EPISODE 46 – Marc A. Pitman

Interview Transcript

Show notes available at: http://savvyeventpodcast.com/46
Tom: Marc Pitman, welcome to the show. How are you today, sir?

Marc: Thanks so much. I'm thrilled to be here.

Tom: Now, you're the fundraising coach and we were actually connected by Michel Neray who I interviewed in Episode 38. If folks haven't listened to that, they might want to go back and check it out. That was a really fun interview, a lot of great information. And as I understand it, Marc, you also are a speaker, keynote speaker to different groups. Would you tell us a little bit about what you do, your background, and how you evolved into the event industry?

Marc: Wow. I was born at a young age. My parents' names were Mom and Dad. No. To speed things up a little bit, right out of college, I started working at the college I graduated from and quickly found the fundraising and just found out I loved it. I did the speaking because I had grown up in a family that was heavily involved in the training aspects of Amway. So I would go to the seminars and rallies and heard event speakers and heard motivational speakers, Zig Ziglar, and Bob Burg, and others like that, and just got so much out of them. I couldn't believe that I could do that, too.

So as a fundraising guy, events were totally a part of what I did. It wasn't my major...my major emphasis was major gift fundraising, but we even used events in that because when you say you're a fundraiser, most people said, "I thought a fundraiser's an event." As I kept going, I started doing some public speaking which are also at events and found out people like the way I package the information, and I then went into coaching full-time to help other people make better decisions, both in running nonprofits and doing their fundraising. It's a real honor.

Tom: I'm still stuck on the fact that your parents are named Mom and Dad because so are mine.

Marc: And we're brothers from another mother, but we couldn't be if they're both Mom and Dad. That's awesome.

Tom: So, Marc, you've been called the Johnny Appleseed of fundraising. I love that. Who called you that? Do you remember?

Marc: Beth Ann Locke, a fundraiser up in Vancouver called me the Johnny Appleseed of fundraising and I just was tickled. I loved it. She said I spread the joy of fundraising wherever I go.
Tom: That's a subject that some people dread. And I'm just thrilled to find somebody that loves it and can share information with our audience. Now, as we talked about before, my audience is event planners and they're doing all types of events, but fundraisers are obviously important to companies. A lot of times, I know my wife's company works with United Way and they're constantly doing fundraising for United Way. So let's talk a little bit about fundraising as it pertains to events. When somebody's planning a fundraiser, where do they start?

Marc: There's all sorts of different ways to go about this. The way I like to do it is a formula called Get REAL. REAL is the acronym. As a gen X-er, I heard that a lot growing up, so it's just easy for me to remember. The four steps are R, Research. You have to know the project you're gonna be doing and the prospects that you're gonna be inviting to the event. Then E is Engaging them. That could be through our committee or some other way of just getting to know if you're addressing the best impact that you want to have with your event. And then the fundraiser part, you're not a fundraiser if you don't raise funds, so I'm big on asking. The A is for Ask. And then the L in Get REAL is for Loving. You have to love the people that...well, you get to love the people that give. You often get to like people that don't, and our worlds are usually small enough that you can't just churn through people so you have to live with people whether you like them or not, sometimes, in a relationship business.

So starting with...for United Way, if they're doing it for United Way, it would be, what's the cause that they're fundraising for? So you get to know that first. Tom, you'd be surprised at how many leaders and nonprofits I ask, "How much are you trying to fund raise for," and they can't answer the question. "Well, more is better." So if you're doing an event that's fundraising, it's really important to figure out what a goal is because that way, you can track yourself and see if it was successful or not.

Tom: How does somebody go about...since the executives didn't know what they were trying to raise, how does somebody go about setting a realistic goal? Any ideas?

Marc: There's an important word that you said. You said a realistic goal, that's great. One of the ways that people often do it is just doing an incremental increase over the previous year. It's something. It's a start. Another way to do it is if you're doing an event that has happened time after time, you can do a three or five-year running average. Had a person who just raised $20,000 more in their event because they improved storytelling? And so now instead of the joy of success, they're feeling the pain of success because it sounds like their board
is expecting that to be the new baseline moving forward. Instead of in a blip or anomaly, they think, "All right, this is what we can generate."

So I'm a big fan of three or five-year averages, see what you've done over the last three years or five year, and then see what you can do to plus it up. Another way to look at it is to take the goal that you want to have, what you think would be needed, to make it a successful event, and then run it through something called the Gift Range Calculator. If you just Google "Gift Range Calculator," you should come up with three. Mine, which is giftrangecalculator.com, that's free. There's one on the Blackbaud site that I helped them build, which is also free.

