

The Underground Marketer Podcast – Episode 26 – Full Transcript

Introduction 00:00:03 Marketing, explosive growth, and revolutionary secrets that can catapult your business to new heights. You're now listening to The Underground Marketer Podcast with your host Tudor Dumitrescu, the one podcast devoted to showing new businesses how to market themselves for high growth.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:00:24 Welcome to the underground marketer. This is the place where we deliver the real truth about marketing and explore big ideas that can help new businesses thrive and grow into big ones. I'm your host Tudor. And today I want to discuss the topic of sales anxiety. A lot of people reach out to me, or I see them talking online on forums and so on. And they're complaining about the difficulty that they experience when they're trying to do sales. And typically this occurs in the context of cold calling and reaching out to new people without an introduction. And a lot of people experienced massive levels of anxiety that can be debilitating. You know, so let's say that their business is in a position where they have to cold call and the anxiety that they experience when they try to do it is so overwhelming that they stop and they never get through it.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:01:24 And they never actually do the thing that they fear. The first thing I want to say here is that cold calling anxiety or sales anxiety is very common. It's common in most people that I've seen, I still experience anxious feelings every now and then when doing sales as well, you know, after I've done thousands of different sales experiences, the feelings are still there. So it's not, you're not dealing with something where you're alone. You know, there's many other people who have gone through this, even salesmen who have become the best of the best in the profession, they have experienced this. Some of them actually still experience it, but they push through it and they do a good job. So, um, why is it so pervasive? Well, I think that sales anxiety is pervasive mainly because of how we are brought up. You know, as children, we are told, don't talk with strangers, don't approach, strangers, strangers are dangerous, be polite, all this other stuff.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:02:31 And the social customs that we are told that we have to follow and all these things, they pile up and they produce a series of limiting beliefs that are very deep and it's very hard to remove them completely because they are so deeply ingrained. You know, it's like almost our entire experience tells us that this is not a smart idea. They're deeply ingrained and it's not easy for us to overcome them. So how does this usually manifest in a person is that they try to pick up the phone and then they experience this tremendous fear that going to stop them or the experience, the fear. And they try to go through the cold call anyway, and they struggle to stay on point. They mumble, they a starter and they're not able to be effective, which is the other key component. You know, some people, they can't do it at all.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:03:29 Some people can push themselves and do it, but they don't do it right. And the reason why they don't do it right, is because of the fear that they feel. They cannot manage that. And so they cannot deliver their pitch correctly. And this can be quite a big problem. You know, if you don't address it because your efficiency is going to be totally destroyed, you know, if you cannot control your emotions and liver, the pitch that you have and actually be persuasive, you know, you're not going to get any results for your business or for whatever you're trying to do. And when you're first starting out, this is one of the most important things, you know, being able to speak with new people yourself. And the reason why it's so

important is because you don't really have other people who you can outsource this to, you know, you can outsource everything else in the beginning almost, but sales is the one thing that most of the time you actually have to do yourself, you know, unless you've partnered with somebody who can take care of it, you know, and even then there will be points when you have to do selling yourself.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:04:38 So you have to get over it. You know, that you have to make that commitment in your mind. If you're facing this difficulty that you have to overcome sales, anxiety, and you must become effective and be an effective salesperson in order to achieve your goals. And just like any other skill, like if you try to remember maybe the first time you learned how to swim, you know, I remember that, for example, the first time I learned to swim, I had some bad experiences before, you know, I swallowed water. I started coughing. I had some bad experiences. So when I was about maybe 11, 12 years old, my parents, they gave me to swimming lessons and they're like, oh, he has to learn how to swim. So we'll take him to swimming lessons. And I was very afraid of the water, you know? And I, uh, even though I wanted to appear cool and whatnot, I was so scared that I actually told the teacher when she asked me, look, I don't know how to swim, you know, because many other times when I experienced a bit of anxiety, I would say that I do know how to do that thing because I didn't want to be embarrassed.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:05:49 Right. So for example, the first driving lesson that I had, I did have a bit of anxiety, but not a lot. So I, the instructor asked me, have you driven before? And I was like, yeah, yeah, I have, even though I never had. Right. And I just said that because I didn't want to be embarrassed in front of him. But anyway, in this case, I actually said that, yeah, I'm, I don't know how to swim and I've never done it properly. And I'm actually very scared. So she took me very slowly and this is very important. And it's important for you as well in overcoming your, um, sales anxiety. And I'm going to explain to you exactly how it is because she took me slowly and she gave me all the protective gear that would keep me afloat. And so on. I had a good experience from the beginning, you know, and I got confident within, I had no problem and I would scream.