

Brittany Lynch: Hey, hey. Brittany Lynch here. Today I'm happy to introduce you to Vic Dorfman. Not only does Vic run a very successful freelance business, he also uses his location independence fully. He lives in Thailand currently, but with the availability to work anywhere, he travels the world often. On top of all this he's also the author of the book, "Make Money Now," a step-by-step guide to earning your first dollar online by offering a service, which is available on Amazon.

I've worked with Vic for several years now, and I know my business runs much, much better because of him. So if you're interested in starting a freelance business, definitely pay attention to this interview. Vic is a great example of why freelance businesses are so great. Vic thank you so much for being here.

Vic Dorfman: Hey Brittany. Sounds like you have some kind of accident happening back there.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah. There's always something going on here in Santa Monica. We've got a fire truck passing by right now. Just to add a little excitement to the interview.

Vic Dorfman: Good way to start for sure.

What are the perks of starting a service-based business?

Brittany Lynch: I appreciate you being here. I'm excited to talk to you about running a freelance business because I know you've been doing this for a number of years now. Let me start out by asking my first question, and that is you're a big component of starting a service-based business. Why would someone start a service-based business over say maybe a product-based business?

Vic Dorfman : Well, it's a lot easier to sell a service. Actually let me back up. We have to define what is a product and what is a service, because the way that I see services now compared to when I started and when I wrote that book, which was over a year ago, it's still relevant information,

but my perspective has evolved over time. I like to share some of that perspective.

Freelancing vs. Monthly Fees

Basically, freelancing is great and it's a great way to transition away from a nine to five job and acquire some skills and learn how to communicate with customers, learn some professionalism, and get the hang of your craft a little bit, in my case, membership sites. What you'll find, what most freelancers find is that they're trading time for money. When you're working a nine to five, you dream about being a freelancer. You dream about trading your time for money so you can work from home and from abroad.

Once you get there, human nature being what it is you naturally start thinking, "Crap, now I'm trading my time for money, so how can I get that sorted? I still think services are best, but I think it's best if you productize your service. What I mean by that is rather than... For example I set up membership sites. Rather than setting up a membership site hourly, which is the arrangement you and I have, I can use you as an example. I used to charge you hourly, right?"

Brittany Lynch: Yeah.

Vic Dorfman : Then over time what I realized is that for me and for most freelancers it's kind of a feast and famine situation, where you're making money at one point, and then next month all of your money and dried up and you're kind of pinching pennies and you're nervous. You can't really provide a consistent amount of value to your clients, so it kind of makes you uninvested and uninterested as well.

What you do in this case, is you productize, which means you think about the all of the problems that you clients have on a semi-recurring basis, preferably on a recurring basis. You come up with a solution to that problem. In your case or in our case, you have all of these kinds of website tasks that happen all the time. You email me and you say, "Hey Vic, can you do this. Can you do that? Can you do this? Can you do that?"

Before I was charging you hourly for it, but it really makes more sense to charge a monthly fee because it's a win-win situation. It asks more from the client, so you get a better quality of client. You can invest more with fewer clients. So you're not always... One of major headaches of freelancing is that if you're chasing that new contract, you are constantly incurring something called a cognitive switching penalty, which means that your mind has now... If you think of your mind as an addict, you're stuffing a bunch of things in there. You can only focus on so many things at once, and the fewer the better.

If can service fewer clients on a recurring basis for more money and with higher value going both directions, then that's a much better arrangement than freelancing. You can think of it as freelancing plus. We can get into this later into the interview, but I'll just give you a taste of where I'm going with this, is that once you're doing that, you start to think that, well this is great. I'm making more money. I'm giving my clients a lot more value and I'm not worried about next month because I know that I'm going to get that payment from Paypal month after month, but you're still doing it all. You're still trading your time for money albeit one way.

Brittany Lynch: That's definitely a really interesting approach, and obviously I've kind of experienced this transition with you a few different times evolving your freelance business. I know that when I initially left my day job that I actually did freelance as well. To your point, one of the benefits was I'm not tied to a desk anymore. I could experience location independence, which is basically working from wherever I would like. However, I was still trading time for money. I used freelancing as a way to gain back some element of time and control in my life, and used that as a bridge to transition into a product-based business.