And then there's a third one, a brand new one from a tech company called Sumac which I also helped them build that allows you to then, if you have sponsorship levels or donors you know that are gonna be there or a number of ticket sales you know they're pretty sure to get, you can put those in there and customize your gift chart. So you could either start with what the need is or you could start with what past history is or you could start with the who you think your donors are and what you think...almost, I guess, a phrase could be what the market will bear. Because generally, most of the things that we're doing, the more we raise, the more good we can do. But it's important to have a dollar goal that you're shooting for.

For some people, Tom, you may know this, for some people, a first time fundraising event, breaking even is a legitimate goal. I remember when we were starting one in Central Maine. I was the executive director of the foundation of the hospital but I had to go to the hospital CEO who really wanted a particular type of event and just say, "I need to hear from you that you're okay if we take a bath in about $25,000 of expenses this year," because it was involving an orchestra and a venue and catering and all this other stuff, because we had no proof of concept. We had no idea if people would actually buy tickets or show up. They did. But you have to have a little bit of risk tolerance, too.

**Tom:** Yeah, I can imagine if you're trying to raise money and going $25,000 in debt, that seems to be a discrepancy there.

**Marc:** Yeah, it totally does. One of the things that he did that might be helpful for your listeners is he suggest that I call all the nonprofits in our region, which is a ton, and I created a spreadsheet. Every row was a nonprofit and every column was a month of the year. So I'd call Aquinas and say, "What kind of fundraising events do you hold in the year? We're looking at doing one. We don't want to inflict on other people's...we don't want to overlap unknowingly." I usually would say something like overlap unknowingly, because I wanted to
leave us the option of overlapping because that's a good thing for our mission. And it was fascinating to look at all the different events that happen through the year. So many events that we do for fundraising are copycats.

In rural Maine, where I lived at the time, from early April or mid-April all the way through almost October, so when snow was on the ground, too, when it was really cold again, there were golf weekends and golf outings. So we knew that not only did we never wanted to do that anyway, but we also knew, "Boy, that's not it for us." But we also saw that there were life event offerings much of the year, live music events, and there was an opening around October, November, and there was an opening for classical music. So that became how we decided to figure out, put in an orchestra concert in that time of the year.

**Tom:** That's some great advice right there. And one of my guests in Episode 10 talked about corporate social responsibility. And he mentioned reaching out to nonprofits and charities, and not just when they can benefit you but to benefit them throughout the year. So this is some great stuff and I encourage our listeners to double-check back to Episode 10 and listen to that. Now Marc, when somebody's putting together an event, you talked about the research and the prospects, that would be part of the reaching out to these other groups. And then you mentioned the engagement. What do you do or what do you recommend people do to engage the prospects to get them involved and get them giving?

**Marc:** For CSR, corporate social responsibility, or for corporations that are trying to do these events for charity, there's a couple different prospects, aren't there? There are the nonprofits, which can be a little bit skittish if other people are trying to raise money for them, and then there are the people that you want to attend the event as well, whether it's staff members or community members that you want to rally around the cause.

So in traditional major gift fundraising, the engagement could be sitting together over a cup of coffee, talking to people, meeting them at different service organizations in your town. But in this case, I was thinking about those [inaudible 00:09:59] listeners, it could be very well be having a committee of people that are passionate about the cause, like a staff committee that would want to support this type of event, and running things through them and then having them test messaging and all with their teams or their respective networks and their different social networks, and then also working with the nonprofits and just running stuff by them as much or as little as they want to be involved.
Some nonprofits just love getting a check at the end. Others really want to have a hands-on part of it and maybe help out with the program or do other things that can support the event.

**Tom:** Now, the next part of your REAL was Ask and you actually wrote the book on that, "Ask Without Fear".

**Marc:** Yes.

**Tom:** A lot of people are very nervous approaching other people and asking for donations. So give us some thoughts. Tell us a little bit about the book and how it came about and if you could maybe knock out a couple of pieces of advice for our listeners, I'd appreciate it.

**Marc:** Sure thing. The book itself was written because I was working with a theater group that was just passionate, 100% volunteer board and no staff that were passionate. And we loved the level of arts that they were producing, the theater they were producing. And I knew that if they had a little bit of fundraising strategy, they'd be able to do a lot more. So we've been studying fundraising. Humans have been giving charitably to causes almost since the beginning of whenever they started existing as humans. And we've been really studying it since World War II.