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:06:46 Then she took the protective gear off and she gave me the thing that I would hold on to, and then swim, just using my feet, using that in any way a day came when she was like, okay, today you have to actually swim without anything. So, um, when she said that I, I felt a bit of anxiety, right. And I felt the anxiety rise up. It wasn't super intense, but it was still intense. So, um, anyway, she put me in the swimming pool. And what I remember is that the fear almost instantly evaporated when I went into the water because I could float, you know, and it was like magic to me because beforehand I wasn't able to float. And now all of a sudden, because I took things slowly and step-by-step, I was able to float magically, you know, like I wasn't actually doing anything going unconsciously, at least to float, you know, I wasn't trying to do anything.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:07:43 I was just floating, you know? And when I saw that, that's the case, my fear completely disappeared. And I felt in control. And I felt that I, I, there there's no danger, you know? So the feeling of control is important. And we're going to get back to this. But anyway, what this shows is that with fears like this and with anxiety is, especially as it's related to stuff like sales, it's not enough to tackle your beliefs. You know? So if before my swimming lesson, for example, she tackled my belief and she made me believe that I can swim and whatnot, that will not have been enough to actually help me float and do the other stuff.

Right. So being effective in sales is like a skill. And you have to learn it. You have to learn it step by step, and you can do all the mindset, stuff that you want.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:08:34 You know, uh, when you tell yourself that all strangers are not dangerous, I'm just gonna pick the phone and I'm going to call, I don't care about the resolve. You can tell yourself everything like this, and it's still not going to help you. You're still going to be afraid. You know, when I've, I mean, I've tried this. When I first started telling her, I was like, oh, I'm looking for this magic mindset you were. And if I just changed the way that I think, uh, and rewire my brain, I'm not going to be afraid, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And that turned out to be crap. You know, because I was still just as afraid, you know, before I did any of the mindset stuff before I imagined myself calling the person and imagining worst-case scenarios, imagining best-case scenarios, I went through the whole thing, but nothing cured me and actually helped me overcome this anxiety until I started to properly face it and do that repeatedly time and time again.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:09:35 And the more I repeated, the more in control I felt of the anxiety. I still feel the anxiety to this day. You know, the, the point is not to eliminate it. The point is to be able to be in control so that you can bring your best self forward. You know? So if you feel anxious, but you're actually bringing your best self forward in the sales conversations, you're going to be effective. The prospect does not know how you're feeling inside yourself, you know, and many times when you feel anxious. And I remember this back from my school days when I used to give a presentation and they would record it, right. So I gave the presentation and I felt super anxious. I felt that it went like crap. And then I would watch the replay and I would be amazed. You know, I would be amazed because actually, I looked supremely confident, even though inside I was dying from anxiety, literally.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:10:31 And the same thing with public speaking, I was student council president in my school. So I gave a lot of public speeches and so on. So I remember the first time I did it, my hands were shaking really bad, and it was visible that I was anxious. And after some time I was still anxious, but outwardly I was supremely confident. So that's the same thing that will happen here in regards to your sales and anxiety with practice, I can promise you that it will disappear completely, but it's going to diminish and you're going to have control over it. And you're going to be able to bring your best self forward. So, um, don't rely just on the cognitive components. You know, don't rely just on trying to change your mindset, trying to change your beliefs, trying to think that what's the worst that can happen and that kind of stuff, because you can do all that.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:11:22 And in the end, it's still not going to get you the results that you want. You know, and typically this can end up as a way of procrastinating. And when it comes to sales, anxiety, or really anxiety of any other nature, procrastination, in my opinion, is one of the worst things that you can do. And here's why when you procrastinate, you reinforce the anxiety. You know, the message that you are sending to your brain is that situation is dangerous and I'm avoiding it. Therefore that proves that it is dangerous. That's the message that you're sending to your brain. And this sort of avoidance is actually reinforcing the fear. And avoidance is a really, really big thing when it comes to anxiety. And the same thing is true in terms of your sales anxiety. If you want to get over it, you have to realize that every time you avoid it, every time you try to do something else, other than giving a call or doing the things that make you anxious, you may very likely be procrastinating.