

EPISODE 864

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:00.0] ANNOUNCER Welcome to the Real Estate Syndication Show. Whether you are a seasoned investor or building a new real estate business, this is the show for you. Whitney Sewell talks to top experts in the business. Our goal is to help you master real estate syndication.

And now your host, Whitney Sewell.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:24.4] This is your daily Real Estate Syndication Show. I'm your host, Whitney Sewell. Today, I want to continue as a few part show that I had started on show — I think it was 800 and then I followed up on — again, I apologize for the delay — but followed up on show 850 and 857, going through our hiring process that we recently completed.

I hope it's been eye-opening to you and has helped you think through your hiring process, or if you haven't hired anyone or an assistant, in this matter, in this case. I hope you have considered it and you've taken it very seriously also and in that process.

Then, we're going to go even more in-depth in that today. This will make a lot more sense if you go back and listen to those other shows, even in order so you understand more about what I'm talking about once I get into some of the show that I'll be going over today. I wanted to highlight show right here in front of me. 800, we talked, the title was massive business growth with A-team.

Ultimately, it means, the A-team, having a class-A team member that are some of the best at what they do and how I found someone recently like that, we found numerous team members like that now but I like to talk about my most recent hire when talking about these things.

[0:01:52.6] Then I went to show 850 and specifically talked about the job description amongst numerous other things but then 857 was even a questionnaire that we use for hiring. I encourage you at least go through those shows and early think through this questionnaire and how you're narrowing down this – the pool of applicants very quickly because your time is valuable and also, because your time is so valuable, it's so important that you do this right and that you take the time it takes to ensure that you are hiring the correct individual for your team.

That they have the proper talent or skillsets that you were looking for and that complement your team. I encourage you to go back and listen to those, and then today, I wanted to get into a more about our interview, I want to back up just a little bit and this will probably be – I don't that I can get through all of what I would like to share with you about an interview or about how everything I've learned recently about interviewing and different steps that we've taken.

I want to go through numerous more things today through the book called *Topgrading*. If you don't know about that book, I would encourage you to have that in your arsenal or on your bookshelf and maybe it's something you go through before you go through the hiring process once and then you'll have it just as a reference for later on.

I still have stuff tabbed in, if you're watching YouTube, you can see I've got tabs and pieces of paper in here and things underlined and whatnot. I'm going to go through part of that book, I wanted to give Bradford Smart some credit there because it is his book and I'm going to read numerous things out of that, but then I'm also just going to share with you some things that we did, how it worked for us, how it worked for our team recently.

[0:03:29.1] I'm also, I wanted to give credit to another individual named Mike Laurence, he's a good friend of mine and he's a professional speaker actually but he's getting into the syndication business and doing an amazing job but I've gotten to know him recently and he has used *Topgrading* for a long time and is very good at it so he helped me or first, thinking about hiring. He was one of the first to turn me towards *Topgrading*, so I want to give him some credit as well as say thank you.

First, I wanted to jump in and talk about just the interview process and again, I'm going to read some stuff to you that I think is very beneficial but in going through, I'm not going to read

everything. This book goes into such detail and so it may not have be completely in order what I'm going to read to you but I want you to hear it and then we'll talk about it a little more in depth and how I used it personally.

I want you to think about after you've gotten this far, your candidates or whoever is up to this point have completed that questionnaire that I've talked about last time, right? You have all of this information. You have a resume, you should have a cover letter, it should be in certain formats because you've asked them to do that, right?

However, you did that and then, they've also filled out that detailed questionnaire about much of their background. I actually want to jump way ahead because this is something that I feel like is so important and for you to think about as you're just going through this process.

[0:04:56.2] One thing I underline in this book that's way ahead of where I'm going to go back to in a minute. It says "By tracing how a person developed over an entire life and career, the patterns that emerge give 1,000 times the insight into the recent past. Then, if you only ask about the recent past."

I want you to think about that. It makes so much sense to me because you are tracing back and through how this person developed over an entire life or career. Just the patterns, these patterns that you'll start to see, it's really incredible that just think about it, because we're going to talk about this interview process. We're going to go in some very in depth or details about questions you should be asking and help you to think outside of the box a little bit because it's such an important part of finding the right person.

