put percentages on my work.

Dan – I'm finding that no coach punches a time clock here. It's very difficult to get good answers to this question, or specific answers to this question.

Susan – And there are pretty good reasons for that, Dan.

Dan – I'm getting a lot of good answers; they're just not specific answers.

Susan – I think you do what you need to do. My daughter just started her own business; she's a massage therapist in the Boston area. If any of your listeners are on the South Shore, they should let me know. She works so hard for herself and I said, "Absolutely, you

would never work as much for anybody else as you do for yourself.” It’s your business. It’s in your own interest to do what you need to do. If you want to work less, work less. If you want to work more, work more. There is a balance, obviously. You don’t want to become such a workaholic. You’ve got to have time for yourself. I spread it out during the day, as I said. I have a few friends here who really sort of call me and say, “Come on. Get out. Let’s walk for an hour,” and that sort of helps to keep me sane.

Dan – I’m going to skip ahead to the balancing your life questions, and I then want to go back and ask you questions about how you manage your virtual assistant as well. This seems to be a good time to just talk about the balance of your life. It sounds like you have it pretty well balanced together. Let’s let people know about your life situation. I know you’re married. Do you have any children still living at home with you?

Susan – No kids living at home. They’re both grown. That does make it a little easier. I do remember, having my own business when the kids were growing up. I really needed to be stricter about my work schedule. Obviously when they came home from school, I wanted to be there for them. However, there were times that they had to learn—I had to shut my door and take a phone call and they had to be quiet. But I tried to limit that as much as possible. But now, what I do is, they do call me on the phone and I want to give them time. Unless I really have something pressing going on, I will spend time talking to them over the phone. That works well. Evenings I like to spend with my husband. It doesn’t always work because he goes in his room and needs to go on the computer and do what he has to do and I sort of go onto my computer and somehow before we know it, it’s 10:00 and it’s like, “Oh my goodness.” There are certain days that we say we’re not going in the office, like Friday night is like no office; that’s just our time together.

Dan – Your husband is not involved in your business is he?

Susan – Minimally. He supports me in terms of moral support. He proofreads a lot of stuff. He’s very analytical and I’m not, so he’s the

one, if you wanted to ask him about percentages, he's the one who would have answered that question, Dan. If I need an analytical mind to look at something...like yesterday, I had a contract from a literary agent and I said, "Please read this for me," because I don't see things that he does, and he pointed out two things to me that I skipped right over, so that's why I need him for things like that. At the moment, my shopping cart, I have...he has to manually input the money into the bank, so he does that. He loves that. Bits and pieces I involve him. He's enormously supportive of whatever I do. He's someone I can talk things through with. He gives me a different perspective sometimes.

Dan – Let's go back to the virtual assistant. You've been working with one for a good deal of time now.

Susan – She's not virtual. She's real.

Dan – I'm sorry. Okay. She comes to your office.

Susan – She comes here, yes.

Dan – Is your office in your house?

Susan – Yes.

Dan – You have no trouble having another person coming into your house. How does that all work? Does she make lunch in your refrigerator?

Susan – I've gotten used to it. I sometimes have to cringe if we're in the same room together doing stuff, but I have a spare room which has my photocopier and a closet in it that she uses for storage stuff. She has to be in here in my office; there are some filing cabinets in here. I have filing cabinets in the basement, so she spends some time in the basement. We just sort of make it work. She's not here very much. When she comes, she's here for two hours, so I know there's a limit as to how long she'll be here.

Dan – Is she there two hours every day?

Susan – No, two hours usually a week. She works about 20 hours a month for me.

Dan – All inside your house or does she take work home with her?

Susan – She takes work home. Some of it's done at home and some of it's done here.

Dan – What kind of tasks does she perform for you?

Susan – As I said, she does mostly filing. She has done duplication where she puts workbooks together for me. If I have product that needs to be shipped and she's here when it needs to be shipped, she would do that for me. She might take stuff to the post office. When I'm away, she comes in and she sorts the mail for me. If both my husband and I are away, she comes in and feeds the cat. She's great. She's wonderful. I don't know where I'd be without her.

Dan – What advice do you have for managing your assistants?

Susan – Be good to them.

Dan – How would you define that or describe that?

Susan – Obviously, I've got a set amount that I pay her, and I pay her what she's asked me for. I actually pay, I think it's like \$12 or \$15 an hour, I think it's something like that. I give her things. I'm constantly giving her stuff. She just loves it. We just happen to be very similar sizes so if I throw stuff out of my wardrobe, I give it to her and she just loves it. . I give her stuff that she would never have bought for herself. When I go on vacation, especially if I'm overseas, I always bring her a gift. I'm good to her. She loves it. It works really well together.

Dan – Could you see hiring someone else to do different kinds of functions for you?

Susan – Yes, I do have some people. I do have a researcher. She actually only lives about an hour, hour-and-a-half from me, but all our work is done over the phone. She would be researching work for the book, work for articles, for me.

Dan – We're coming near the end of our questions here, which we didn't think we'd be able to get through all of them.

Susan – We've gone through a lot stuff, Dan. I didn't think we would go through so much in an hour.

Dan – It's amazing how much we can cover.

Susan – It's amazing.

Dan – Let's think back to the pearls of wisdom. What things haven't I asked you that I should have asked you? Other points that think you should have made that we just didn't touch on?

Susan – We've covered so much. I just would love to see your listeners focus in an area and niche themselves and look to become an expert in that area. It's going to make their life so much easier, because as I said, people will then seek you out rather than you having to look for them and convince them to buy your services.

Dan – That's really good advice. My last question for you is more on the emotional side. What would you tell a coach who is starting out on one of those dark, dreary days when everything looks bleak; what would you tell them, or suggest, to get their hopes and their spirits back up?

Susan – I've had many of those days actually. I've got a dear friend who's been a coach for me. By the way, have coaches for yourself as well; it's so necessary. One of my coaches has me always focus on my purpose. What is my purpose? Why am I doing what I do? My purpose is literally to share with other people, be a resource, help other people grow. That's why I love doing this teleseminar, for instance, because it really fills one of my purposes. Focus on that purpose and ask yourself what can you do to take a step forward in

the direction of your purpose. Maybe it's doing some research. Maybe it's doing reading, writing. Taking time off; maybe that's what you need to do on that dreary day when you're feeling down and nothing's working. Just go away and think about something else. Go for a walk. Go snowshoeing. Be good for yourself. Climb a mountain. Go swimming. Take an exercise class. Just take your mind off it and just come back refreshed. Sometimes we feel that we have to keep at it and we're wearing ourselves out and we often...just taking a break and looking at it differently could be very, very helpful.

Dan – Great advice. Susan, how can people get in touch with you? What are your websites and your emails?

Susan – The email, as I mentioned before, is Susan@TheTradeShowCoach.com. Believe it or not, the website is TheTradeShowCoach.com. There are lots of articles, free articles on there. If there's anybody interested in product, I've got lots of product there. If I can just be of assistance, any questions; if they're starting out or they want to look at how to maybe niche themselves, I would be delighted to be of assistance.

Dan – Thank you so much for your great advice and your wisdom today. I thank you very much for coming and sharing all of that great information with us. Susan Friedman, thank you so much for sharing your time and your energy and your wisdom with us today. I'm grateful.

Susan – My pleasure. I'm very grateful and I thank you, Dan, for the opportunity to share. That's what it's about, how we can help each other.

Dan – Thanks again and good-bye everyone.