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:12:34 And it can be very subtle. Because for example, you can think that, oh, I will work on my mindset and I will change my mindset. And then I will no longer have fear when I cold call, right? That's what will go through your mind. And the mistake in that is that it's a lie. That's not, what's going to happen. What will happen is that you will waste your time doing all the mindset exercises. And then when you pick up the phone, you'll experience exactly the same type of fear. And not only that, the fear could even be stronger and you can feel even more incompetent and even lower, and you will feel lower because now you will think, oh, I've done all this mindset training. And look, I not any better. You know, this is impossible. I can't do sales. I can't call that's what will go through your mind because that's the evidence you have given your body.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:13:28 You know, when you try to do it before you procrastinated, and instead you prefer to do the quote-unquote helper activity, which actually took you away from experiencing anxiety and therefore told your body the exact opposite message that cold calling or whatever it is, is dangerous, and you're avoiding it. And it got reinforced. So you don't want to do it like that either what you want to do. And what I found very effective is that you have to seize avoiding, and this is what I like to use. It's called systemic desensitization. And basically what it means is that you have to condition your body through repetition, not to experience fear. And the reason why this works is because there is no rational reason for you to experience fear when you're cold calling, right? There is no reason for it. You just pick up the phone and suddenly there is also the fear, you know?

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:14:30 So it's sort of like a reflex, you know, it's, it's unconscious, you don't want to experience the fear. You just pick up the phone from your table and dial in the number. And suddenly your palms are sweating. You're trembling and the, all the rest of it, your voice is shaking and so on. So it's like an association that was created in your brain and your neurons got wired, such that every time this experience picking up the phone to cold call is perceived anxieties automatically triggered, you know, and there is no reason for it. You know, it's just the conditioning. That's what exactly in psychology is called the condition. If you remember, for example, Pavlov's dogs, right? So every time before he fed them, he would turn on a light bulb, and then he would feed them. And after some time he just turned on the light bulb without feeding them.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:15:27 And he noticed that they started salivating nevertheless, and that's because their salivation was associated with turning the light bald ball. You know, that's, that's what in the dog's brain, that's what the association was created. And it became like a reflex. You know, it didn't become something that had any sense to it. And I mean, this is how they still train mice in laboratories or other animals to do stuff through conditioning, you know, through classical conditioning, by rewarding them when they do the activity that they want them to do. And by punishing them when they don't. So the same thing is happening in your brain. You know, you've built conditioning around cold calling and fear, and now the two of them are attached. You know, when you try to do one of them automatically thinks the other one with it. So what you have to do is that you have to smash through this association, you have to break the link between the anxiety and the cold coin and the most effective way to do this is systemic desensitization.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:16:32 So I will walk you through the process briefly. What you need to do is that you need to make a list of the things that made you anxious when it comes to cold calling. You know, so let's say that you feel anxiety because when you pick up the phone or even even worse, let's say that you feel anxiety. When you think that you're going to have to

Coco, right? So you make a list of everything. So start from the beginning. The first time you experienced anxiety is when you think that you have to call the next things IAT that you experienced is when you actually pick up the phone, you also experience anxiety. When you dial the number, you experience anxiety. When you hear the ringing tone, you experience anxiety. When you hear the person responding to you, answering the phone and you experience anxiety, of course, throughout the conversation.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:17:25 So there's a lot of places where you experience anxiety here. So try to rank them, you know, and this is the second step after you've made your list, rank them. I experienced let's say anxiety level, where 10 is most intense and zero is least intense, no anxiety. I experienced anxiety. Let's say six. When I have to think about cold calling and I experienced anxiety, let's say seven. When I pick up the phone eight, when I actually dial it in and start calling, and it goes up all the way to 10, when the person answers, that's when I experienced the maximum anxiety. So if we want to address this with systemic desensitization, our goal is not to not to feel anxious when the person answers, right. We can't do that. It's it's too much for us. Anxiety is at too high of a level for us to tackle it.