So there are certain systems in place that you can put in that, like I said, with the Gift Range Chart. If you're trying to raise $100,000, most of us would think we just need to get 100 people to give $1000 or 1000 people to give $100, but that's not how it works. It usually takes the first gift being 10% to 25% of your goal. So that would be a top sponsor. The second gift to be about 10% to 15% of your goal and the next one's being 7% to 12%, the next two. There's sort of the 80/20 thing, but there's a way that we've looked at how you map out fundraising. So that helps when you're going into the Ask because you know that we're not asking everybody equitably.

The other thing I would say is one of the major things I would say about making the Ask is talk to your steering wheel. Have you ever left a meeting and said I've thought of all the things you should have said? "Oh, I could have said this. Oh, I could have said that."

**Tom:** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

**Marc:** Okay. So I figure, you're going to talk to your steering wheel anyway, why not talk in advance? And so that's part of when I am training people, I have them go over the Ask, whether it's at 101, asking for a sponsorship, "I'd like to
ask you to consider becoming a sponsor at $35,000. Would you consider becoming a $35,000 sponsor? Would you consider becoming a presenting sponsor?" And you see how I'm already skipping over words? It's better to get that out before the event, before the Ask, but it also works if you're gonna say something. "I'd like to have everybody raise their paddles," to do whatever the impact is gonna be if it's a raise the paddles part of an event. Or, "I'd like to have everybody pick up the pledge cards on their table," and see how many days of camp they're able to cover. Get yourself used to saying it because when it comes to asking for money, we are all inundated with ad messages every day.

What I think is when we're nervous about asking, we project that energy, and the prospect picks up on it and thinks it's a gut message to them of, "Ooh, I've got to be on my guard. Something's not right here." So that's why I like telling people that honesty and integrity are two of the best fundraising tactics in the world. It's really easy to remember if you're being honest and have integrity. So one of the ways you could be honest with that is even at a podium, you could say, "You know, I'm really nervous standing up here in front of you today because I don't normally ask for money." And the prospect is gonna, first of all, let down their guard. "Okay. That explains the tension I'm feeling." And often times, they'll start rooting for you because they don't like asking for money either. So they'll be like, "All right, Tom, you can do it. Come on."

So practicing it in advance is helping remove those barriers. Anything we can do so that the prospect can hear the Ask as clearly as possible. I'm also a big proponent of asking for a very clear action, whether it's a specific dollar amount. I like the specific dollar amount. At events, it could be taking an action, like becoming a monthly sponsor and then making it clear on a pledge form what those levels are. But helping treat prospects like adults and letting them make up their own mind, telling them clearly the action that you're asking them to take, and then giving them the space, usually, it's silence, to say yes or no, or to process the Ask that you've asked them to do.

**Tom:** I would assume that raising funds in a down economy, I mean, for example, this year, we have the presidential elections, and some people are afraid to commit. So what advice do you have for somebody when they're trying to raise money in an uncertain economic time?

**Marc:** Don't stop. There's a part of us that needs to be the beggar in "Fiddler on the Roof". Do you remember the story of "Fiddler on the Roof"?

**Tom:** Oh, yeah.
Marc: Okay. So they're going through and talking about the village and all the different characters, and one of the guys is a beggar. And he goes up to a person and asks for money, and what I remember is the person said, "I've had a hard day." And he looks back at the person, the beggar looks back and says, "What? Because you had a hard day, I should suffer?" And we've got to have some of that chutzpah because we don't know where other people are at.

There was one point during the housing downfall or the housing bubble burst in 2008, 2009. We had gone through a capital campaign and I had a lot of people that still had outstanding pledge commitments. So I started making phone calls saying, "Hey, I know that the economy went wonky for us. If you need to readjust your pledge payment schedules, I'd be glad to do that." But after about four or five calls, I realize the economy isn't wonky for everybody. There are industries that are thriving right now, even in a down economy. So I try to readjust my words to saying, "I know that the economy sent some of us for a loop or has sent some people for a loop and if that's you, we're totally open to looking at your pledge payment times and readjusting those as it fits you."

The unwritten part that I was really saying is we still need you to make good on your pledge. But I didn't come across that way. I didn't want to come across that way. I want it to come across as serving people that had already made a decision and were just securing it through.

The other thing, Tom, I'd say about a down economy, is that after the 2008, 2009 great recession time, the nonprofits that were able to come out of that the fastest were the ones that kept investing in fundraising during that time. We saw a really weird thing. It would be a company cutting off its salespeople in marketing efforts during a tough time because they had to focus on their product. Nonprofits, during this tough financial time, started cutting all their fundraising and marketing dollars, many of them, so they could "focus" on the mission.