Let me ask you the next question then. If someone did want to get into the freelance business, and they came up to you and they didn't know what type of service to offer. What would you suggest they do to come up with ideas?

How to Develop an Idea for a Service

Vic Dorfman : I think what you really need to do is to be observant because ideas, maybe contrary to popular belief ideas are bound... They're a dime a dozen. Everybody has a lot of ideas and a lot of good ideas at that, but that's not really as relevant as people think it is. What's relevant is that you go online, you read around, you look at what people are having issues with consistently. What are people's frustrations? What are their pain points, and where are they not experiencing satisfactory solutions to those things?

Then once you've got a few ideas in your head tentatively, the important thing is that you test those ideas as quickly as possible, and that you don't engage in, and forgive my language, mental masturbation, and start building this beautiful thing in your head about what this service could

be, we've all done it, but that you just get your idea and you test it quickly. To answer your question more directly, I think just going online, reading and seeing what people are having problems with.

I told you just a second before we started the interview about my podcasting service that I'm coming out with. What I saw and what I podcast, you podcast, and we do interviews all the time, and what I discovered talking to people is that there's nobody who does end-to-end podcast production where you just send a raw audio file out to internet land and it comes back in 48 hours ready to go, ready to publish a blog post, show notes, social media, or works. You get better at this over time too because the kind of unsexy truth is that, especially if you're just starting out, it's going to take a while before you develop a bit of a business intuition and a bit of a nose for ideas, but you'll get there. You just have to be persistent.

Brittany Lynch: That is true, over time you, as you put, develop a nose or intuition for business ideas. Let's say I want to start a freelance business. As a practical first step, would I maybe think, okay what skills do I use in my day-to-day life right now that maybe my boss is paying me for that might have customer base online? Let's say I have paid traffic skills. I have writing skills and basically take an inventory of the skills that I use in my day-to-day life. Then following that to get more inspiration because some people might not even understand what sort of services are available out there to freelance. Where would be a good site to go to get inspiration for the types of services that are even available in the first place that other people are doing?

Vic Dorfman : I see what you're asking. That was a very kind way of prompting me with the kind of answer that you'd like for your listeners. Definitely take inventory and be honest with yourself about what you can do. That's all there is to it because when I started out freelancing online... Maybe you've had this experience too because I know you came from Google, and I know you had experience with Adwords, but that doesn't mean that that's where you're best suited to, because I started out writing. Then after about a month of freelancing writing I literally had carpal tunnel syndrome and I hated writing. I didn't want anything to do with writing ever again.

Just because you enjoy something, turning it into your business isn't necessarily going to be enjoyable. There's no right answer to this by the way. There's no kind of way to predict whether you're going to like something beforehand. I would say, yeah, go online. A good place to go is the Warrior Forum. I know we've talked about that a lot, which is the biggest internet marketing forum in the world. You're going to see... The reason I like the Warrior Forum so much, I have a soft spot for it because I got my start on the Warrior Forum. It gave me my first few gigs. Got me "out of a job." What it is, is it's a lot of people... something like 700,000 or 800,000 people now who are in various stages of their internet businesses and they need services. They need SEO services. They need writing. They want people to create websites. There are people hiring there. You can very quickly get a sense of different kinds of markets, and cross-sections of business from going on this forum and seeing what kind of stuff people need.

That's just on avenue. There's a lot different places you can look online. You can go on Reddit. Reddits, like a business subReddits, and even I think somewhere in your interview questions when I was going through them, I think you mentioned tax services, accounting services. If you're an accountant, then there's no reason you couldn't start an accounting service, but you'd have to validate idea, and I guess we'll get to that in a bit, yeah.

Brittany Lynch: I agree with you, Warrior Forum is a great spot to go to, not only get ideas for services to offer, but also to maybe even get your first job. Let's say that I am starting a freelance business and I've come up with my idea or I think I have an idea and I think I want to offer paid traffic, like done-for-you campaigns for people. What would be my next step? Do I need a website or do you not even recommend that with these forums out there?

