

**EPISODE 14**

[INTRODUCTION]

**[00:00:07] TF:** Today, I am so excited to welcome Joe McKendrick. He is an author, independent researcher and speaker exploring innovation, information technology, trends and markets. I have a special connection, because Joe is married to my cousin, Kathy. For years, I've heard about these great articles and how he's been such a thought leader. I'm really excited that you can come on my show, Joe.

**[00:00:32] JM:** Thanks, Tiffany. It's great to be here. Congratulations. I understand, I'm your 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> session. I've listened to some of your previous podcasts and you're doing a great job. It's really great getting this information out to people, because pursuing your career dreams can be a difficult journey. We need people like you to help people guide their journeys.

**[00:00:54] TF:** Well, thank you so much. I just appreciate it. It's been great seeing you over the years, whether it was Thanksgiving when I was in high school, because my family – even though I grew up in Georgia, with my grandparents being from up in Philly, we would go up there once every five years. It was always fun seeing you at weddings and family reunions, and good stuff like that.

Today, thank you. Fun to get to talk to you about your professional life. I was especially struck by your journey, because I feel you were living this freelance life and being an influencer before that was even super popular. Could you walk me through your career journey?

**[00:01:36] JM:** Okay. Let's just say, 'it's been a long and winding road', to quote The Beatles. Probably more of a long and winding road than they had to go through. I started, basically, back when you were in high school, when you visit us for Thanksgiving in the family, I was just starting out my career back then, or I was just starting out my entrepreneurial venture at that point.

I started out as out of college, working for a management association, as editor with a professional association, dedicated to the career advancement of managers. That gave me

some perspective on how this all works. I was fortunate to rise to the ranks of this organization, to the point where basically, the members of our association were go through some of the issues, are countering a lot of the issues that we still see to this day; their jobs were being threatened by automation, by computerization, downsizing, all those nasty – well, computerization is a nasty thing, but all those things that were negatively impacting their careers.

I saw this through this association that I helped lead. At that point, I wanted to branch out and I was preaching entrepreneurship in the magazine, in the association management magazine. I was talking a lot about it. I thought, this is something that everybody should try, and I'm going to try it myself.

**[00:03:02] TF:** What was that association?

**[00:03:04] JM:** It was called the Administrative Management Society. They originally started back in 1919 as the National Office Management Association, NOMA. They changed their name at some point in the 60s to AMS. They focused on managers, people running companies, not only in office management as their historical roots are, but it was automation, information technology, human resources, finance, all that good stuff. They brought all these skill sets together to help managers succeed in their jobs, to succeed in their organizations.

**[00:03:39] TF:** Cool. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to disrupt your flow, but I just – for anybody to understand what that is. Then you were saying, after you got started in that, you had risen through the ranks?

**[00:03:50] JM:** No. No problem. Rose through the ranks. Rapidly rose through the ranks, to the very top. It was interesting. It was as educational as getting an MBA, basically, the things I learned and the perspectives I gained, looking at the challenges that business people face in their careers. I wanted to branch out. I wanted to launch my own consulting business. It's a mixture of things. I do consulting. I do writing. I write for IT journals, currently write for Forbes, on the subject of advancing your career through business technology; understanding what this is technology is and what it can do for your career.

ZDNet, more focused on the technical side, somewhat, but still focus on the ways technology is disrupting careers and careers in technology, such as developers, data scientists and things like that. A lot of things have changed and come together since I started my own wee little venture here. It's been fun to grow and see the changes that the world has gone through. It really has been quite a journey.

**[00:04:58] TF:** I can imagine, because when you were starting in the early 90s, I mean, that was even just right before email became a thing. How did you get to launch an entrepreneurial career before all of this? I mean, it was almost meta, if you will, in that you're writing about technology and yet, you're living it at the same time with all that was going on then.

**[00:05:21] JM:** Yeah. At the time, a lot of people had PCs. PCs weren't necessarily connected to anything. You ran spreadsheets and word processing and games, or whatever, but you weren't connected to the world at the time. The way you were connected to the world was through phone, just simple phone calls, or fax. I had a fax machine and that was my method of communication at the time.

The 90s were really interesting. What happened was the Internet really broke through in the 90s. It became commercialized. You had the worldwide web, Tim Berners-Lee launched it back in the early 90s. He designed it. You had Netscape with the browser, AOL. I think, I still have an AOL email address. I don't use it. It's inaccurate, but it's still – it may be what the world's oldest email address that's still out there, I guess.

**[00:06:13] TF:** That's funny. I haven't thought about Netscape in years. How did all of this come together with you writing with CBS Interactive and also with Forbes? Tell us more about, because I know there's so many aspiring writers out there who want to get their work on such huge platforms.

**[00:06:31] JM:** My own journey was I came from the technology side. Let me tell you, I took programming back in high school and college. Basic programming, Fortran and Basic and things like that. I know enough to be dangerous, but it wasn't my career path. My career path was actually journalism and communications.

I found that I was able to blend these skills, or blend these two perspectives together to interpret what's going on in the technology world, and make it clear to the readership what's going on, to interpret what vendors are doing, new developments, or innovations, and bring to my readers, or the readers of my reports, or my articles, or what have you an idea, a perspective on how this is affecting their jobs, how this is affecting their careers.

I would say, for people pursuing careers in writing, journalism, communications, things like that, the best bet is to also focus on a secondary area, be it healthcare, politics, social sciences, whatever the case may be. Focus on a specific area and get really good in that area. Immerse yourself in that marketplace. For example, I've immersed myself in the IT technology marketplace. I actually bumped into Bill Gates once. That's how immerse I got.

**[00:07:55] TF:** Oh, you got to tell me that story.

**[00:07:59] JM:** Well, the head of the bed. Microsoft always had these great events, and they have a reception afterwards with great food and stuff like that. I was basically, at the buffet, feeding my face and Bill Gates came walking by. I can't wave hi and my mouth is full of food. That was the extent of my interaction.

