INTERVIEW WITH UKRECRUITER

Interview with UKRecruiter Podcast Transcript

Rhys: The following podcast is taken from my video blog, which you could find under the same name and the recruitment podcast channel on YouTube.

Louise: Hey everybody. Welcome to Recruiter Zone's live chat. This is going to be a lively show. I have a fabulous guest today, who is going to probably behave himself, possibly not.

Who knows?

Rhys: No, no, no, no, no. I have no intention of behaving myself.

Louise: Okay? So I'm going to let you introduce yourself. I'm just going to move myself to the other side of the stage because what I'm going to be doing is checking everything's okay on LinkedIn and then I'll pop myself back on. So if you want to introduce yourself, let us know what Davidson Gray do.

And I'll leave you for a minute to do that.

Rhys: Well, I'll keep it short because when I've watched this kind of thing before, not necessarily yours I got so bored with people doing the intro, I switch off and then you get three minutes of somebody papping on and on about themselves. So I'm not going to pap on about myself and bore people cause I'm sure the people that are watching want to get onto the subject matter, not listen about me. But quickly, I built two recruitment companies over the course of 12 years. Sold those, set up Davidson Gray. Davidson Gray now support startup recruiters. That's what I do. Support team, do all the back office, the accounts, the marketing; pretty much everything that allows the recruiter to recruit, hire staff and management the staff themselves.

But the difference is, I keep the partners I support, the group I support, very small because their first hire is me as a co-director. So it's not scaled. I am actually a working director. I don't just coach and mentor. I actually do some of the jobs that the would-be MD would do. So the people that I work with don't have to be a 360 MD.

That could be a 180 or a 90 and then me and my team pick it up. Apart from Davidson Gray obviously I'm an international media star with my YouTube channel and my podcasting and my 3000 readers every single month of my blog, which I may have mentioned more than once.

Louise: Superb.

And I meant to mute myself. I was click clacking away. I Do apologise for that. But I have put your links over on LinkedIn. Hi, to those of you watching on LinkedIn. You're saying hi on LinkedIn. Join us on Crowdcast. The link is there. If you're watching us on Crowdcast say hi in the chat and if you want to find out what Rhys does, there's a link down here. So I've got, I don't know, seven questions. Let's see how we get on with them.

The first one is: why did you pick this - what is the topic and why did you pick it?

Rhys: Well, it's a loose one on why most recruitment businesses fail, but I picked that cause it just can go off on different tangents. Because I mean, there's very little that we can cover in great detail in 30 minutes.

But, you know, I've got a passion about marketing, I'm passionate about cash flow. I'm passionate about growing successful businesses. But the statistic that, I mean, do you know this, how many recruitment companies fail? That's statistic I always use is four out of five fails within the first two years.

And that's something that I understood to be true. I don't know if you know if that is still about right?

Louise: Four out of five. That is absolutely shocking. So 80% of people who set up a recruitment business, it doesn't pan out how they thought.

Rhys: In the first two years; that is apparently the statistic.

Louise: Okay. So I'd be really interested to hear what other people think about that. I suspect that a percentage of that 80% of people don't leave recruitment entirely. So they realize doing it alone isn't for them and they joined some other venture still in the recruitment space. I find it hard to believe they would leave recruitment entirely. I don’t know what you think.

Rhys: No, I think what it is that the four out of five, they fall into categories, but I think there's a fair chunk of people that just jump into it and wing it. And, and they just don't bill enough, you know? Cause I get a lot of enquiries from people that are, say, doing a hundred grand a year, 120 grand a year, been in recruitment a year, and think they can do it.

There's a lot of difference between working in an office and working on your own. And a lot of it can be the mental thing of people just struggle to work on their own. Or they just want to have a lifestyle business. Well, after 12, 18 months, that lifestyle can start to get a little bit carried away.