Vic Dorfman : No. You don't need anything. Well, you need one thing. You need clients, and everything comes after that. If you can't convince people to give you money to do this thing for you, then don't do anything else. Don't build a website. Don't open a Twitter account. Don't do anything. Find some people who you think might need your service and pitch them. I know this sounds simplistic and it is kind of simple, but isn't easy. I think people experience a lot of resistance to this because there's a bit of selling involved. Truly, if your service provides value, and even for the first few people you do this for, you can do it at a discount or even for free, depending on how intense the service is for you to do. Say, look I will run paid traffic for you. I will put together a campaign. I will run your thing. I'll send you the conversation rates. You'll see how you did and I'll the full

thing off your hands. Would you be interested in that? He would say "hell yeah."

Then say, okay, well, how about I give you 50% off and I'll do one for you and we'll come back in a week's time and see how the results are. So you see if people are willing to give you money by asking for it. Once you have one or two or three clients who had paid you and they've given you some feedback and you figured out is this service something I want to do. Is it something I'm good at, or is it delivering value for my clients? That's another big thing. It can't just be what I want to do. It's got to be is this valuable to my clients. To the degree that they would pay me to do it for them. You know what I mean. People are not just going to give you money to do stuff they can do themselves, or that you couldn't do better in their step. Yeah. So get clients.

Brittany Lynch: So step one, I've got my idea. Step two, it's idea validation, and that's really what you touched on, which is asking is this something that you need. Is this something that you would pay for? I guess ultimate validation is when you've actually received the first payment. Because people can say yes, but if they don't pay, then maybe it's not quite there yet. When you're doing the idea of validation phase, is this something that you would again recommend doing on either a Facebook group or the Warrior Forum?

Vic Dorfman : I would say that this depends highly on the service you're offering, right. Because if you're offering something related to internet marketing then it would make sense to go where those people congregate. In the case of the Warrior Forum, it would be the Warrior Forum. I'd seen a

lot of people validate their ideas on Facebook and Facebook groups devoted to business. There is a group on [inaudible 15:59] called the 7 Day Startup Facebook group, which is Dan Norris' Facebook group. He's the guy from WP Curve. He wrote "7 Day Startup" and "Contact Machine." Very cool guy. Great group. That's basically all we do in a group, is we start these... people start these startups and then they say here's my offer. Here's my pitch. Is anybody interested? If people are interested then they get pitched. It is important that you're in a place where you can get a realistic feel.

In other words, just because nobody purchases your thing right off the bat it doesn't mean it's a bad idea. You could be in the wrong place to be pitching. You want to go where the people who are having the problem that you're solving congregate, which seems kind of highly intuitive, but if you're doing paid traffic you don't want to post to your personal Facebook page, and saying hey friends and family I'm offering this service. No one's going to give a shit because they are not having that problem. You have to go where people are experiencing that problem and pitch them.

Brittany Lynch: Spend some time getting to know your audience and where they hang out online?

Vic Dorfman : Yes.

Brittany Lynch: What forums? What websites? What Facebook groups? And join those because you already come A, more familiar with your audience, but also develop something that you and I talked about before, which was develop your network, correct?

Vic Dorfman : Yeah. Absolutely.

Freelance Earnings

Brittany Lynch: That's really helpful. We're at the point where we have an idea. We've talked about idea validation and even getting some of our first customers. Warrior Forum is a great example, but if you're not offering services related to internet marketing, then you might want to look elsewhere and again, just figure out where your customers hang out online. We as a freelance business have you noticed that there's kind of a cap on earnings. Is it possible for someone to start a six-figure freelance business, and if so, what sort of time frame have experienced that's possible?

Vic Dorfman : I'm not sure. I don't think I've hit six figures. I don't really keep track. I think it's possible, but it all depends on how much you want to work is the truth of the matter. I don't like to work too much, but some people do and some people have different obligations and some people have a family to take care of, but I know it's totally possible, and I know six-figure freelancers. I will say that some services, some businesses are more conducive to high dollars than others. With writing, it's quite difficult I think in general to make a really, really good freelance career. You can do it if you get into the corporations and you charge ridiculous rates, but if you do something like paid traffic, which is what you mentioned, you can really quickly get connected to people who spend six, seven figures a month on paid traffic and see huge returns and they'd be willing to pay more for your services if you take that off their hands.