It gives you 1,000 times the insight into a recent past than if you only ask about the recent past. You're going back sometimes in the high school but at least college, depending on maybe the work history and age of this individual that you're hiring, if high school was 30 years ago, it's probably not worth bringing.

However, if they're 23 and this is their first position or maybe their second or they just graduated college, maybe they're – this is their first or second career or job and they are in their mid-20s,

it's probably going to be worth maybe asking a few things about high school as well so you can get a better understanding of this individual and just some of their habits.

[0:06:24.2] Because some of the habits they ask for is still going to be there right now, right? If they're in their mid-20s. Think about that. When going into this interview, this book helped me to think through, using the tandem interviewing process and that ultimately just means you and another individual. You're not doing it solo, you're not doing this interview by yourself.

By doing that, it does lots of things and we're going to go into some of those but it's going to give you more confidence as the interviewer, just to have that other person there with you and you're both – you both have looked over the resume, the cover letter, the questionnaire, you both have – I hope so, anyway – you needed to, before you get to the interview, before you are seeing that person face to face or most likely now this is going to be on Zoom. I would have those documents open and what I did when we were conducting interviews, I printed almost all of that information out.

Circled things, made notes, and so that way even after I go through my interview and the typical questions that I would ask, I still had those things there so while my business partner and I were doing the interview, maybe he was asking a few final questions.

[0:07:31.2] I could look through these documents that I laid out on my desk about this individual, their resume or their questionnaire and see my notes and that was very important. That helped me to ask better follow-up questions or to think through once again, was there anything that was conflicting information from what they shared through the interview versus what they have on the documents that they already provided.

It helps me to think through those things but that tandem interview is extremely important and is extremely powerful. Ultimately, we want to insist on getting answers. Doing things solo all the time, we're going to rush through things more, there's going to be awkward silence and it's going to make us and the interviewee uncomfortable.

We're going to go through some tips on how to alleviate some of that. I just want you to think through creating this tandem interview versus a solo. This interview, we want to go in

chronological order and I briefly mentioned that but, thinking about school years and then just progressing through many things that they already gave you in that questionnaire, right? We're going to go through every job with the first job and moving forward to the present.

Then we're going to ask about plans, goals, and even self-appraisals. They're going to self-appraise themselves and we're going to talk about even where we ask them to rate how their supervisor would appraise them as well. It's just going to bring out so many things that you would not normally even think to ask that individual.

[0:09:00.1] We're going to dive into every success, failure, important decision, important relationship and even boss relationships and those ratings like I talked about. Two heads are definitely better than one but you only think about who this other person is. You want them obviously to be a sharp individual.

Also, think too, if you are say, a one person show at the moment, one person business and you think, "Well, Whitney, I don't have anybody else on my team, I don't have that business partner that I can trust to ask these other questions or to come into my interview like that.

I would say, reach out to a friend that's also in business or another entrepreneur. It would be great if they had experience conducting interviews. However, depending on the type of interviews they conducted, it may not be useful honestly.

It would be nice if they had good people skills, those things but you want to think about who you're trying to hire and most likely, you're hiring someone or hope so that has skillsets that you do not have. Hopefully, you're hiring somebody that's a lot better at specific things than you are or else you may not be hiring them yet but you should be anyway.

[0:10:02.0] Anyway, this tandem person, hopefully they have some skills that even you're looking for, maybe they're experienced in marketing or they're very experienced executive assistant or they've had numerous executive assistants because that's what you're hiring for.

They have some skills there, they have some understanding and they've been through this process and they worked with different people with these skillsets you're looking for in this individual that you are interviewing. Just think through who that person is.

Hopefully they have, even if they're not on your team, hopefully they're obviously somebody you trust greatly. They hopefully have skillsets that you do not. Complimentary skillsets of yours. Just having them there is going to make you so much more comfortable and the two of you are going to conduct like I said, a tandem interview, you're going to take tons of notes and we're going to go through some of that.

One big thing I want to stress is that, through any interview, you would think this would be an obvious thing but it's not because you get a little nervous, right? You get nervous and you just start reading off your questions and you get – you start speeding up but you forget to carefully listen to the responses of the question.