You play a bit too much golf, you watch too much Sky, you know, and it does get a bit boring. So what I say to the people looking set up is it's critical the first year or two to hire your first one or two staff, because that keeps you interested, keeps the peer pressure, gives you something to do and it prevents that stagnation when you start to go backwards.

Because what I have seen in some businesses is where they trying to hire the first person, the second person it doesn't work out. They give up. And then it gradually tails off and they end up getting a job again.

Louise: Yeah, so I guess there's a percentage of people who start a recruitment business thinking, this is going to be a lifestyle business, it's just going to be me.

And they're never going to be unhappy with that. But if you don't bill enough, it won't work as a lifestyle business. And if you build a business to grow, what you're saying is one of the reasons you fail is because you're not growing fast enough. You're stagnating.

Rhys: I think the problem is the lifestyle recruiter see it as a lifestyle, and I think that's the wrong mindset.

It works well for some people, but some people, you know it becomes too easy. You know, to watch Sky Sports, play golf or not really do what you're supposed to do, which is why I advise getting a member of staff or two members of staff to keep that peer pressure, to push on.

But it kind of depends what you want to set out to do. Because if you look to set out and grow a business, the other thing that catches you is cash flow. And that's why I did a video of blog on it because if you are working for somebody you're used to taking the taxes at source, PAYE, but if you're working for yourself, you pay PAYE, you pay VAT, you pay corporation tax, you pay personal tax.

And they all come at completely different times. And when you start up, you don't get your personal tax bill, your corporation tax bill until 18 months to two years. So that's a hell of a shock. And if you are not used to planning for that because you've been employed, that is what's going to get you by the nuts .

Because, you know, without cash, your business is going to stop.

Louise: So I've already got a question from Tony.

What's the 360 biller?

Rhys: That's the ' do the new business, get the vacancy, fill the job yourself. That is another mistake that startups make is looking for 360 recruiters because 360 recruitment is hard because you've got two skills.

You've got the new business, and then you've got filling the vacancy. Filling the vacancy is more of a farmer thing. New business is more of a hunter thing, so the easiest thing to do is have a 180, which is just a deliverer. Now, if you set up your own business, the chances are you've got to do business, you've got clients, you've got that capacity.

So the lowest hanging fruit is either the hiring is somebody that you know, so they're a safe bet or somebody that you can give vacancies to. And all they've got to do is find the right candidates, submit them and manage the process, which is a much easier job. So there's a lot lower chance of failure because if the first one or two hires fail on you, that could be emotionally really hard plus financially really hard. So your first one or two hires are absolutely critical, which is why I say the best bet is hire somebody that you know that's guaranteed to work with you or go for a safe bet of someone that's just going to fill vacancies for you.

Louise: So I've got another question. So I've got two questions, which are over from LinkedIn.

I'm just going to do the first one. Is it possible to do this without funding? Because you were talking about corporation tax and all the rest of it. Is it?

Well, it is if you're working with a Davidson Gray style business. So if you're partnering with a solutions business, I don't want to sound like a snob. I don't categorize myself in the same way as other back-office companies, but you can get funding through other people, so it can be done, but ideally what you want to do is have the cash yourself. And that's another reason where startups fail, is they don't do a good sales forecast and a cash flow forecast because, it's easy to say, I'm going to bill in month, one or two, but you might bill in month, one or two, but then it might take a month for person to start and then a month for person to get paid.

So really you need 4, 5, 6 months money. So can you do it without funding? There is a guaranteed government loan system, which I've never been through, as in I've never known anybody go through. I don't know how difficult it is, but there is some sort of guaranteed scheme to get you a business loan.

But if you've got zero cash, zero loan, no access to cash, then your only real option is an investor. Which is, like I said, a Davidson Gray style model, of which there are a few.

Louise: Yeah. Okay, cool. Now I think this question from Kim, which came in over LinkedIn probably came in when you were talking about you know, that you find the assignments and then you get a colleague to do the sourcing and the interviews.