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:18:21 So we start by tackling it at the lower levels at the lowest level possible. You know, so that's why you, you will rank them now in order from the, from the least anxious to the most anxious activity, right? And you start with the least anxious, one, whatever number that is. And let's say that my case is thinking about making the call call. So I will think about making the cold call with the intention of actually making it and I will feel anxious. And when I start to feel anxious, instead of avoiding it, I will keep thinking the same thing. You know, as if I was trying to make myself as anxious as possible by thinking that I have to Coco, and that involves doing anything that may frighten me at that moment. So, you know, I will think that they will yell at me on the phone.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:19:07 I will think use all the thoughts that are, would normally make me anxious. And the goal here is that you want to bring your anxiety as high as possible. And at the same time, while you're bringing your anxiety as high as possible, and you're not avoiding the situation that makes you anxious, you want to physically relax. And here's what I mean by physically relaxed. Your body is going to relax before your mind typically, and that's what you want to make use of, you know, your mind will be super anxious and it gets your body pumped up and anxious as well. And your goal is to now, while you're in that exposed to that situation, that makes you super anxious to bring your body, to make your body relaxed. You know, so I might do some deep breathing, you know, diaphragmatic breathing, deep breathing in and out and try to slow down my breath, you know, not hurry it up, try to slow down any fidgeting that I might do.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:20:10 You know, maybe you see that you're fidgeting with your hands. Maybe you see that you're doing some other habits, some other small, let's say compulsion. You want to slow all of those down and focus on the situation that's making you anxious and physically relaxing your body. And the idea here is that the body cannot be both relaxed and afraid at the same time. And the more times you repeat this, and by the way, do not expect this to be quick. You know, some people they know that they have to call call, and they imagine that they will be able to call core a hundred people a day in, I don't know, one week of practice and I have to break it to you. That's not going to happen for the vast majority of people. You're probably going to cold call a hundred people a day, if that's what you want in one, or maybe even two months.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:21:04 So give yourself time and you have to practice every day and you have to do it consistently. And it's not enough that I became calm on this situation this time. You know, I have to repeat it again and again, until the trigger, you know, the situation that gave me anxiety no longer triggers the anxiety only then do I move on to the next stage that I ranked? You know, so only when I think on a day about cold calling and I no longer feel anxious or I feel let's say level one, anxiety or level two anxiety only then do I move on to actually picking up the phone? And obviously my anxiety will increase again. And then I have to do the same thing until that no longer makes me anxious. You know? So, um, this is the technique that I found most effective for myself.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:21:53 I'm not a psychologist or anything like that. So obviously take this with a grain of salt. And I don't want to give you any advice. This is all for informational purposes. And obviously for those of you who dealing with more severe anxiety, you may want to get a therapist to actually walk you through the, this exposure and through systemic desensitization when you apply it for your sales anxiety. And especially if you're applying it for any other kind of anxiety, which may be more difficult to deal with. But anyway, I'm just sharing with you. As I said, for informational purposes, what worked for me and how I've managed to actually get much better at these and be able to perform at my peak, you know, because that's what this is about. And the most important factor is that you have to be patient. You know, we we're told in our culture about instant results.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:22:52 All of us want results as quickly as possible. This is not the kind of thing where you can get results quickly. You know, when you're trying to fight with anxiety, you're not going to get results quickly. You know, as much as you want to get instant results, it's not going to happen. You know, what's likely going to happen if you take it slow, is that over time, which means months, you're going to progress from the activities that gave you some anxiety. Initially. Now they will no longer give you anxiety. And you're going to progress to where you can manage the anxiety. And I mean, the best case scenario is what happened with me in swimming, right? Remember in swimming, I had no anxiety left, you know, because I took these bit by bit. It was like magic. You know, the, the initial anxiety that I had about swimming completely disappeared.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:23:42 When I saw that I could float in water, you know, that there was no reason in my head. Why should I should be able to float? I wasn't doing anything differently consciously, but because my instructor took it gradually and she got me to gradually get adjusted with the water and expose myself only gradually to different situations that cause me anxiety. I was able to overcome it magically, you know, without effort without actually even pushing myself very much. You know? So the, the moment when she said, now you have to go in the water and try swimming without this. I tried it. And instantly I succeeded. I don't think that I could even have failed if I think back on it. And the same thing can happen with regards to sales, anxiety. She take it slow. You know, if on the other hand, you try to be macho and take it as fast as you can.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:24:35 And you try to push yourself through it. It's very likely that it's going to make it worse. You know, if you do that because you're going to make the situation be traumatic for you. You know? So let's say that you call core and you're super scared. You super anxious, but you pushed yourself to do it. And because of that, you mess up on the phone and the other person starts yelling at you. Let's say the worst case scenario, you're going to have a terrible experience and probably inside your brain, you're going to get the, you're going to transmit the message that, look, this is actually quite dangerous. You know, it's quite scary. I'm