What they found was those nonprofits that did that had a harder time actually having bigger impact later on. It took them a lot longer to recover. But the ones that kept effective fundraising going during that time rode the storm a lot better because people in a down economy, ironically, especially in North America, and I'm sure it's around the world, too, but I know my experience in this aspect is in North America, people dig deeper sometimes because they understand it. They see the suffering around them and it impacts them more viscerally than it would if we're just a hypothetical thing that you're fundraising for.

Tom: Very good stuff. I really appreciate that, Marc. Fundraising's taken a different turn with the internet. There are sites now like GoFundMe and Patreon
where people are trying to raise money online. Can you talk to us a little bit about how that affects or changes things that people are doing?

**Marc:** I think it's great. I think the more ways that we can help each other express our generosity, the better. I think there's something that's really wonderful about being in the fundraising space, is that we're getting to encourage generosity in individuals and that becomes sort of addicting. Generosity and gratitude, when you're able to express gratitude and when you're able to express generosity, it's just, they're very deep, human characteristics that are, who [inaudible 00:18:59] to be around that? So GoFundMe and the other ones you mentioned, they're helpful. I think they're...people, I think, are a little bit unrealistic when they go into it, often in fundraising. They think there's some magic Rolodex of donors in the sky that are looking for a place to just deposit their cash.

**Tom:** There's not?

**Marc:** No. I'm sorry, Tom. I haven't found it yet anyway. In fact, one of my standard email replies to some people, a certain way a question is worded, have a standard email reply that says, "We don't have a magic Rolodex of donors that are looking to give money. We teach you how to find your own. If you're on board with that, let's move forward." I think part of it is having the discipline of...if you're sitting on a board and your nonprofit's looking to raise money, having the discipline of an event is really important when it comes to online fundraising. Knowing whether the levels, if it's sponsorship levels in an event, it could be giving levels on your GoFundMe page, let's say, "What are the deadlines that you're gonna have?" Just like you'd have an event, "Who's the committee?"

Because so much of the successful online fundraising is done offline. It's done by people picking up the phone and calling friends. It's done by other people sharing emails to people to drive them to the site. There's so much other things behind the scene that make a successful online fundraising work, that you might as well consider it an event and see if you have the resources of staff, time, intent, motivation to actually carry it through like you would a successful event.

**Tom:** Now, you mentioned storytelling. That came across in your website as well. Talk to us a little bit about the storyline that needs to be crafted by the event planner to bring these people together.

**Marc:** I am so glad you brought that up because we're going into our third year of running the Nonprofit Storytelling Conference and we're seeing people that are just making incremental tweaks in their storytelling make, what do you call
it, exponential jumps in their fundraising, doubling and tripling their fundraising.

The biggest thing I can tell you, Tom, is that when it comes to telling the story for fundraising, most of us want to verify the choice that the donor is making. So we'll talk about our nonprofit, our cause. We'll talk about who we are and what we do and all the great things about us. And the donor just hears that it's kind of like the teacher on Charlie Brown, wah-wah-wah-wah-wah-wah-wah-wah. They don't hear anything. What we're finding is really effective, and shouldn't surprise us, is talking about the donor and the impact the donor is gonna make. Your gift is gonna conserve this amount of land. Your gift is gonna spare these many vets. Your gift is gonna help this kid go to school. Your gift is gonna do this for an adult. Your gift is gonna feed this many seniors.

And of course, you need the nonprofit to go through, but people are pretty smart. Donors are pretty savvy. And when you start tying people's values, the stuff that they know is important or they wish they could be doing with the intended outcome, it's remarkable how powerful that connection could be and how much you can raise more than you can the old way.

A simple rule of thumb for this is to, let's say you're writing a fundraising letter, take out a red pen and take out a black pen. And with the red pen, circle every reference to your nonprofit to the words "we", "us", and "our". And with your black pen, circle every reference to you or the donor, "you", "yours", or "your". And the reason is the more red you have, the more in the red your event will be. If you're talking about the nonprofit and talking about yourself in the sense of, "We, the nonprofit, we are raising this money," you're gonna not connect with your donors. But the more you, yours, and your you have in there, you're gonna be in the black.