**[00:08:20] TF:** That's a cool story. It's so funny, because in my episode nine with Lauren and Sarah Whitney on networking, Lauren talks about how she kills it a buffet line. Who knew, buffet lines are the hot networking thing?

**[00:08:34] JM:** They really are. For tech events, too. We've had covered for the past year. Everything's been virtual, but it's going to go back to in-person events. The tech events have the greatest food. They had the greatest food. They have after-hours cocktail events, great buffets. Just worth going just for the food, I say.

**[00:08:54] TF:** Career stuff, secondary. The food, we got our priorities.

**[00:08:59] JM:** The food, yeah. Bring out the food.

**[00:09:02] TF:** Awesome. Well, I love on your career journey; it's funny how you're even taking stuff back from your very early career with the Management Association. I look at your recent articles on Forbes, which we'll talk about many of them in the coming questions. Basically, they're talking about management; the intersection of management technology, career path. I think that's so interesting, how that has been a common thread throughout your career.

**[00:09:29] JM:** Yeah, absolutely. Another piece of that is the association I joined was big with surveys. They survey the membership, they survey people in the industry. A little story. When I first joined the association as an assistant editor, one of my first assignments was writing up a press release. They did a salary survey of management and IT jobs. My job was to write up the press release. I just took what they previously have written press releases in and plugged into numbers, things like that. They set it out. It appeared a couple days later on the front page of *The Wall Street Journal*. Now my name was in it.

**[00:10:04] TF:** Wow.

**[00:10:05] JM:** I showed it to my parents who had given up all hope at me at that point. I say, "Look, I wrote this and it's on the front page of *The Wall Street Journal*."

**[00:10:12] TF:** How cool. How old were you at the time?

**[00:10:15] JM:** 22. 23.

**[00:10:17] TF:** That's amazing.

**[00:10:19] JM:** Yeah, that was such an experience. I recognized at that point, wow, the media loves surveys. People love surveys. You open up, or go to a site, you're going to see a lot of survey reports, because that's what people want to know about. They want to know what's going on in their industry, what's going on in the world, and what people are thinking. At AMS, I helped build this survey capability. We not only had salary surveys, which I can't take credit for it. They were doing salary surveys since the 1940s. That was their thing. They had that. We started doing surveys. For example, workplace smoking policies. At the time, people were allowed to smoke in workplaces. It was a health hazard.

**[00:10:58] TF:** It's hard to imagine.

**[00:10:59] JM:** It's hard to imagine. Yeah. We did surveys. What are your policies? Do you intend to ban smoking in your workplace? This was the beginning of the ban and workplace smoking. We did surveys on workplace literacy, computer literacy, systems adoption and things like that. I specialize in my own career is doing surveys, doing original surveys for clients. That blends in with the work I do writing for Forbes. In fact, I do surveys for Forbes as well.

**[00:11:29] TF:** What's the last, or the latest survey that you've been working on?

**[00:11:33] JM:** Well, we did a survey on the purchasing patterns for a computer system. Do companies go to the cloud and buy the services from Cloud? Or are they still buying systems that they bring in to their – on-premises, they buy their own systems? How do they acquire the computer technology that they have? We found a lot of people are turning to cloud now. People are not necessarily going out and buying servers and buying equipment. The trend is to just simply go to the cloud and acquire the service you need from the cloud, from cloud services.

**[00:12:08] TF:** That's interesting. Now, how is that being affected by all the attacks, the cyber security issues that are coming out now? Is that impacting people as far as the cloud, or do they still feel safe with that?

**[00:12:21] JM:** Well, it's interesting, because initially, when the cloud first became a thing, I'd say 10 years ago, people were concerned about the security of their data and the security of their applications relying on a third party. However, what has come to light is that cloud providers, Amazon Web Services, Microsoft with Azure, Rackspace, these cloud providers have the expertise and are constantly worrying about security. They train their people. They have the latest technology.

Whereas, if you're in a company that has its own data center, you're not going to be as up to speed with security, the latest protocols, the latest technology as a cloud provider would. A

cloud provider provides, gives you much more security for your data than you can yourself. Cloud providers know how to back things up. If they do go through an issue, Amazon, AWS has added just now then, they have the backup.

To the user, you don't even know that your data was down, because everything has been backed up. You don't hear about ransomware, or hackers hitting cloud providers. They hit private companies. They hit the oil pipeline folks; Continental, I think, it was a couple of months ago. They hit municipalities that are running their own data centers. You rarely hear about cloud providers being hit by ransomware, or a hacking, because they have such ironclad security. They think about that stuff day and night.

**[00:13:53] TF:** Oh, that's great to know, as far as what enterprises can do to protect themselves. What's the best career advice you've ever been given?

**[00:14:01] JM:** Best career advice I've ever been given. Again, my first job, the director, or the person above gave me some advice. He borrowed it from the Nike advice. He said, "Just do it." If you have an idea, pursue it. Just do it. Don't wait for permission. Don't wait to go through approval processes and whatever. Just move with it. Do it. I think that's the best advice. Some people say, "Gee, I'd love to start my own business, but I don't know about getting licenses and setting up bank accounts, or blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." I'm like, "You need to do all that stuff, but you can do it over a period of time." If you have a business idea, run with it. Start working on it and get it out there. Again, the Nike phrase, borrowed from the Nike phrase, "Just do it."

**[00:14:44] TF:** I love it. Well, I know I'm living that right now, because I didn't know a thing about podcasting. I think, it was October last fall, I started Pat Flynn's Power Up Podcasting Course. The day I finished my job at Penn, the next day I started it. It's been a lot of trial and error, but it's been a crazy, fun adventure. I'm excited to have gotten to do this.

**[00:15:05] JM:** Yeah, you're living the life, Tiffany, as I've been doing as well. It's the entrepreneurial life. I think, everyone should try entrepreneurship. At some point in their life, everybody should try it. Everybody should try running their own business. Again, it doesn't have to be a thing where you formally set up, you buy office space, and get signage and

whatnot. Can be something you do on the side. Now, they call it a side hustle these days. Everybody should experience it. Even if you work for a large company, even in a large corporation, there's probably space, or you can make space to be in what they call an intrapreneur, someone who works within the bounds of a company to pursue an idea.