So I think this question relates to that, which is how much could you outsource as a new recruitment business?

Rhys: That's a bloody good question. Well, I mean, there are freelance recruiters out there you can use. It depends how much you scale it. If you're looking for somebody to manage the whole assignment, that's a fairly skilled job.

But if you're looking for somebody just to get CVs, I mean, there's various outsource companies. So you can outsource it. My nervousness is on quality. And that's where I would probably avoid it. It's good to have a capacity outlet. So if you do have access to somebody that you can go to, if you suddenly get an awful lot of vacancies, you have got a capacity situation, maybe your freelance recruiter or a tried and trusted method that maybe you've got internationally.

It is riskier. And, really when you are looking at your first two years you want to avoid risks like the plague. Because once you get up and running, okay, that's fine. But the first one or two years is the cash situation, the survival situation. Also, mentally it's a lot harder cause the adrenaline's flowing.

You're not used to, it's a new thing to you. You want to minimize stress from a positive and a negative point of view, cause positive stress does drain you. Not as much negative, but it does drain you. So try and keep everything fairly safe.

Louise: So I'm going to get to my own questions, but I've got the comment from Erica. Erica's over on LinkedIn. I don't if you know Erica Clifford, who runs Just Recruit.

Rhys: yes. I don't her personally, but we have interacted.

Louise: She's amazing. And she's just shared her own thoughts, which is in the early days of her startups, as she ran a very successful recruitment business, we reduced the fee percentage for the ability to invoice on written acceptance.

So being savvy, isn't it, it's maybe changing your invoicing, changing your payment terms because you need that money quicker?

Rhys: That is a very smart idea. It is offering your client a discount. If you, if you explain to a client, if you're a startup, the vast majority will pay you quick anyway, because everybody likes to look at the little guy.

So they, they're probably going to pay you quicker anyway. But that suggestion from Erica is a very good suggestion. But I also stress that if you do offer a discounted rate to your clients, you do put on the invoice and follow up in the email that it's on the basis it's paid within terms, and then chase to make sure that whoever is paying it, whether it's on accounts payable, they know that the discount is based on paid in terms, so they will know they get penalized.

If it's not paid in terms and it's something that as an employed recruiter you don't think of, but then when you're self-employed is you put it loud and proud on your invoice. You make sure you send it to the decision maker and what you definitely do is get to accounts payable because they will get the bomb kicked if they pay late and then they get stung. But I think Erica's suggestion, it's a very good suggestion to try and increase cash flow.

Louise: Yeah. Okay. Right. One of my questions, let me just get 'em up on the screen. Okay. So you've given some of the reasons that recruitment businesses might fail. We went off on a little bit of a tangent, but let's go the other way round and you tell me a few things which you think would separate a successful recruitment business from one of the ones that have failed.

What are they doing right?

Rhys: Well, first of all, depends what you mean by successful. Cause somebody asked me this other day and they said, but what's your best successful case studies. Well, it depends on what your success is because one of the businesses I've got, the chap that runs that works three or four days a week, he's got four very, very settled staff.

He earns a significant amount of income. He's got a love- lifestyle balance. Now is that more successful than somebody who's got 10 staff and he is working 60 hours a week? There's more risk in it. So it kind of depends what successful is. But not wishing to avoid the answer to the question. It's getting the cash flow right?

So you always get the cash flow right. But it's having the discipline to take yourself out of the business to work on it, rather than always in it. Because as a recruiter, you're going to go, oh, there's a vacancy, there's a candidate. You know, because shiny, you're always chasing, putting out fires and being the hero, but it's actually having that ability to stand back for maybe half a day a week, or one day a month and work on the business. Because you'll have lots of great ideas, but you won't implement if you're always in the business. Cause why I advocate having a mentor, a coach, a non-exec.