There's one switch that I can see with that. With events like what your event planner is maybe doing, it could be that it's, "We, all of us in this room, are having this impact for this outcome," and that's a higher form of the "we". When it's just, "We, those of us who worked at the nonprofit," or, "We, who volunteer, we, staff members who volunteer for this nonprofit," that becomes an "us and them" sort of thing. That's not helpful. But when it's a communal, "We, we're all in this together," that can be a much more powerful story.

The other thing I wanted to tell you about stories, though, is really, you could get totally into formula and you could do all this reading and all, but for most volunteers or most people that are raising money on behalf of a cause that aren't getting a paycheck from the nonprofit, their own personal giving story can be
really powerful. We tend to underestimate the power of why we get involved with the cause, but sharing what struck you, why you're involved, why you're throwing this event, why you felt it was important to have this change made in the world, can be one of the most powerful messages that you can get across.

**Tom:** You mentioned the final letter in REAL stood for loving. And I know this applies to events. If you're doing an annual event, you need to stay in touch with your people. I would imagine with fundraising it's very similar. You want to cultivate that relationship. Can you talk to us a little bit about loving your donors?

**Marc:** Absolutely. One of my friends, Steven Screen [SP] calls it reporting back to them. So after an event, you could have a report back to them, "Everyone, this is the difference that you've made. Thank you." But it's important to say thank you. Right now, in the nonprofit space, if you had 10 new donors last year, you could just list them out on a piece of paper and take a Sharpie and cross out 6 of the names because only 4 of them are gonna give again this year. We're so bad at saying thank you that there is some research that indicates that of people that made a gift the first year, they're asked why they didn't make a gift again, one out of four of them didn't even know that they made a gift the first year.

As a nonprofit sector, we're doing such a bad job at even acknowledging, "Yes, we received your gift." In fact, I have a couple of screenshots from people that have Facebook messaged me saying, "Okay, I've given $50 a month for two months. Shouldn't I have gotten an acknowledgement at least once that I even gave it?" They were passionate about the cause but they get turned off because there wasn't even an auto-responder saying, "Yep, your credit card was processed." They could see it on their bill but they couldn't see it from the nonprofit.

So I guess the good news, Tom, is that the level is so low, the bar is so low in the sector that any amount of reporting back will make your event stand out. But going back to the sponsors is one level of loving on them that's just saying very intentional, could be a phone call or if it's feasible, a visit saying, "Thank you so much. We want to thank you." It can even start at the event, depending on how your event's structured. Doing some sort of communication [inaudible 00:26:10] all the attendees but also, there's all sorts of ways you can do it.

It could be just taken out your camera on your phone and doing a little video of the impact being had, if there's animals being released in the wild, you could take a little impact, and then email it to everybody saying, "Because you were at the event where that raised this much, these animals are now being able to go
back into their natural habitat." It's not just, "You're so great, we love you," but showing them the specific action that's being made can be really powerful, and let them know that they're part of something bigger than just themselves.

**Tom:** Once again, some great stuff. All kinds of ideas are just flowing and I'm not a fundraiser.

**Marc:** Yey.

**Tom:** Because some of these techniques could literally be applied to different phases of their business. So it's just some great stuff here, Marc. Now, Marc, you do, in addition to your keynotes, what audiences do you speak to usually when you go out and do your keynote?

**Marc:** Often, it's board members and CEOs of nonprofits who are confused by the complexity of running a nonprofit. With a business, there's usually a customer. With nonprofits, there's clients and then the customer is often the donor. So you need someone to fund it, then you'd have a mission that you're doing to someone else or somewhere else. There's also a lot of fundraisers in the room, but I love speaking to the leaders and helping them shape the culture of gratitude within their organizations.

**Tom:** Marc, usually, when I get a guest on this show, if they're involved with events as a speaker or as an event planner, I always ask them if there was ever an event they went to or participated in that something went wrong, maybe a horror story, and I'm using your quotes there, but some kind of little thing that went wrong, what you did to overcome it or what the event did to overcome it, and what you took away from that.

**Marc:** That's a great question. I'll leave the name of the nonprofit out of the worst one. But there was an event I was at that was a very high-end fundraising event. In the quiet phase of the capital campaign, we had invited the top-end guests and prospects at a location that was donated to us by people that wanted to have a significant impact in the campaign, so they had this very nice space. It was a hotel, a very upper-end hotel. We had a great event. It had just a good feel. The right people were in the room. The right people were presenting. We had people that are being impacted presenting.