If the company doesn't allow you to do that, maybe it's time to think about joining another company. I think, any good company out there nowadays, should allow that sense of intrapreneurship, if not entrepreneurship, to allow you – If you see a good idea, you can run with it and you can get some resources to support it.

You see the major tech providers, Google is legendary for that kind of environment, where if you come up with an idea, you can go with it. Amazon is Jeff Bezos encourages that. Amazon is legend for its ideas. The folks that Amazon come up with thousands of ideas every year. A lot of them don't make it. You don't even see a lot of them appear on the market, but they're constantly experimenting. It's experimentation. That's what entrepreneurship is, experimentation.

I saw a session once, Jeff Bezos was the interviewee. The person doing the interview asked him. Amazon at that time hadn't shown any impressive returns to investors. It's a growing company, but where are the profits? Jeff Bezos said, "Everything we make in profit, we plow back into experimentation. We plow it back into new projects." That's the secret to their success. They don't sit on a pile of cash. Even though Apple does and successfully, but that's another story.

**[00:16:58] TF:** Yeah. I remember at Google, when I would go on site visits, I was lucky, I got to go visit Google when I worked at Vanderbilt Career Center back in 2007 and 08, both the New York and the Menlo Park. Then also, when I was at Penn, I got to visit them. They would always talk about their 20% time and how those projects – I mean, some of them would later turn into whole divisions. It was amazing.

**[00:17:24] JM:** Yeah, exactly, exactly. The Googleplex, Menlo Park, it isn't just the nap pods. That's what you hear about in the volleyball courts. It's that innovation that's allowed to thrive there. That's the way you do it. That's the way companies should operate. Beyond that,



everybody should pursue that in their careers at some point. Even if you work for a government agency, you should try entrepreneurship. It's quite an experience and it's quite a learning experience. If not lucrative, then it's a learning experience.

**[00:17:54] TF:** It's exhilarating. It definitely makes you look at everything differently. I think, it also makes you, when you are in your – for me, because I balance the side job for nine, almost 10 years, and then had my regular job. I think, it made me look at the managers with more empathy. Well, I mean, I was lucky, I had great managers along the way. I would think about, well, there's so many things that employees don't see that their managers are dealing with, because when you're an entrepreneur, and I mean, I was small scale, but you were dealing with all those yourself.

**[00:18:25] JM:** Exactly. Exactly right. For those starting out their careers, no matter what field you're in, it's great to have that entrepreneurial mindset. You are your own brand. You're going to be your own boss running your own thing. It could be a thing within a company. You're your own brand. That's how you should position yourself. That's how to move forward in this world these days.

**[00:18:46] TF:** I love you saying that, because I tell all my clients, “Okay. I am now making you your own marketing manager, and you are the product. You have to learn how to pitch yourself.” Basically, episode eight, which is all about interviewing, is about being able to articulate the value you can deliver in a way that's meaningful for that target job. It's like, you are the same throughout, but you're going to change your message a little bit, depending on the audience you're speaking to.

**[00:19:16] JM:** Perfect. Perfect. Yeah. Tiffany, I knew your grandfather. He was quite the salesman. I mean, he could convince anybody of anything. I mean, he just had that knack about him, that sales ability.

**[00:19:28] TF:** Oh, yeah.

**[00:19:30] JM:** I mean, he was quite a character. These days, you don't necessarily need to have that extroverted skill, because you have social media, you have LinkedIn, you have

Facebook, you have Twitter, Instagram. You have all these tools to get out to the world and get your message out to the world and interact with their own podcast. I'm a bit of an introvert. I can't go sit in front of people and make a sales pitch. That's not my career choice. But because we have these channels, these electronic channels available to us, we can't get our message out to the world. Somehow, my words get out to the world, and it wouldn't have happened otherwise, because I don't have that salesy personality. That's the beauty of it.

**[00:20:14] TF:** Yeah. Once you do, it's well thought out. It's so cool the way that you have your influence out there. Now, I want to, if you don't mind, turn a little bit. I think, we were almost making a transition to this. As offices slowly open back up, because before, you were talking about the innovation, the Google, the Amazon, the Apple. As offices open back up, how do you envision office life in this post-COVID new era? What are the aspects of office life that you think have changed for good post-pandemic?

**[00:20:49] JM:** Yeah. I have to admit, I've gone through a transition in my own thinking, especially over the past year with COVID. Prior to COVID, I was a great advocate of remote work, of distributed work, or work at home, work from anywhere, as I prefer to call it. I believe that the organizations of the future – I still believe this actually, the organizations of the future will be built on people working from many different locations across the globe. Talent will come from many different locations across the globe.

That opens up possibilities. I'm in the Philadelphia area. I've done work with people in the UK. I've done work with people in Germany. I'm working with someone now in Hungary. It's a global marketplace that's available to you. That's the beauty of work from anywhere. I recognize, too, and I've seen this firsthand over the past year, working at home is not a good thing for everybody.

You have 20 people early in their careers, in their 20s working out of their apartments, out of spare bedrooms, not really seeing anybody all day long. That's not healthy. I thought, that is not something I would have wanted to do in my 20s as I was starting out my career. Sitting at home in a corner somewhere, looking at a screen all day and that would be my interaction with the world.

For people at that stage in their careers, they need to get out. They need to be able to develop, find mentors, to learn firsthand from people. They need to be out there learning how the world works. I think for a lot of folks as well, at any age, the workplace is a family. The people in the workplace are almost like a family to them. In some cases, more than their family, more of a family than family. You watch *The Office*, the TV show, *The Office*, they had their issues, but they're family.

**[00:22:34] TF:** They're fun.

**[00:22:35] JM:** They're fun. Yeah. They're fun. People are social, and they need that interaction. They need that sense of family, that sense of belonging. That's what's been missing. I saw that. I saw that with people I know firsthand. The isolation is horrible.