So you've got somebody who is going to take you out of the business. You're going to put together some ideas and if you come up with one idea a month, just one and action it, you're winning. Five ideas that you don't action is a bag of shit, cause it's not going to do anything. So it's just doing that one. So all you need is a couple of hours a month where you're going to work on the business and that's what gives people the distinct advantage to take the business forward is by coming up with one good idea a month and making sure it's actioned and that is the difficult thing as a recruiter, because it's not naturally a recruiter star. Cause recruiters are always fast, hundred mile an hour. You know, they don't slow down.

They, they're not looking at the medium term or long term. So it's a difficult thing to do. And that is something as a business owner, I learned, that rather looking here, you've got to look here, but look here and look here as well. And it's that change of vision that yes, you've got to look at today to get the money in.

You've got to look at the medium term, but then also you've got to look at the business you want to be so you being the business you want to be today, so you can be that business tomorrow. And it's that wherewithal to change that vision. But one of the things that I have seen a lot in the successful business owner is that humility.

Of not thinking, you know it all. Because the know-it-alls are the ones that fuck up. It's the ones that appreciate that running a business is a brand-new job. A recruitment consult is a good job to turn you into a business owner, but just because you're a good footballer, it doesn't mean you're a good football manager.

So it's having that humility that a need to learn, and I know I need to reach out and not thinking I can just wing it, which is what I did for the first two years. I just winged it, and I fucked up a lot.

Louise: You saying that reminded me that I actually did a show with Erica about a year ago and she shared some of the learnings from her own business because she owns a software company now.

And, and one of those was, that. It's being prepared to say, I don't know everything, and you know, I'm not an expert in running a business. I might have been an amazing recruiter and a fee earner and convincer of candidates to take jobs. So Kim said here ' stepping out of the business is the thing I struggle with the most' which is what you're talking about.

Getting somebody else involved in your business to force you to make time. Sounds like it's a really important thing.

Rhys: Yeah, well, I did a blog on it, on why every business needs a non-exec. And it's not necessarily, cause the non-exec knows more than you. It's having that person that you feel a peer pressure to, to meet with them, whether it's once a month every two months.

And reactions, and then feel guilty if you don't do them. So it's having that person there. I also did a blog on the difference between training and coaching. Cause training is very different to coaching and a good coach helps you develop your ideas and your thoughts. And that's what I try and do with the business owners I work with. They know their market best.

They know how, what culture they want in the business best. They've got the great ideas. I'm really there to help troubleshoot them, crystallize them, and create an action plan to make them happen. And that's what a good coach really does. So no matter whether you're a one-person band or whether, you know, you've got, I mean, Alan Sugar, he has non-execs for Christ sake.

So, you know, everybody benefits from a non-exec. I've had non-execs, my ex-tutor at Cranfield had a non-exec, Mike Walmsley, you may have heard of. He's a non-exec. You know, it's having that person to talk to and confided in. Fortunately, the lady I work with, Operations Director, she's a great coach for me in helping me crystallize my thought process because going back to most recruitment business owners are a hundred mile an hour. Because you're a hundred mile an hour, you won't slow down enough to be able to put those ideas into action. And one of the things I like to say is, often to go faster, you have to go slower. You get more done if you slow down at some point to put the action in place.

And then there's a time for speed. But the business strategy, that's where you've got to slow down.

Louise: I do truly believe that. And I think that well, I see a lot of recruitment businesses who don't look, they're very, very focused. They're not looking outside; they're not prepared to take on ideas.

I actually think that you can be highly arrogant and successful because let's be honest, Alan Sugar is, but don't be so arrogant that you won't listen and see what's going on around you.

Rhys: Yeah. I think arrogance and confidence are very closely linked. Because I've been accused of being very confident, borderline arrogant, sometimes , but that's just because I have a lot of belief.

It doesn't mean I'm a twat, it's is arrogance and confidence can get mixed up. Where the business owners that I mentioned before, that think they know it all, struggle, is the ones that do think they know it all.