Brittany Lynch: I think what you mentioned was interesting for a few reasons, and I was going to touch on this later, but you

mentioned it really does depend on your circumstance as well, as well as what services you're offering. As an example, you run a very successful freelance business, but you also live in Thailand. To your point that you don't like to... You don't want to work too much, you can support your lifestyle for a lot less than it would cost to live in the United States, right?

Vic Dorfman : Exactly.

Location Independence

Brittany Lynch: Why don't you tell us a little bit about location independence. What does location independence mean to you, and what has your experience been with location independence? Both with your job financially. Just what it meant in your life.

Vic Dorfman : I think it's part of everybody's personal journey through life in figuring out where they belong, and how they want to spend their time. It's always good to remind yourself that you're going to die, and that your time is limited. You don't want to defer. What happens to a dream deferred? You don't want to defer the things that you want to do while you're in your prime if you can at all help it. For me that meant doing some traveling and finding out a little bit about the world and about myself. When I came to Thailand, and I came here just spare of the moment because I was actually fired from my job. This was the catalyst for me to start my business. This was about three years ago. I came here with no money. I actually left with no money. I came here with about \$22,000 in credit card debt, which is all paid off. It was either sink or swim.

I was living in a hostel and every day I'd wake up and I'd go to the lobby. I'd log on to the WI-FI and I would just email everybody I knew. Here's the other thing too about the question you asked previously is that you need to have some hustle. You can't just... I mean it's business. No one's just going to hand you their hard earned money. We all work hard. There's going to be a period of hustle, especially if you're just starting out. I just want to point that out. What I found living in Thailand, and this is a very personal thing. You may find it living in Europe or in Spain or in Bali or in Brazil or whatever, is that you resonate better with some places than others. Once you feel that residence and you feel like this is my place. This is my spot.

Then you start to think, well, maybe I should just stay here. Because I grew up in the U.S. but I never really felt like I resonated with American culture, and I don't know when I came to Thailand things made sense, so I thought I'd stay. It is difficult to be location independent at times because... Especially if you're from a Western country. You have to start all over. You don't know where everything is. There's a big setup cost for learning the lay of the land, learning some of the language, some of the customs. Especially if it's a vastly different country from the country you're from. It could be some serious culture shock type issues to deal with. Those don't go away by the way, they just get funkier as time goes on.

So location independence is great, but ... This is kind of cheesy, but you just have to listen to that little voice inside in and if you feel it... I'll say this. I'll leave it at this. That you should definitely travel a little bit, and you should try location independence to see if it's for you. Because just

like anything else, you can't know about something without experiencing it firsthand. You can't experience it from hearing other people talk about it. You have to go, and do it.

Brittany Lynch: I think that that was really good insight, and I like what you said about resonating with a certain place because I've definitely found that to be very true. With location independence, one of the other areas I want to touch on before we come back to the freelancing side of things, is the financial. I think that you as people think about retirement a lot of people think about it in the sense of staying in the United States or staying in Canada or wherever they are. That might be right for them, but for other people they could actually retire right now or be permanently semi-retired by moving locations and living in a country with lower costs.

Financial Benefits of Location Independence

Speaking of the financial side, you mentioned that you had credit card debt when you moved to Thailand. Do you think that by living in Thailand you were able to pay that off faster and what other impact has living in Thailand financially had on you?

Vic Dorfman : Thanks for prompting me by the way because I do have a tendency to get off and ramble.

Brittany Lynch: No. That's good.

Vic Dorfman : No, definitely I think that's a huge benefit of going to... There are a few countries that are probably better known

for this. Like Thailand is obviously one. Columbia is another big up and comer. Bali is also very nice in Indonesia. There are some countries where the cost of living is relatively low compared to most of the rest of the world, but it's still a good standard of living. Thailand is definitely one of those. In my case, yes coming to Thailand, even though I had no money, my relative expenses went down because in the US when I did have a job I was making good money, but pretty much all of that money just kept me afloat. You were saying before the call that there's a direct correlation between how much you save and how early you retire, rather than how much you make.

If you're spending everything you're making and... Okay let's say back in the U.S. you're making \$10,000 a month, but you live in Manhattan and you have to spend \$6,000 on your pad. Another \$2,000 on food. Another \$1,500 on taxes. That leaves you \$500 bucks a month for coffee. What the hell is the point of that? You're not really saving anything and you're just breaking even. So your salary is sort of a losary. It sounds like a lot but it really isn't a lot. Whereas if you're living in Chiang Mai, Thailand, for example or Metagene, Columbia, cheaper places, but with pretty good standard, less than standard, then you can focus on your business. You can focus on building your freelance business, without having to worry that you are going to go broke, because you don't need much.