**[00:22:51] TF:** That's part of why we moved, I mean, last year. I was basically, as my mom jokingly said, I was surgically implanted in the city. I loved it so much. I mean, I was six blocks from Rittenhouse Square. I would go to my little coffee shop 10 blocks from Penn. I adored it. Then after I had that side job for almost 10 years, but during the day, I would see my friends at work. Then of course, on weekends and stuff, I would see my other friends. It was just three months in that apartment, then I came down to just get out for a little bit and I thought, "Okay, it was weird." In one way, I wanted the dream of working for myself. Then in another I thought, I can't just be by myself all the time. This would absolutely drive me up a wall.

With this podcast, so many of the guests are like you, friends and family and people from these relationships, that I'm glad to do this now in my 40s. If it were in my 20s just out of the gate, it would not be anything like this.

**[00:23:56] JM:** Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely not. You need to be able to develop those friendships. I have friends from my first job develop, working side by side with them on a day-to-day basis. They're really good friends. To this day, they're good friends. We just need that. I don't think someone graduating from college, for example, at age 22 suddenly sitting in the corner of their living room with a screen eight hours a day is going to cut it.

**[00:24:23] TF:** So true.

**[00:24:24] JM:** To bring it full circle back to your original question, I think – What was your question again? Now the workplace. The new workplace has to be this hybrid model. You need that flexibility. I think that flexibility is fantastic. You need that flexibility. You need to do away with the 9 to 5, five day a week commute, first of all. I mean, that's one refreshing thing out of this horrible pandemic. The one refreshing thing, people were alleviated from that, their commute, but they need to get back when they want to get back to work, be it two days a week, three days a week.

They need that flexibility. Folks that are older have children, need to tend to their children. They need that flexibility. Employers were way too rigid. Up to the March 2020, there was still that rigidity in the workplace. “You must report here 40 hours a week. If you're five minutes late, we're going to dock you. You have to stay here until five or six or whatever.” That doesn't work anymore. I think that the genie's out of the bottle, I guess, you could say, people realize that people have enjoyed the flexibility they enjoyed for work at home. The isolation issues are there. They need to come back to the workplace, but not necessarily full-time. You need that hybrid environment.

Maybe a WeWork, or they call it hotel income concept, or a WeWork type of concept would work, where you don't have fixed offices in your workplace, but you can come in and you can – you have space there to work and your space to hold meetings and so forth. I think that's the workplace that will work, the workplace that work in the future.

**[00:25:54] TF:** Oh, yeah. Those were cool. In Philly, I went to some events at WeWork. They had about, I think, at least three locations, probably more, four of something around Philadelphia, just near where I lived. It was such a cool concept. I was thinking, if I was working for myself all the time up there, I would have to join something like that to see other people and have that interaction. What's you're talking about as far as this hybrid work? What effect does it have on productivity? What have they found this year for maybe the employers that were worried about that? Where there are fears founded or unfounded?

**[00:26:32] JM:** Well, the surveys I've seen indicate that the productivity has held. There hasn't been an issue with productivity at all. I mean, I don't know if it's increased, or decreased. I

don't have that data. No, I should say, it has not decreased. It has not decreased. Everything is held in place for organizations. I think, that's shattered the managerial myth that, "Oh, if everybody's working at home and doing their own thing, they're not going to be productive. They're going to be goofing off and don't deliver work." It did not happen. That did not happen over the past year. If anything, many organizations saw greater revenues and greater results in their bottom line over the past year, than in 2019. Not including travel, or hotel, or the industries directly affected.

**[00:27:17] TF:** Of course. Well, it almost seems like going back to what you're saying about the entrepreneurial thing, as an entrepreneur, the boundaries between working and not working are always blurred. It seems like, I mean, when I close my computer, it's like, "Oh, wait. What's it? 2 a.m. now?" Not that that's how it should be, but it seems in some ways, I could almost envision with the productivity, there's less boundaries between work and home. In some ways, people are just always on, which that has its own drawbacks, too.

**[00:27:49] JM:** It does, Tiffany. You're right. There's a couple of ways to look at it. I think, if you're doing something you really love, if you have passion for it, I mean, the boundaries are gone anyway. There's no reason that boundaries. If you're really doing something you love, and you're pursuing something you love, if you're an entrepreneur, and you have this great idea, or you're doing career development, you're working with people to develop their careers and help people with fantastic stuff. You don't even want boundaries.

I mean, if you do something you love, you don't want the boundaries. If you have a job that you don't necessarily love, if it's a 9 to 5 routine, and you can't wait to get away from it, then it's time to start thinking about what you're doing as a career and perhaps, switching jobs, or looking at a different course for your life.

**[00:28:33] TF:** Episode 12, Courtney Whitmore. We were talking about that, because she's an entrepreneur with Pizzazzerie. That exact same thing, she calls it the Sunday night test. Basically, if you're dreading the next day, then it's time to really re-evaluate and see how you can shake things up. Well, how do you think – I keep seeing on LinkedIn, they're talking about the great resignation, and the big shift, and all of that. How do you think that's playing into?

Has the pandemic just made everybody – I mean, I know I did personally reevaluate their lives and decide to make some big changes. Do you think that's happening, too?

**[00:29:12] JM:** Exactly. It's had a huge effect. People really have reevaluated what they want to do and what they're doing. Again, if they're at a job, they're not necessarily satisfied with, or if they're having issues with their management, and they're working at home, this stuff is all coming into their home as a result. If anything, makes me more aware of how you're on the wrong path or in the wrong job, it's when it's invading your home life. That Sunday night test, that's a great example.

With the work at home we've had over the past year, it's been seven nights a week, they've had to dread the next morning. It's really caused a reassessment of what people's priorities are, what they want to do with their lives. There's been a lot of fear out there. It's been a justified fear for your family, the safety of your family, the safety of your loved one, the safety of your friends. Interestingly, for example, in New York, Broadway shut down and it's still shut down till September, I believe.