Louise: Well. Yeah. Actually, you're totally right. Yeah. We shouldn't, I shouldn't confuse arrogance with being a know-it-all.

They're not the same thing at all. Are they?

Rhys: No, the ones that struggle, the ones that either won't listen or nod in agreement, and then do it anyway. Cause that really pee's me off if somebody ask you a question and then you give them an answer. They go, yeah, yeah. And they ignore it anyway. Why the fuck have you asked me a question in the first place. Don't ask the question if you don't want the answer. Don't waste my time. But it's having that humility to at least listen to a different point of view. And admit to yourself you think that's a better point of view, because yes, you should have confidence in your own ability.

You should have confidence to make decisions, but also have the confidence to understand that sometimes people have got better opinions than you, no matter whether they're an administrator or whether, you know, they're a senior manager. Everybody's got an opinion. And it's about you working with those opinions.

Some of the best ideas I heard from the people more at the lower level, the administrative level or resourcer level. Cause they say things in a different way.

Louise: Okay. So two things. Molly said over on LinkedIn, we're talking about businesses failing. I had a freelance recruitment business that failed because the fees for resumes drowned me.

So that's about, you know, using external sources. I guess that's, you know, thinking what your costs are going to be up upfront. Being judicious where you spend your money. Somebody else on LinkedIn has asked how they get in touch with you, Rhys. So I've actually put your LinkedIn link into the post and I'm going to put it here now as well.

My next question for you, we're never going to get through all these questions. How important is it to have a niche?

Rhys: I've always been a huge fan of niche. I think the days of generalized recruitment businesses are phasing out rapidly. There's still a place for the Nigel Pages and the Hayes are large organizations, but buyers are getting a bit more sophisticated, and they want to deal with experts.

But you can have your cake and eat it. Examples within some of the partners within the Davidson Gray support system, is that they've started off doing one sector and then they, they've spotted another avenue for profit. So all we do is open another brand and have a separate brand.

So it's the same company, but it's a separate brand because there is one company, well, it's one of the companies that I built and sold. We had six different brands for the same company. So we could appeal to different buyers. It was a head-hunting organization, so we had London Head Hunter, marketing headers, sales Head Hunter, UK head hunter.

So people were more attracted to them because they were all, for example, you know, marketing Head-hunter might appeal to them more than a general executive head hunter. So you can have a different brand, but as far as niche goes, it's just so much easier because you've got more people that promoted the business through LinkedIn, through phone calls, so on and so forth.

It builds your database. So rather than going out looking for new people all the time, your database is growing. You know your market; your clients know you. For me, it's an absolute no-brainer. Where you going to make the decision is how niche you have it. Because there's niche and niche. So, you know, if you go too specific, you are potentially going to hem yourself in, but I would say it's better to err on that than where I've seen some businesses fail where they go, right, this is my market. There's another ally to put one person there, one person there, one person in there, but they're only generating their own candidates and their own clients. So, having more people in the same sector is going to mean you can share the leftovers of the candidates that don't get placed and you can swap intelligence.

You're going to get the benefit of people having heard the business name before. So I would say err on the side of going small, but then when you do expand, go allied.

Louise: Okay. I like that. And a couple of comments over on LinkedIn. If you wonder why my eyes are going everywhere, it's because my eyes are going everywhere.

So Molly has said that this is going back to setting up a business working for a company. We are undercutting everyone around us, still no-one would buy. I'm a real salesperson, so if you're a recruiter and you don't know how to sell, you can still be an amazing recruiter and be rubbish with clients, I guess, if you're 180 recruiter..

Rhys: What was the question? Did you have to be a good salesperson to be a good recruiter?

Louise: Well, they were not able to sell to clients.

Rhys: Well, no. Cause this is when it comes back to the 180. There is one of the business that within the Davidson Gray group, and they came to me with a challenge that they automatically promoted resourcers from 180s to 360s.