In Thailand you can get by on... Some people get by on... I don't know, 600 bucks a month. I think it's more reasonable to say like \$1,500 a month. Surely you can rustle up some clients to get that much going a month.

How to Price Your Services

Brittany Lynch: That was a really good answer, and kind of perspective on the financial side on location, and independence. It perfectly ties back to pricing of freelance. Obviously in order to make that \$1,500 or that \$10,000 or whatever your goal income is with this freelance business, you need to know how to price your services. At this point we've talked about how to identify ideas. We've talked about how to validate that idea, and find an initial set of customers. I think a lot of people have trouble thinking of, how do I price my service? Do you have any insight on that?

I know you kind of touched on it earlier on in the first question, but I'd love to hear a bit more.

Vic Dorfman : I think as a freelancer, you're doing the work as distinguished from you're hiring people to help you, and you're building your real... Let me just take a distinction here real quick. There is freelancing where you are doing the majority of the work, or all of the work in most of the cases, and building a business which relies on processes, on scale, on human resources, employees, on software and automation to produce a larger result than you can personally input at this proportionally larger result. In other words, you put in one unit of "you" time, you get back three units of client value kind of thing, whereas in freelancing it's more of a one-to-one.

If you are doing everything yourself, and you are in a freelancer world, in my opinion, and some people would disagree on this, but in my opinion you should charge as much as possible, and provide as much value as possible, and take on as few clients as possible. There is

caveat which is that when you're just getting started, and you don't have any skills to speak of, you won't be able to do that. You're just going to have to take it on the chin for a while, and charge less. Here is the thing too, you don't know how much to charge. Let's say you've started a theoretical business of running paid ads for clients, well how much should I charge? I don't know. There is no right or wrong answer.

I think you just sort of throw out a number that you think is reasonable, and then very quickly maybe within a week or two, a month or two you're going to be able to ascertain pretty accurately where your skills, and the amount of value that you contribute to the client, how accurately they correspond to how much you think you should be getting. What's really cool about freelancing is it actually teaches you... It gives you a better objective, sense of value. When you work for somebody, when you work at a company, even though you know that the money is coming from other people who have to pay you, you don't really feel it.

Once you are sort of owning every aspect of your business, process, and because you have to really treat your clients really, really well, and not just like some third party end client that ultimately the corporation, not you is responsible for. You just start to realize a lot of things. I'll give you a real life example of a very successful entrepreneur, and how he prices his service. My buddy Russ Perry from DesignPickle.com... He built a million dollar business. This isn't a freelance business, but it's a service-based business.

The way that he figured out his pricing was he thought, "What is sort of kind of reasonable, and what would I pay?" He came up with I think it was like a \$197 a month for their basic tier, and it's unlimited graphic design... It's the service. People paid it, and it stuck, and it sort of made sense for his target market. They evolved the pricing over time, but that's the thing. You just put out what you think is reasonable, and over time you're going to evolve. With you and I Brittany, I started out charging you I think... How much did I charge you per hour when we first started? Like \$40 or something.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah. Something like that, I can't even remember. It's been a few years now I think, but something like that.

Vic Dorfman : I think I charged you like \$40 an hour which was... For me it was like, "Man I'm really banking now," because when I just started out, I was charging... I don't know. When I first got to Thailand, and I was trying to figure out how to eat, I think I was doing \$10 a hour or \$15 an hour, anything that people would be pay me, but as I acquired expertise, and reputation, and as you acquire those things your business, then you can start pushing the envelope a little bit, and saying, "Look, I like working with you. I think I'm providing good value to you, and I'm going to raise my price. I understand if you don't want to stick around, but I have to do this."