I just read an article in *The New York Times* that a lot of the performers, and I really feel for them. Here's your big break on Broadway, your March 2020, you're finally on Broadway and oh, my God, the whole thing is closed.

**[00:30:25] TF:** It's so sad.

**[00:30:26] JM:** It's so sad. A lot of these people have pursued other careers, going to broadcasting, streaming services. They've shifted over to maybe more electronic means of delivery of entertainment, or content that a lot of them might – I can't speak for them. A lot of them might want to stay with it.

**[00:30:46] TF:** Yeah. It's interesting how innovative, it's made everybody. In my case, I love my job at Penn. It was just time to do something different. I had been there six years. I love the people. I love the students I was working with and Penn was a great employer. It was just, I think with all the different shifting priorities in my life, I wanted to be closer to family, and so

many things that I was passing the Sunday night test that Courtney mentioned, it was just – it was time to shift some stuff.

**[00:31:17] JM:** Exactly, exactly.

**[00:31:19] TF:** Joe, for employees who do have the option to remain remote, or select hybrid, will that hamper their chances of future promotions compared to employees in the office full-time with that face time? The old version of face time, not you know.

**[00:31:37] JM:** That's a great question. I don't know if anybody really has the answer to that yet. Yeah, it would seem that working side by side, or seeing certain people every day, you're more likely to favor those people for promotions, if you're in an executive position, I would imagine. My hope is – may not be idealistic, my hope is work is being delivered electronically. Perhaps, your work is being measured by the quality that you deliver.

With remote organizations, if you're running – I've seen this with a lot of software companies, even long before the pandemic. A lot of software companies had remote workers. They're all over the world. They're judging the work of the employees by the timeliness and the quality of the software that they're delivering to build their applications. Hopefully, this model will extend across the board to other types of organizations. It doesn't matter if your employees are in Saskatchewan, Canada, or Nuremberg, Germany, or wherever. You're judging their work and determining their value to your organization by the quality and timeliness of the work they're delivering. I know. I work that with clients, and hopefully, they continue to value my work. My work with clients has been fairly remote over the years.

**[00:32:54] TF:** It's funny. Mine too, because I worked for years through Elance, and then Upwork. Then of course, a lot of it was just – at least, half my clients were from referrals or past clients. People were surprised to hear when I would talk about every client that I think I worked with over a 1,000 during that time. I think, only five were in-person. I mean, routinely before work, I was getting up and talking to somebody in Hong Kong, or like you said, Germany, or even just on the West Coast all the time. I think about, “Wow, I would not have been able to start my entrepreneurial venture years ago before when all those freelance platforms came to be, because that's really where I got my start.”

**[00:33:42] JM:** Exactly, exactly. I worked with one organization. The person who brought it all together was in Scotland. We had a developer in Argentina. We had a developer in India. They had me in the US. The four of us were quite a team and we work together constantly to deliver what at the time was a fun website.

**[00:34:01] TF:** That's awesome. For the employees that do stay remote, how can they stand out with their teams, just to make sure that they don't get lost in the shuffle to people that go back to the office?

**[00:34:14] JM:** I tend to look at it more from an entrepreneurial perspective, versus being part of a department. If you're an entrepreneur, again, that whole self-branding aspect. By self-branding, I mean, getting your work known out through social media channels, using LinkedIn. I call it the lift strategy. LiFT. LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, using those –

**[00:34:37] TF:** I love it.

**[00:34:38] JM:** - channels. The LiFT strategy. Lifting your career that way. Getting the word out to the world. “Hey, this is what I'm doing. This is what I'm thinking. This is what I've done recently.” That's all part of brand building. A lot of people have gotten to know me through social channels and recognize my name. I sign on with a new client, they go, “Oh, yeah, yeah. We heard about you. We saw your stuff on LinkedIn.” From a more entrepreneurial remote perspective, that's the way to get yourself known and to build your network. It's a network effect. It's all about networking.

**[00:35:12] TF:** Any tips about when you're doing your LiFT strategy with LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, how have you engaged your audience through those platforms? Are there any strategies, or tips for people? Because I think a lot of times, people get a little bit – They can do it with their friends as far as just Facebooking, but when they think about purposeful, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, sometimes it can be intimidating.

**[00:35:36] JM:** It can be. Yeah. I'd say with Facebook, avoid the red cups. Don't post pictures of yourself with red cups. A lot of people do that. They really should avoid that.



**[00:35:46] TF:** For sure.

**[00:35:49] JM:** In my case, because I write a lot of stuff, I'm able to provide links to articles I've written. That's what I do. I get out there on LinkedIn, even Facebook, say, "Hey, here's that article I just wrote on this and that." That often generates comments. What's important is you need to continue to engage your audience. If people post a comment to one of your links, comment back. Keep the conversation rolling. Keep the engagement going. You have to be active. You have to really get out there and be active with your channels and get your name out there.

You're a career advisor and coach, so you're probably really good at this. I've tried to tell people this. "Hey, get active on social media." Sometimes I can't get people listening. Maybe you could get people to listen to you. If there's any one piece of advice they need is get active. Get your name out there on social media, and get active with your industry. There's Twitter. You hear a lot of bad things about Twitter, and it gets abused a lot and misused.

For getting to know people in your specific industry, it's fantastic. It's a great resource, because with Twitter, you can identify those people who are the influencers in your industry. My case, it's IT. I link to, or I follow people who are really the thought leaders in IT. Sometimes they'll even follow me back, and that gets a conversation going. It's a great tool for getting the people – immersing yourself. Again, immersing yourself in your industry, in that area. Be it IT, be it politics, be it healthcare, whatever it may be. Career development, that's an industry. Immerse yourself in it, and get to know the people.

Follow the people. Follow the people. If they post interesting links, comment on those links. Get out there and say, "Hey, good point. What about this or that?" That's the way to do it. Immerse yourself in social media.

**[00:37:36] TF:** That's one thing I tell jobseekers, too, when they're preparing for an interview. I mean, obviously go to the company's website and research that. Look at their social media channels, because you want to see how they're presenting themselves to the world. That could give you some great tidbits for conversation in your interview.