And they said, we've got this great resource, 180 person who doesn't want to be a 360? We're not sure what to do. And I said, if your biggest problem is candidate attraction, why do you want to put someone in a 360 role who really enjoy being a source for good candidates, then keep them as that. And that is, it's massive.

I think it's massively undervalued because, if you're constantly getting good candidates, then you've got almost a USP above the competition. So if you have people that are great at sourcing good candidates, they can be as valuable as a 360. But to be a 180, you're selling anyway.

You don't have to sell like a salesperson sells. What you're doing is good customer service, world-class customer service and helping people to buy and helping them make their own decision is selling. That's solution selling. So it's not selling as in the features and benefits of why this is a great role or features and benefits of why I'm a great recruiter. It's getting the confidence of the client, being their expert and helping them solve their problem because recruitment is a massive pain in the arse for clients. It really is a huge pain in the arse. So if you could just provide a solution and give world-class service that's selling, and that's miles better than selling as people might think it is.

Because people don't like to get sold to. They like to buy, they like people to provide solutions that they want. They want people to take problems away from them. And that is really what a recruiter should do. So the old school thought that you need to be a great salesperson to be a recruiter, I think is crap. It's not. It's somebody that understands customer service and how to communicate with a client and gain their faith and that that's different.

Louise: So a few more comments. Going back to the niche, being an expert in your field is important so you can live up to the consultant part of your role and provide true value outside of just filling jobs.

And I guess being consultative is a way to keep getting his clients coming back to you. And Gavin, who teaches recruiters how to bill more, very interesting, says most organizations in the world work in niche. Why would this not apply to recruitment? I think we're saying it does. So let me go to my next question for you.

It's nice to have the engagement here and on LinkedIn. Thank you for that.

So the next question I have is about marketing and branding, and I think we started to move towards that, which is, it's not just about selling.

So how important is marketing and branding in building a successful recruitment business?

Rhys: It's not, and it is. 95% of recruitment companies are crap at marketing, yet they could be successful. And I did a video blog on it because the vast majority of recruitment companies are crap at marketing because marketing is a specialist skill and it means being systematic and process driven.

Recruitment business owners aren't. However, switched-on ones that are good at marketing get massive benefits because it makes your environment an easier place to make money. If you make your environment an easy place money, then not only do people make more money, but it’s also easy to attract staff and retain staff.

So if you get your marketing right, then you create your Nirvana. Branding is ally to marketing, but it's not quite the same. Marketing is more of an outreach thing to attract people as branding is an ongoing, almost image culture thing that is quite often developed by the quality of service that you deliver.

And that's where, again, quality service is closely aligned to marketing. But marketing can be a massive differentiator for you. If your space doesn't have brilliant marketing companies in it, because to get on, say, page one of Google, if there's two or three companies that are brilliant on SEO, then you're not going to win.

So, you know, a lot of markets, you can get good traction because everyone else is crap. But some of them, maybe not so much. Some of them we've tried, and we've struggled and some of them we've nailed it in six months. You've just got to be better than the competition. So if the competition's crap, you're winning. If the competition is great it's going to be harder.

Louise: So one of the things you spend a lot of time on is the podcasting and the interviews and things like that. So if you had a recruitment business who were working with you and they were in the pharmaceutical field, and the owner said to you, do you know what, I want to spend four hours a week doing podcasting and interviews. Would you say yes to that, or would you tell them to wait?

Rhys: I'd say wait, to be honest. It all depends on your market. I mean the reason I do it is because I enjoy it. Because I like to share the experience of knowledge I've got with other people. It's not necessarily to promote Davidson Gray. Cause Davidson Gray is a size I like anyway, so it is just sharing that knowledge.

But you've got to look at your market. If your market is very receptive to you being a thought leader, then fine. But don't let your ego convince you that that's the case. You've got to look at the return on investment of whether you get traction. So when you are looking at LinkedIn, people look at comments and likes, but you've got to look at the views and then drill down the views to see who's viewing you.