The counterintuitive thing is that the clients who are willing to pay you more... First of all they have more to pay, which means that they are successful, relatively successful themselves. They are not tire kickers. B, successful people understand the value of a valuable service, and a valuable contractor. That all goes back to,

you have to become a valuable contractor. You have to provide a lot of value. Again it's like... I don't know. I feel like there is no answer that I can give that's going to communicate the fact that you just need to go, and do it. It's like the 90s slogan. You just do it, and all of these things will reveal themselves, but definitely it's good to have all these little points in line just so when you come up against them, you will know like, "Oh yeah, I remember hearing that thing about pricing." You just got to kind of go out, and do it basically.

Brittany Lynch: I think that your situation... Obviously you run a freelance business so it's very applicable. Is it a good kind of story for everyone to understand? It's true, you mentioned you started out charging \$10 or \$15 an hour. Here is the thing, is even if you look at your competitor pricing or mine, there is going to be a huge range. There probably were people charging \$10 on the work forum for the services that you are offering, but what you did, and you did this several times throughout the course of us working together was you started to build up your customer base, and then at a certain point you realized, this is too little. I'm not earning enough from the work that I'm doing. You also kind of... It sounds like re-prioritized your life.

You didn't work 10 hours a day, so you said, "What can I do to not work 10 hours a day, and make just as much, or even more?" You visit your clients. I'm sure every time you adjusted your price, you approached them with the same message, "I want to work with you, but I've got to increase my prices." I stayed on through that because you made yourself incredible valuable. That point of becoming a valuable freelancer is very, very important, and don't forget that. Think about how can you make yourself so

valuable that this person really can't live without you, or it would be really annoying to change service providers.

Even though you increased your prices several times, I still stuck around, but I'm sure that you had lot of clients who didn't stick around too.

Vic Dorfman : The clients that... Yeah, of course.

Brittany Lynch: They were the tire... As you call them tire kickers.

Vic Dorfman : Some of them were, but not necessarily. I think just going back to... Two things: one is I just want to point out the way that you said that you decide that you want to kind of live a life a certain way, you figure out what you need to do to make that happen. You're working backwards from the result that you are looking to achieve, which is the kind of the ideal [inaudible 36:09].

Brittany Lynch: Yeah.

Vic Dorfman : As you sort of pair down your client base, you're working with fewer people, but they are more passionate people. Now I have three clients. You're one, and then one you know also, and then one you don't know. I'm working probably about the same amount of time that I was when I had 12 clients, or 15 clients, but I'm charging way more. I'm providing so much more... Here is the thing too, you just get so much more invested, and passionate with fewer clients because you can give them more, and they are giving you more, they are paying you more. It's kind of this win-win reciprocity cycle and... Whenever you can, and like I said, it might take a while, raise your prices, work with fewer clients, and provide more value.

Brittany Lynch: That's really good summary of that, the points that we just discussed. Let's say we have our first customers now, or first few customers, what tools do you use to manage projects? I know you are like the tool guy, you've tried a lot of different things.

Vic Dorfman : Are you calling me a tool?

Brittany Lynch: Depends on the day.

Vic Dorfman : I'm not the tool guy for myself, but I am guy that likes to make clients lives easier.

Brittany Lynch: Definitely.

Vic Dorfman : See, that's the value, is that was born out of necessity like with you for example. We're setting up like team chat with slack, we're setting up to do lists with Trello so that anytime one of us tells the other, " Hey, we need to do XYZ, we immediately put a card on Trello so that we don't forget it. It may take a while for us to get to it, any one of our priorities, but it's not just going to get lost in the email inbox. So kind of your job as a freelancer, whatever your service maybe is making your clients' lives easier, and better, and you get better at that with time.

Brittany Lynch: I can definitely say you've done that for me. I think that it's just a really great example of how to really excel in the freelance business, is making your customer's life easier which you've really prioritized. I guess one of my final questions here is what do you think the secret is or secrets to running a successful service business are? We've touched on some of them, so maybe just summarizing what you think the most important things are.

Vic Dorfman : I know if there are any secrets... You have to show up. Woody Allen reputedly had said that 80% of success is just showing up. I think that goes for... In fact that motto was so poignant to me at one point in my life that I actually have show up tattooed on my arm.

Brittany Lynch: No way.