**[00:37:53] JM:** Yeah, yeah. I'll fall back on, I think, is Richard Nelson Bolles, who wrote the original, *What Color Is Your Parachute?* He's been updating it for years and years. He wrote it way back before social media, before computers. You answered one ads with type letters. His advice was, if you get to know a company you're really interested in, if you want to join a certain company, get to know that company. Do research on that company, and get to know the people behind that company. Don't just answer a blind ad, or just throw a resume at them and say, "Hire me."

Social media is a great tool for that, because you can start following the people. If you like IBM, you can start following the people who are executives in IBM. They're all out there on Twitter. They're all out there on LinkedIn. Following them, see what their thinking is. Get to know them. You get the know behind the scenes, what's going on in the company. IBM wants to do more with e-commerce, or IBM wants to focus on artificial intelligence. Get to know what the direction of the company is. You may even get the start two-way interactions with the executives in these companies as well.

**[00:38:56] TF:** It's so funny that you mentioned *What Color Is Your Parachute?* because that's what my whole episode two, with Dr. Catherine Brooks. She did the update for 2021. We had that conversation. Then, she just came out this past April with the college edition of that. Thank you for bringing that up.

**[00:39:17] JM:** Oh, it's a great work. Yeah.

**[00:39:18] TF:** In the book, they talked about the flower exercise to help you know next steps and really evaluate. Then what you were talking about, there's at UPenn, we have this values exercise that we would have our students go through, and they would think about what's important to them in a job, which you were just alluding to.

One thing I also wanted to get your take on as we are talking about social media, what about LinkedIn groups? Because I feel that's something that's been underutilized and such a valuable way to get your hand on the pulse of an industry and an easier way to connect with some influencers.

**[00:39:56] JM:** Yeah, exactly, exactly. I'm in a number of LinkedIn groups. Boy, it's a great tool. Because, exactly as you said, Tiffany, it's a way to get to know who the influencers are and the industry itself; the major players, or the most outspoken players within the industries, I should say. One of the LinkedIn groups I'm active with, we have an agreement. We promote each other's posts. If I post something, I'll let them know and they all go in and comment and forward it and so forth, and vice versa. I'll do that for them. It's a very engaging type of activity that helps promote, helps promote yourselves, as well as the people you're involved with.

**[00:40:34] TF:** Oh, that sounds great. Yeah. I'm in a mastermind group, through Pat Flynn's smart, passive income. We all are about 10 of us are podcasters. I learned so much from them, and we try and promote each other's things as well.

**[00:40:47] JM:** That's the key.

**[00:40:48] TF:** What lessons Do you think executives are taking with them as we progress into this post-COVID economic boom?

**[00:40:56] JM:** Okay. Well, we talked about the work at home, the need for hybrid work, and the fact that people don't have to be there in the office 9 to 5. That's very important. Executives themselves were at home as well, working at their homes. They understand firsthand, the advantages, that flexibility.

One of the key lessons – I don't know. I'm going to get philosophical here. I really learned to appreciate what I had before the pandemic. The business travel. I did a lot of business travel, and other people complained to it. It wears you out. If you're traveling constantly, really, it taxes your system and taxes your personal life and everything else. Then all of a sudden, you have a whole year where you don't travel at all, and you don't go anywhere. It's all virtual. You realize, "Oh, some of that travel wasn't too bad. It was nice getting out to exotic places, or wherever, to get out in the world." You begin to miss it after a while. I've heard that from people, too, people who complain before about there's too much traveling in their lives. All of a sudden, "Gee, I wish I could be at an airport again."

**[00:41:56] TF:** Exactly. It's like a hotel. I've heard some people, you see some headlines, oh, is business travel dead, or something? At what percentage, do you think, business travel is going to go back? Will it be full steam ahead in the future? Or do you think maybe it'll be at 50%, given that employers see that a lot of work can be done remotely?

**[00:42:15] JM:** I think, it's going to get close to – Eventually, it's going to be close to where it was. Look at my industry. Look at the technology industry. I mean, that's the virtual industry. I mean, if anybody's going to be virtual, it's technology. They invented virtual technology. They invented Zoom and FaceTime, and all that cool stuff, and podcasting even. The conferences were constantly filled to the brim with attendees, up till 2019 conferences were just overflowing. They were holding these things in venues in Las Vegas, and taking up the whole city, basically.

Oracle has his annual thing in San Francisco, and they take up all of San Francisco. All of Downtown San Francisco is an Oracle event. Even the tech people still need to get out there and have that face-to-face interaction. They want that. I think, the virtual stuff is great, and it saves a lot of money and travel costs. It save a lot of hassle and traveling, but there's still going to be that need for interaction. There's still going to be that need for getting out there and working side by side with people, or meeting with people.

I think, it might not happen within the next couple years. Eventually, business travel will be back to where it was and going strong. It's just, there's going to be many options as well; the virtual interaction, the online meetings will be an important part of the strategy. People still need to see people.

**[00:43:39] TF:** Yeah. I miss traveling. I've gotten, it's like, “Wait a second, It's been too long. I need to make a hotel reservation right away.” I know this, shifting gears here, but you write a lot about artificial intelligence. Could you tell me, Joe, what are the latest trends you are seeing in artificial intelligence?

**[00:43:59] JM:** Well, someone said, it's neither artificial, or intelligent, when you think about that. I think, the trend is there's a lot of discussion about machines being able to think, machines taking on the jobs of humans, but I think it's more of a – it's happening on a smaller

scale. Artificial Intelligence is very task-oriented. AI is capable of taking over task, but not eliminating entire categories of jobs.

I think, that's what people need to recognize is that in many ways, is going to help people do their jobs better. You have, class example is the chatbots. When you call into a corporate call center nowadays, you're likely to get a chatbot, an automated voice, say, "Okay, how can I help you? I understand the need to pay a bill." That's a chatbot talking to you. That's alleviating a lot of the headachy portions of jobs of actual call center operators. It's elevating their jobs to more of a consultant role, helping their customers with higher level types of issues. That's an example of AI coming in and alleviating some of the manual drudge work from jobs, and helping people to elevate their jobs and perform on a higher level for their organizations.