So if you put pictures of your dog or your wife, or you know, your first day at school all that bollocks, then you know, you might get lots of likes, but is it customers? You're looking to find people that are going to either use you to find people, or they're going to find you a job. Those are the people you're looking to approach.

So I'm all up for blogs, I'm all up for podcasts. I'm all into the interview thing, but it's about measuring whether it's going to get you the success that you want. Because with the sort of marketing, obviously that's part of it, is going through the path of least resistance. The biggest return on investment and, and it's looking at that from a proper subjective point of view by measuring the results to understand what makes the money.

Sometimes it could be the boring stuff that makes you the money, like PPC, that's a nice, easy thing. You get a PPC expert, and you pay for every click. So that's nice and simple. SEO's a bit more complicated. Then you've got your podcast, then you've got your blogs, then you've got your outreaches.

It's about measure what works for your market. Because some markets respond really well to SEO , but some are locked out by the big hitters, whereas other ones, they're not doing outreach here. So it's about what's good for your market. But as far as the podcasts and the video interviews go, I would spend minimal time in measuring.

Louise: Okay, so someone's just asked me what exactly Davidson Gray do. You made a comment about putting a photo of your dog on LinkedIn. There's a photo of someone's dog.

Rhys: I have done it, but I've got a beautiful dog.

I tell you what, I wish I was as handsome as him. I'm so envious. He just sits there. He doesn't know it. And he's just so goddamn handsome.

Louise: What's he called?

Rhys: George. Good manly name. So you've got George, but what does Davidson Gray do?

It is set up and support startups.

It's recruiters who want to own their own business. Have the humility to know that they don't know everything. They want the support. They want to work. The biggest are guys that want to work with me because our support team is world class. You know, we get five out five in all our customer surveys all the time, but it's somebody who wants to work with me as a co-director, as a shareholder.

Now, the people I work with, they're the MDs, they make the decisions. I don't push anything, but I'm there to promote thought and also deliver some of that. So for example, you know, I'm very good at marketing. I'm very good at the finance. Two areas that most of the MDs I work with don't want to get involved with.

They want me to do it. So Davidson Gray, yes, we provide the marketing, the accounts, do the invoicing, LinkedIn, job board, CRM, give you all that stuff. So basically you coming to us to set up a business. We build the infrastructure for you and support the infrastructure, but it then takes it to that next level of growing in the business as if you're going to sell it, but not necessarily selling it. So it's building it in a way that if you do get an unsolicited offer for the business, it's built in such a way that somebody can look at it and go, right, we can seriously scale this cause it's well put together. So it's primarily with startups.

I have worked with a few very small businesses that realized that they weren't going to get anywhere without working with someone like me. But primarily it's startups and we only have nine. So I am incredibly selective. People say, what's part of the criteria? I don't work with recruitment dicks.

You know, it's the people that know what they don't know. They want to have fun doing it. They've got the right morals. And they're doing it for the right reasons. I'm not getting spiritual, but, you know, I want to enjoy working with the people that I work with because setting up your own business is stressful, but it should be fun.

And that's one thing I didn't do in the first few years, is I was so busy and so driven, growing the business. I didn't smell the roses. I made a lot of money, but what I didn't do is necessarily enjoy it along the way. So what I try and do now with the business owners is help them enjoy it.

But I want to enjoy working with them. I want to like those people and, and get the buzz of making them. And I'm fortunate enough that all the businesses I work with, I get on great with every single one.

Louise: And that is a lovely way to work. I like that. Tony's saying, where do you make your money? So how does it work for someone partnering with you?

Rhys: We take a percentage of revenue. We don't take percentage of profits, we take a percentage of revenue, and within that revenue, we supply a lot of support services. So it's the CRMs, it's the account, it's the support staff, pays for my time. And it scales such that unlike recruitment fees, the more the business builds, the smaller the percentage.

So the more successful you are, the smaller the percentage. Although Davidson Gray get more money, so it rewards success.