Vic Dorfman : Above my wrist. And because I think it's such a simple, but constant reminder that as you go through your day, or through your life... Some days, like today I did not feel like working whatsoever, but I was like, well I just got to do it. You sort of develop a stoicism, and a meditative quality. It's amazing how freelancing actually teaches you many, fine qualities that you incorporate into your character. Like you develop a certain calmness, a certain equanimity, because when you have a client freaking out, and saying, "You know, everything is exploding." It's on you to sort of keep a cool head, and fix everything in a timely manner then add a necessity. You develop that skill, and then you realize, "Hey, you know what, when a client is freaking out, I'm still cool as a pickle." Wow, now I can do that, and now I have confidence, and that ability. It radiates into other aspects of your life.

Time Management and Energy Cycles

Let me just go back to your previous question. I'll fully address this question about tools, because I actually got off topic again. I do use a few tools. I do use Toggl, which is a free online timer. It's T-O-G-G-L.com. It's a really cool tool because it's just a super simple to use timer that allows you to know what you're working on any given time. Then at the end of the week, you come back, and you sort of see the distribution of work like, "Oh, 50% of

the work I did this week was for Brittany." That's not good because that means that I'm neglecting my other clients, so I need to switch it up next week.

I'm also a big fan of Trello because it's just an awesome to do list. Other than that, I think those are pretty much the only tools ... Google Drive. Google Drive is amazing, absolutely amazing, way better than Dropbox, but I won't get into that.

Brittany Lynch: For storing all your files, absolutely. I've never used Toggl, but I love Trello for to do list management. It's been amazing for me. I've used it for about two years now, and it's been very, very helpful. I definitely second that. Toggl sends really interesting... Especially from their perspective of running a freelance business to see where you are spending your time to optimize it. As you grow, see how you can use that time better. In your book you talk about the currency that you need to manage or learn to manage is energy. Can you explain what you mean by this?

Vic Dorfman : This is a concept that I... It's not my concept. It comes straight out of a book called "The Power of Full Engagement" by Tony Schwartz. In a nutshell, let me just give you an example, real life example... We all have 24 hours a day, and let's say you Brittany today you're going to be awake for 13 hours, 13 or 14 hours. How many of those hours honestly, would you say that you can be like 100% present, and totally productive before you get down energy and distracted?

Brittany Lynch: No. We were talking about this actually at the start of the call. I'm definitely most productive in the morning, like early in the morning, and then I take a bit of a break. I go

to gym. I come back, and then in a few hours later I start to work. Like I find in the morning, and the evenings actually I'm the most focused, and get things done the best.

Vic Dorfman : Exactly. How about two or three hours before you go to bed? How is your energy level then?

Brittany Lynch: Usually it's really good for me. That might not be the same for a lot of people, but I actually... Usually my mind comes totally awake right before bed, and I get productive again which probably isn't a good thing, but yeah, that's kind of how I work.

Vic Dorfman : I'm the same way actually. I have a nice burst in the morning, and then in the afternoon I start getting kind of sleepy, and I just notice myself drifting, then I'll go exercise or whatever. Then I definitely get another burst in the evening, maybe another one in the late afternoon. The point of the book is that you have all of these hours in the day, but they are not equally productive hours because you are not going to put out the same quality of work in after a heavy lunch as you will in the early morning when you're kind of hungry. You just woke up, you have a cup of coffee.

When you notice that your energy is waning, and that your awareness, and your focus on the task is starting to wane, and that's actually a good indication that you need to stop, like force yourself to stop because a lot of times you want to barrel through, which is the wrong thing to do. Force yourself to take a break. Do some jumping jacks, have an apple. Take 15 or 30 minutes to recharge, because you have to remember, and this is the whole premise of the book, is that we are sequential creatures.

Everything about our biology, reading about the world in fact is sequential.

There is the day, and night cycle which is synced with our sleep-wake, then within the day, within the waking hours of your day you have several other cycles. You have diurnal cycle where your energy goes up, and down. The idea is that you capitalize on your most productive hours. Use the times when your energy waning to actively renew so that when you come back up, you're coming back up at a full peak of energy. I'll just give one last quick example.

The way that the authors of the book came about this idea, and started to do consulting for big companies on the basis of these concepts is that they study tennis players. They've worked with professional athletes, professional tennis players who they found out the difference between the elite tennis players, and the let's say B-list tennis players is that in between sets, which is in between in exchange in tennis when the ball boy runs and gets the ball, and each tennis player is sort of taking a few seconds before starting the next match for the next set, they look at what the tennis player is doing to recover. They just expanded all these energy.