**[00:45:20] TF:** Very cool.

**[00:45:21] JM:** On a broader scale, not to say AI, but digital is wreaking havoc with a lot of industries. We saw what happened with media, printed newspapers, or what have you, digital channels have eliminated the paper, newspaper, and have put a lot of newspapers, traditional newspapers on shaky ground, shaky footing. I think, what's happening is a lot of newspapers are moving to the web. A lot of TV stations also are moving to the web. It's almost becoming indistinguishable between what a TV station produces and what a newspaper produces. Because you can go to [cnn.com](http://cnn.com), a TV network and read stuff. They have stuff to read on their sites. You can go to *USA Today*, which is a print paper, and there's videos to watch on their site.

**[00:46:10] TF:** That's so true.

**[00:46:12] JM:** It's like, what's the difference anymore? It's changing industries. It's changing the nature of what people are – the jobs for people in industry. It's just reconfiguring as well.

**[00:46:24] TF:** Well, it's interesting with the disruption too, because I started career coaching in '98. I came, I think, for two or three months, they were actually faxing resumes when I worked at Drexel Career Management Center. Then, which is so funny when I think back to that. Then by early '99, everything was starting to go online and definitely by that summer. It's just, I can

even tell. It's so funny that I got that little snippet of where I'd even do phone calls, in my first few months at the end of '98. Then '99, it was almost all email and not that many phone calls. I think about how all of that has led to the democratization of the job search process.

Now, instead of just faxing to maybe a local company, when it's online, anywhere, anybody from anywhere can pretty much apply. Now, of course, can they be in that area? Can they do it remotely? Over the past 20 years, you think about how many more people apply to every job. Now granted, that takes you to more competition, and there's applicant tracking systems. That's a whole other thing that ideal with as applicant tracking systems and the resume episode in for, but I think that has helped more people have more opportunities.

**[00:47:39] JM:** Exactly. I mean, the applicant tracking systems you mentioned, that's a whole another challenge for HR. I think, there's issues that need to be addressed there. The fact that people can apply to jobs from any location in the world, and I think about this with education, too. You have the online educational programs. They call them the MOOCs. I don't know if they still call them that.

**[00:47:55] TF:** Yeah, I've heard that.

**[00:47:57] JM:** Massive online open courses. There's Coursera, and companies that provide that, even Harvard and MIT provide these MOOC type environments. You don't have to be in Cambridge, Massachusetts. You don't have to relocate to Cambridge, Massachusetts to attend these courses. You don't have to relocate to Palo Alto to go to Stanford.

**[00:48:15] TF:** Yup. Penn was definitely – they were focusing a lot of energy on expanding that program with the online courses and degrees.

**[00:48:23] JM:** Yeah. It's fantastic. A lot of cases, they were offered for free. I think there's more of a cost model to a lot of these courses now. Still, they're very low cost and they're accessible to anyone. You could be in Bali, or Kenya and attend MIT and take MIT courses now. I think, that's going to have a profound impact on the world. Because if you have people in these areas, as long as they have some Internet access, these people in these areas, which

were totally inaccessible, the higher education, the benefits of higher education, suddenly can tap into that.

You can go to these courses. You can attend these courses and learn robotics and AI and all this other stuff from Stanford, even though you may live in Kenya, or India, or Bali, or wherever. The same goes for jobs as well. You can work for IBM, or Microsoft, or Google, assuming they stay with their work from home, or work from anywhere stance, and never have to leave your home. You could be in the Yukon in Canada, and work for Google. You don't have to relocate. This is opening up possibilities throughout the entire world. It's elevating the entire world.

**[00:49:29] TF:** It is. It's all interconnected too, because you look at the real estate boom happening. I mean, we're recording this in late June of 2021. Then, you think about how I'm looking at all these secondary cities within the United States and just from population perspective, where maybe they're not the top five most populated cities, but there are hot cities like Nashville and Austin, that suddenly so many people are going. I mean, they've been cities that I've been growing for years now, but it seems like they're just exploding now, because people aren't tied to the coast.

**[00:50:03] JM:** That's exactly right. You may have even had distressed cities. Say Akron, Ohio, dependent on steel and steel mill is close, and everybody in this town was out of work. Maybe now, many of these people can access jobs and do their jobs remotely for companies anywhere in the world. That will help boost that local economy. In many ways, technology is this lever that's lifting the world, more so than any government program could do, more so than – God bless some anti-poverty, or NGOs working with these groups can do is technology can help to lift the world.

We've seen that in India, for example. India is very technology savvy and there's a lot of companies that have come out of India. That's lifted this whole nation out of close, dire poverty a couple decades ago. We're seeing it in Africa. Internet access, use of cellphones, use of mobile phones, smartphones, are providing people opportunities to work remotely, to make money, or to provide income. This amazing the impact we're seeing around the world as a result of technology. Distressed communities, as well as thriving communities.

**[00:51:06] TF:** That's incredible. What do you think the next frontier is in terms of disruption? Or just what it will elevate, or where it's going?

**[00:51:13] JM:** Wow, that's a great question. The next frontier, wow. We're going to see a lot of virtual organizations. I talked about they need to be with people and that's in they need for workplaces of some kind. That's always going to be there. We're going to see more companies, more virtual organizations that can run virtually. There won't be necessarily a physical presence. The next Microsoft, the next Google may not have a huge campus complex somewhere on the West Coast. It may be entirely a virtual company.

I'm sure you familiar with open source software. There's a lot of open source software out there. Linux and Apache and so forth. These organizations have been running virtually for decades since the 1990s, since when their founders created them. Basically, built on developers working on this code from anywhere in the world; Asia, Europe, North America, South America and so forth. They're an example of an organization that can run entirely virtual, and deliver really fantastic products to the world.