[0:11:14.1] It happens all the time and you get nervous or maybe, especially if it's a solo interview, right? You get nervous and you forget to listen, that's so important. Listen to what they're saying. Then, we're going to take notes and you and your – I'll talk about it again but you and your – with the tandem interviewer, your partner in this interview. You both are going to be taking some notes and there's different thoughts about how to take notes and who should be taking notes, those things.

What we found is that my business partner and I both took notes during the interviews and we both ask questions. There's different ways that people have done it successfully and maybe one person is taking the majority of the notes and you discuss this obviously ahead of time.

One person may take all the notes and while maybe you as the main interviewer, especially if you're bringing someone in and it's your business that's hiring, you may ask all the questions. That person may follow-up with a few questions, that's fine.

You may ask the majority of the questions, while they take the majority of the notes, often times, that happens and it's nice to – here's one tip. If you can use a shared document. I know most of you are probably going to be doing this over Zoom. At the moment, you probably can't do these

in person, especially if you're hiring a virtual assistant that will be, maybe even states away or even in another country.

[0:12:32.2] It's going to be hard to do that in person. You're going to have maybe your document, your interview document and your notes on your computer. It's nice if the other person can take notes and you can even see them if you are not taking notes.

What worked for us though is we both took notes, we could not see each other's notes during the interview. What's helpful is in later, when we follow-up, we can go back through that document and talk about what each other noticed, right? Some people think that you should always maintain eye contact with that individual.

Obviously, that's a little more difficult through Zoom, over the computer but you still can do it. They can tell if you're taking notes, they can tell if you're writing things down and people say that's a bad thing to do because then it makes that person feel like they've said something wrong. I would say, there's certain ways to do that.

You want to write things down even when they say good things as well so that there's some finesse there about it, right? You're not only writing down what seemed like bad or negative things about their history or however they answered something. Think through that a little bit and then note taking. It's so important that you are taking good notes.

Yeah, again, later, you and your partner in this interview will go back through these, such an important time to do that. Okay, there's different trains of thoughts here, you have to figure out what works for you. For us, we both took notes.

[0:13:53.7] We both went through the interview process, asking different questions. I was taking notes and he might ask questions and then we would switch. Sometimes people will do it half and half. One person may do the first part of the interview or the opening or the other person does another section or what not and you can think through that. Try to make sure that when you ask questions that you stay extremely open-minded.

Don't bias the response, right? Leave it so open-ended that they have to think about their question and give more details, right? You're going to observe their body language of course. I mean we all think about that whether you know it or not. You are reading people's body language without a doubt and people are reading your body language all the time. I like this little quote here but it says,

"The medium is the message, and so it is with interviewing. Thoroughness and honesty is the message, the passage way to truth. It is thoroughness and honesty that show you revealing patterns, patterns for how the candidate evolved today for not just a few but literally dozens of competencies." We've talked about that a little bit earlier but you have to know that we're going to be as thorough as possible and we're going to just gain so much information about this individual and know that this interview is going to take a long time.

It takes much longer than probably any other interview that you have ever been a part of even if you were the interviewee. It takes a long time. Here's one quote in here too. It says, "Managers who say I don't have three hours for this type of interview should finish the sentence with, "So I will waste hundreds of hours and I'll miss-hire three out of four people at a cost of a 100,000," or whatever it is for your hire, times three.

He says times three, which is in this place and case, it's a 750 wasted hours. It is so important that you keep an open mind to this interview process and that you're willing to spend two to three hours in an individual interview but also remember when you think I don't have two to three hours to do an interview but I want you to think about all of the steps you've done up to this point have narrowed this way down to the top few candidates.

[0:16:08.4] If you don't complete those steps right, if you're not in-depth and you plan to interview a dozen people or 20 people well then yes, this is going to take a very long time and so that's why those other steps are so important that you get those right and we interviewed four people and we did I think two of them one day or two or three maybe and then we had another day of two or three interviews, which I believe that are about four interviews total out of hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of applicants.

That helped us narrow that way down very fast and again, I went over those other shows how we did that and those questions, the questionnaire and the way people responded, things like that but you have to realize that you have to be open to that kind of in-depth interview. There is a few more things here before I jumped into the interview process or questions and whatnot.