What they have to do is they have to now recover their energy so that when next set starts they are peak capacity. They found that these elite players actually have recovery rituals that they are tagging at the cords of their tennis racket. They're focusing on their breathing. They're doing some kind of gesticulation. They found that these elite players, they do this recovery routine more efficiently. They started to translate this into all areas of life, and in particular business. They started working with

CEOs, and sort of forcing them to like get off caffeine. When you feel that you are tired, stop, and do some yoga or take a nap. Don't force it. Cut the alcohol because that interferes with your sleep-wake cycle. Focus on sleep. Kind of all these common sense things really, but they are not so common sense for a lot of people.

Brittany Lynch: In traditional office place, you may not be able to go the absence flow of your energy because you are required to be at the desk from nine to five, whereas when you're running the freelance business, you kind of take this example of energy, and apply it to be more productive, and actually get more done with less time in your business. At least that's how I look at it.

Vic Dorfman : That's a huge benefit of working "for yourself," but not in office is it really reflect in your health. If you listen to your body, and you prioritize your health before work, if that makes sense, because your work will actually improve as a result.

Brittany Lynch: This has been great so far. We've had a lot of really great information. Just to kind of sum up what we've covered in today's interview is we've talked about how to come up with ideas for your freelance business, for the services that are available in a freelance business. We talked about the importance of idea validation, and going to where your potential customers hangs out online. We talked about how to get our first customers. Vic gave some great examples of tools that he uses, and also productivity in general. We also touched on location independence. In this case Vic lives in Thailand, which I think is really, really cool aspect of freelance is that you aren't tied to that desk anymore.

Vic, is there anything else you want to add before we call it a day on today's interview?

Vic Dorfman : Yeah. I think it's important to always sort of keep a tension, a healthy tension between what you're striving to achieve, and where you're currently at because if you are not happy where you are at now, then once you get to that place where you think you want to be, then you might not be happy with that either. I don't know. I guess it's just more general way. Just to try to enjoy what's happening now, and stay present, and aware of what you're doing because really the next moment comes out of this moment. If you put all of your energy, and creativity into doing the best you can in your business now, and providing a lot of value for the people who are paying you... They are paying you. That's a huge thing too.

Freelancing will teach you... Again, I said this, is working for yourself instills certain... It teaches you a lot about life. One of the things that you'll find that it teaches you, and maybe you've already found this, I'm sure you have Brittany, and probably some of the listeners have, is you develop a really profound sense of gratitude for the people who you work with. I've been working with you for a few years, and I feel so immensely grateful to you, and just immensely grateful period for the opportunity to be able to work with you, and the fact that I'm so honored that you pay me. You give me money to live the kind of life that I want, and all I do is some website stuff for you, but to you that's valuable.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah.

Vic Dorfman : You see. That's like a very beautiful thing. You learn gratitude. You learn to respect the people who are putting

food on your table. It's very easy to be dissociated in a corporate context because you don't really... It's like when I came to Thailand, I didn't have credit cards, so I used cash. Once you feel that money leaving your hand, you're like, "Oh, I get it. This is painful." You don't feel that with a credit card. You just swipe, and you look at the bill online later. There is a disconnect, but if you just persevere through the adversity, and there will be adversity. You should expect there to be adversity. You should not expect to prior work week, at least initially.

All the true grades in any field, in any endeavor, they persevere through adversity, and eventually you are going to get to where you want to be in, then you are going to set a new goal, if you want to get there. Just this tension between enjoying now, but also having ambitions, and striving to improve where you are at. That's all I got to say about that.

Brittany Lynch: That was a great additional insight into your outlook on not just the freelance business, but life in general. I definitely have to second what you said. Even though it's just website stuff, I'm very grateful for having you being involved in my business because it's helped me immensely. Before we go, where can people learn more about you if they want to get in touch?

Vic Dorfman : You can follow me on Twitter @Vicdorfman V-I-C-D-O-R-F, as in Frank M-A-N or go to VicDorfman.com.

Brittany Lynch: Awesome. Vic, thank you so much for being here. I really, really enjoyed it. Everyone who's listening, I hope you enjoyed it too, and thanks very much.