I think, that's a model that we're going to see more of as these entirely virtual organizations, not necessarily tied to a physical location, delivering this next generation of products, or services to the world. Though a lot of it's being built on software, I know that there's a saying. Someone said, software is eating the world. Data is eating the world as well. Data is eating software, I should say. Something's eating something. A lot of these companies are built on data and software.

Uber doesn't own taxi cabs, or cars. Uber is a network of independent contractor. That's being fought in some quarters, by the way. It still is a network of independent contractors, who operate via this app, who operate, data delivers the customers, the times the customers want to be picked up, where they want to go, and so forth. The independent contractor's out there, or employees as the case may be. There's some litigation there. These contractors able to deliver the service through the app with using their own vehicle. Airbnb, they don't own hotels, they don't own any houses. They do everything the same way. People sharing space and working with the app, with the software.



**[00:53:29] TF:** So interesting. It's really, the sky is the limit for what's next.

**[00:53:33] JM:** It really is. Yeah, yeah, it really is. You're going to see breakthroughs in not only business, but healthcare and medicine and things like that. You hear about, there's kids out there. Kids, high school kids, who were developing ways to fight cancer using online tools.

**[00:53:48] TF:** Amazing.

**[00:53:49] JM:** I mean, submit amazing stuff.

**[00:53:51] TF:** Joe, how do you think the past year and a half has changed the job search?

**[00:53:56] JM:** Well, it's taking the stigma off remote work. There's many people who would love the idea of working for a fantastic company, but they don't want to relocate, you might have a great company in Boston, for example, but you don't want necessarily move to Boston. It's a beautiful area, but it has a high cost of living.

The stigma is off of remote work. Companies are more open to the idea of having you work from wherever you are, your home or wherever to be an employee, or deliver services to the company. Because the stigma is off, people are more open to applying to jobs, or companies they really want to join, who really want to be part of. Hopefully, that doesn't change. Hopefully, the stigma remains off work at home. If I want to work for a company in Washington State, I don't have to necessarily relocate to Washington State to do so, even though it's a beautiful state and I wouldn't mind living there.

**[00:54:44] TF:** Yeah. It's great. More people will be passing Courtney's Sunday night test, because now they'll be aligned with organizations that they really believe in.

**[00:54:53] JM:** Yeah. Yeah. Going back to what I was saying about Bolles's book, *What Color Is Your Parachute?*, you should look for the organization you want to work for. Find that organization that you identify with. It could be L.L.Bean, for example. That's such a cool company. Yeah, I want to work for them. They're in Maine, I think. I think they're based in Maine.

**[00:55:09] TF:** I think so. Yeah.

**[00:55:10] JM:** I don't like the winters at Maine. Yeah. I like the winters there. I don't want to have to move there. Because of work at home, and work from home, work from anywhere, the stigma's off. They might be open to employing me and give me the opportunity to work for them and stay where I am, a little further south.

**[00:55:27] TF:** Well, one last question. What advice do you have for job seekers?

**[00:55:33] JM:** Well, again, leverage social media. Remember that LiFT strategy. Make use of social media. Work that social media and really immerse yourself in it. Not the nasty stuff that's out there on social media, or the flaky stuff, but the industry stuff, the industry-specific stuff. Get to know people in the industry. Get to know your industry, what the thinking is in that particular industry. Identify the companies that you really want to work for, and get to know the people in those companies and follow the social media paths of those companies, the what's out there on social media, what's going on to those companies and what direction they're going in? The advice I got years ago, just do it. Don't wait for permission. Just do it. Get out there and start connecting.

**[00:56:16] TF:** Joe, for somebody who's just starting out in the industry, how can they identify the right influencers and thought leaders to follow that will help them professionally?

**[00:56:28] JM:** Well, the best way to start out is to identify the association that's affiliated with either your profession, or the industry you're interested in joining, or both, a little of both, and get involved with the association, that professional association, or trade association. I'm a little biased. I'm a former association executive who dealt with this stuff. I couldn't think of a better way to really get to know what's going on in your industry, or your profession, than by joining and getting involved with these associations.

Of course, they're online too. They're accessible via online channels, as well as in-person meetings. Leverage both. Go to the in-person meetings as they revive and start again. Hopefully, they will soon. As well as the online channels and online resources these

associations have to offer. That's the best way. You get to meet other people who are experienced, had the experience, as well as people who are just starting out such as you might be.

Exchanging ideas, exchanging notes on what's going on in the industry. You can hear speakers, you'll go to meetings and hear speakers talk about what's going on and presenting new types of ideas. Get involved with your professional association, or industry trade association, and get to know those people and read their journals. They have journals. They have webcast, presentations, all kinds of things.

In those journals, and in those presentations, you're going to see the people who are really the thought leaders in those industries, because that's who they bring out for their conferences and for their meetings and for their articles in the trade journals. Those are the thought leaders, and those are the people who are the legitimate movers and shakers and influencers going on within their sectors. Get involved with the associations.

**[00:58:13] TF:** Awesome. Well, thank you so much, Joe. It's been so much fun catching up with you. I have also really –

**[00:58:18] JM:** Oh, man. Likewise.

**[00:58:19] TF:** - I enjoyed learning from you and hearing about your expertise. I mean, I think of conversations again, from that Thanksgiving and other weddings and family reunions, where we'll get little snippets. To get an hour with you, I really feel so fortunate. Thank you for taking your time.

**[00:58:36] JM:** This is great. You asked a lot of great questions, Tiffany, and what a great podcast series. I'm going to start recommending everybody should tune into it, because everybody needs a career boost. Everybody needs that advice.

**[00:58:46] TF:** Well, hopefully. Just thank you so much, Joe. I appreciate it.

[OUTRO]

**[00:58:51] TF:** Thank you so much for listening. I really appreciate you and I hope you have found this helpful. Please go to [tjfcareercoach.com](http://tjfcareercoach.com), my website, so you can get more advice to help you in your job search. I hope you'll check out more episodes of Job Search Strategies with Tiffany Franklin.

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