not enjoying this pen. Then the next day, when you try to do it, you will feel anxiety. That's much worse, you know, and you can continue doing this and you're, you're not going to get anywhere.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:25:25 You know? So the point here is that you have to expose yourself to the level of anxiety that you can manage. If you cannot manage that level of anxiety, because you've gone too far down your list, then that's not going to be beneficial for you. So that's why I can't emphasize enough the need for you to actually take it slowly. If you want to overcome your sales anxiety. And I mean, you're going to have enough time to be a peak performer, the best things in life they take time to accomplish, and don't let yourself be fooled by our instant gratification culture to think that results or instant results are coming because they're not, you know, every time you've learned something hard, you've spent months doing it. You know, if not years, in some cases, you know, think about how much it took you to learn the level of mathematics that you learned.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:26:23 It took you at least told 12 years in school. And you know, maybe for those of you who studied mathematics at university even more so, um, these things are not easy. Don't expect them to be easy. Don't expect fast results. What you should be expecting is making progress and making progress. That's aimed towards your goals. And if you're always moving towards your goals, then things are good. Then you need to be happy and try to practice some patience. It's going to be very helpful when it comes to overcoming sales anxiety. So that's pretty much it for today. I will briefly summarize what we've discussed. So we've said that sales anxiety manifest itself most often when you have to do sales, strangers. So stuff like cold calling, very frequently, cold emailing sometimes. And so on it originates in childhood. We have a lot of bad associations that our parents plant inside our minds about speaking with strangers, interacting with strangers, social conventions and so on.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:27:31 And all of those are very deeply, deeply ingrained. And we're almost conditioned just the way Pavlov's dogs were to experience fear in such situations. So it's completely normal. You know, you're not abnormal, there's nothing wrong with you. Sales anxiety will manifest, you know, by your breathing speeds up, your heart rate goes up, your voice starts quivering. You lose control of your thought process. Those are some manifestations that you're going to experience. Don't try to cure it just by changing your mindset or the cognitive part by thinking differently, because this very often ends up as procrastination and procrastination is avoidance and avoidance will just reinforce the fear and make the anxiety even worse. So don't go via that route to try to clear it up instead, realize that what you have to do is what's known as systemic desensitization, basically create a list of the things that make you anxious, you know, and list everything there.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:28:34 You know, maybe for some of you thinking about cold calling makes you anxious. And obviously that's not the maximum level of anxiety. You will experience a higher anxiety when the person, when the phone is dialing and you hear it, or when the person picks up or wherever it is for you. So create a list of all those situations, rank them in order, you know, from the one that causes the least things. I cited, the one that causes the most anxiety, you can rank them, you know, from one to 10 or however many you have, and then expose yourself to each one, gradually starting from the one that causes the least things it all the time. And while you're exposing yourself and trying to make yourself as anxious as possible with it use physical relaxation techniques, most of which are deep reading, you know, the Africa Matic breathing and reduce your fear while maintaining the exposure and do this repeatedly with each one until when you trigger it.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:29:30 When you think about that situation, or when you do that action, you no longer feel any anxiety or very little anxiety. And in this way, you will be able to it. You know, some of you who have clinical anxiety, you know, not just regular sales anxiety that anybody could have, but more clinical features of anxiety. You probably need to request the help of a therapist, but therapy with systemic desensitization. The good news is that it has around 97% efficiency when you're doing it with a therapist and they will walk you through the process and you will be able to conquer your sales anxiety, or really any other kind of anxiety that you may have. So, um, that pretty much covers the topic for today. So stay tuned for the next episode and until next time, keep growing your business and providing massive value to the world, because remember you are the reason why we're all growing richer. Our freedoms are expanding and we're all living in greater prosperity. Thank you.