Louise: And I'm going to just put up Gavin's comment on the screen because I love it, which is, it is so important to have fun running a business. I tell you what, I would imagine that if we did a happiness rating for lots of early days recruitment business owners, they're going to be scoring really low, aren't they?

They are going to be super stressed and not loving it.

Rhys: It is. Which is why if you have somebody that you can set up with, or you have a mentor or a coach or some sort of support system like that, it makes a hell of a difference. Because where I struggled is I was constantly learning new things I didn't understand, finding out things I didn't know I needed to understand, constantly fucking up because I didn't know what I was doing.

Learning from mistakes and trying to multitask and it is really stressful. But it should be fun because for me , going from recruiter to business owner is completely different because everything you do is for your business, you're not doing it for somebody else. So the crap stuff that you hated doing, like updating the CRM, but it's your business, you don't hate it cause it's your business.

So the adrenaline rush, the fun is much, much higher, if you can get the mental balance right that you are enjoying it and you are enjoying the up bits and the highs and not necessarily feeling the lows because it should be fun because you'll obviously make more money. But apart from that, you only get one life.

When you got your own business, what, 50 hours a week for the first six months doing it? You got to enjoy it.

Louise: Yeah, no, a hundred percent agree. First six months or first 23 years in my situation.

Rhys: Yeah, I do find that most, most successful recruitment business owners are a bit like me that if you're not overdoing it, you're doing it wrong.

Louise: Yeah.

Rhys: And that's not the way to do it.

Louise: I agree with you. I'm still doing it. Okay, so we are at 25 minutes. People who want to know more, tell me just in a minute how all the different ways they can get in touch with you in all the different ways they can absorb your content.

Rhys: Well, the best way to contact me is through LinkedIn Messenger. Just direct message me. If you go to the Davidson Gray website that holds the blogs, the podcasts, and the video blogs. You'll find the podcasts on all the channels, Spotify, so on and so forth. And if you look at YouTube, the channel there, I think it's The Recruitment Podcast with Rhys Jones or Rhys Jones Recruiting podcast one or the other.

If you Google Rhys Jones recruitment quite often that'll bring up an awful lot. But if you want to go to a one-stop shop, go to the Davidson Gray website and that has all of them there.

Louise: Wonderful. Okay. And the Davidson Gray website is down here. Yeah, so check out the website. Connect with Rhys on LinkedIn. This is going to be turned into a blog post. So maybe you're watching this on replay, and you haven't an opportunity to ask a question. Get in touch with Rhys, ask him directly. We've also had one content piece from you in the newsletter.

We've got something else going on the blog. We use quite a lot of your stuff in the newsletter anyway so there'll be more to come.

Rhys: No, well, it's about spreading the knowledge. I don’t know how big my library of blogs is now, but it's got to be pretty big. I think it must be about 40, 50 now. What I try and do with all the content that I do is genuinely good, good advice.

It's not designed to attract business with Davison Gray. Cause like I said, the size of the business now, is a size I'm fairly happy with it. It is genuinely to give people help and prevent them from making the mistakes that I made.

Louise: Yeah. Well, we want to elevate recruitment. We don't need any dodgy activity going on.

We should be helping people do better, shouldn't we?

Rhys: Well, it's nice to be nice.

Louise: Yeah. Indeedy. Okay. Well I really enjoyed chatting with you. I wish we could see your whole poster. I can see work. Don't worry. Be happy. The world is your oyster. Oh, I love it.

Rhys: Yeah. My wife got that.

Louise: That's perfect.

Rhys: We've got one downstairs that has bring me sunshine, which is one of my favourite songs that Morecambe & Wise, Bring Me Sunshine.

Louise: Yeah, that would make a lovely towel. Anyway, might be aging myself, that. Rhys it's been an absolute pleasure chatting with you. Thank you, all of you who've joined us here today on LinkedIn or on Crowdcast.