The major failure came when the head of the organization never made the Ask. He shut down the event without any solicitation. And there's no point in having that event if there weren't gonna be an Ask. So that to me was a dismal failure because you have the prospects that donated the space wondering, "Why did we just do this. Was this just a meet and greet? I didn't think it was a meet and
greet. I thought we were actually gonna help move the cause forward." You have a whole bunch of prospects who, based on our experience in trying to get in touch with them, we weren't gonna get in touch with them again for months because getting them in a room was hard enough.

He shut it down, did a Q & A. And he was closing the Q & A, and I did raise my hand and say, "What's it gonna cost to get this all done," to help bring him back on track. And I got mixed results about that. Some people thought we're glad that that was said. A couple people were torqued that felt like that shouldn't have been something I said when the head of the organization was taking it on a different course. My sense was that I was a consultant on that event and I was brought in to help them do something they hadn't done before.

So it was still a great event. People had a good time. If it's a fundraising event, Tom, you've got to raise funds. How is it gonna happen? There are times for engagement events and there are times for stewardship events, and those are great times to not have an Ask. If you're getting to know people, you're introducing people to your cause, introducing people to the nonprofit head, or if you're thanking them, those events go wrong when people think, "Oh no, we've got all these people in a room and we may never get them again. We probably should throw an Ask in here, too." Because then, it feels like you've pulled a fast one which isn't good.

Tom: Okay. On the other scale, a lot of event planners and speakers and entertainers have gone to events where everything seems to go right and everything's just...the event feels like it's at the next level. And I'm curious if you've ever had a chance to work with one of those. And if so, give me a little bit of an idea of what made this go so great.

Marc: Two things came to mind. One of them was the Nonprofit Storytelling Conference is an event that one of the reasons I think it went so well is that there is a high level of detail to the experience of the attendees, attention to that to the point where there were blankets last year in the room for people because conference areas can get chilly for some people. And the blankets just...I didn't think anything of it, but the attendee response was, "Wow, that was so thoughtful and that just made it such a great feeling event." It was a really good vibe that has extended beyond the event itself. It's growing into its own sort of tribe.

The other one, when it comes to fundraising, I haven't seen it redone yet but I love it, was when I first got into fundraising. I was working for Gordon College on the north shore of Boston and we were in the middle stages of a capital campaign, and they are doing regional events now. So we had already talked to
our top donors. We had already talked to the inside out, the board members, and the people close to us were moving out in concentric circles. In doing that, the model that they were using for their regional events was to take the top prospects for that region and invite them to be on the event planning committee. We had an event planning committee job description, which is really important if you're working with volunteers because we all need to know what's expected of us. And one of the things is also to make their gift.

So we went into a region, talked to our top prospects and we did the engagement by planning this event. I got to solicit them all in front of the event because that was just part of the job description. You had to make your gift before the event. And so we went in to do the event as a college. We knew we had already had our top prospects solicited and pledged in hand. Everything else that they're bringing to us was gravy. It was really, really exciting.

Tom: Now, you've got your book which is called "Ask Without Fear". You've also got a companion CD or DVD, is that correct?

Marc: I do, yes.

Tom: And then you've got some other training. Would you tell us a little bit about that?

Marc: Sure. So we've got...the "Ask Without Fear" DVD was a request from clients who said, "We love the book. We want to take this to the board. Can you give us sort of a retreat in a box?" So that was working through in about a 70-minute form, the book. So there's a lot more in the book even though it's less than 100 pages. I wanted something that a volunteer could read and not feel overwhelmed with. But then I also have books on storytelling. What I really love doing is working with, "How do you craft your message and how do you then, as leaders, implement that in the organization?"

So my other site, concordleadershipgroup.com, there's a leadership report where we studied over 1,000 people in nonprofits, and we just released a report a few weeks ago on the status of leadership within nonprofits. What's the ability for nonprofit leaders to tell a compelling vision? How important are strategic plans? How many have them? Hint: Only about 49% of nonprofits said they had a strategic plan. It was awful. And it did matter. The data showed that leaders with strategic plans were a lot more confident, a lot more flexible. They were actually getting their work measured and their effectiveness measured. So I'm [inaudible 00:34:25] so I just love helping people be better at what they do.
**Tom:** Now, if our audience is interested in reaching out to you, where should they go?

**Marc:** For the event planning, they should definitely go to fundraisingcoach.com. And there's also some training at thenonprofitacademy.com. And then for the leadership report and for CEOs, going over concordleadershipgroup.com is great.

**Tom:** Okay, great. Well, Marc, again, I want to thank you for your time today. I really appreciate it. It has been a joy. Thank you.

**Marc:** Thank you so much, Tom.