Again, it goes without saying that please spend the time to do this. Review the questionnaire, the application, resume, those things. I talked about printing those things out, making notes and then just allocating the correct time. Think about allocating the correct time because obviously if we say it's going to take two to three hours, you need to think about that how you're spending that time and I would go through those interview questions and that document that I am going to tell you about in a minute and layout some specific timelines.

You may spend five minutes just in the opening just talking a little bit, building a little rapport. You may spend five to seven or eight minutes something like that on education and then you may spend an hour or more just on work history alone and then maybe eight or 10 minutes for like plans and goals and self-appraisal, and maybe 15 to 20 minutes on some other questions or whatnot you have as well but you need to think through and that would just be a two hour interview there.

[0:17:56.5] You need to think through and plan out just a little bit. One thing you need to remember is that you're in control of the interview, okay? Just have the mindset that you're the professional and you are in control of this interview. It's often that interviewees will, obviously you ask them a question maybe they're nervous as well so you want to take note of that and be aware of that but you want to be in control of the interview.

You don't want them to spend five to 10 minutes talking about something that has nothing to do with what you asked or nothing to do with their character or the question or just anything. Just remember that you are in control of that interview. It says in this *Topgrading* book too. It says, the former interview of the candidate with 15 years of experience is fast-paced and I want to read that because most of our interviews were two to three hours and we did not get through all of our questions.

Also especially our first one or two, I didn't expect it to take four hours but we could have easily spent four hours if I had gone through every question and we did and we didn't go through every question, obviously, because we just could. We couldn't get through it in two to three hours. I am very upfront with that candidate ahead of time and I'm going to go through that. That maybe in the next show because we're almost out of time already unfortunately.

Some of these things are just very important to think about before you begin your tandem interview or before you begin the interview at all, you need to be thinking about these things. It's so important but remember, I'm going to do another show about it most likely but I won't get to it this time but the next one will be about the interview and the questions and things like that.

[0:19:32.2] Schedule a time. Yeah, you want the interviewee to feel comfortable, right? I'm going to go through that again, but a lot of times, they may start asking questions in the middle of the interview and you want them to know upfront that they'll be a time for them to ask questions and if they have some specific questions maybe you say, "Could you just make some notes about that and we will follow-up about that."

Or "Before we get done today, you know we won't allow you to ask any questions that you want to ask but we want to move it just for time sake, we want to continue through the interview." There is different trains of thought there. You just don't want to get way off path and spend 15 minutes on something that's not about the interview right now and you don't know if you are hiring this person. If they have asked questions about benefits or they have questions about whatever. It is not the time to talk about that right now.

A couple other things. Note taking, I've talked about this. Some people say, "Oh you don't want to be taking notes at certain times" and the book here reminds me about – he talked about it's definitely a rapport builder and I think so too. It's like when they're talking about great things, you want to document those things too. They can tell when you are taking notes even if you are on the computer.

It's not like you're sitting across from a desk where they can actually see your pen going and you're looking down. You are breaking eye contact, those things and that's another reason too why it's a big advantage to have somebody that's interviewing with you because then somebody

else can be taking a lead. Maybe you're taking a bunch of notes and someone else is maintaining that eye contact or asking follow-up questions and things like that.

[0:20:59.8] There is some pros and cons there both ways no doubt about it but a big thing about this tandem interview, have somebody that's professional. Have somebody that you trust. If you don't already have somebody on your team and if you do, think about other team members that is going to be interacting with this individual, right? Obviously, it will help if it was somebody that was in management. Someone that is maybe top of the food chain with you in your business or whatnot.

Think about who that individual is and they're going to be interacting with this person potentially a lot as well but if not, find that person. Find somebody in the business that you're in. Hopefully especially if they have hired someone already that in their business that's fulfilling this position that you are hiring for and obviously somebody you trust. They are going to be able to provide tons of insight and thinking through those questions and so that was really fast.

I want you to think through and be prepared to conduct a tandem interview and it's so important and I had never thought of that before our last interviewing, before going to *Topgrading* but I do believe that that improved our process greatly. I remember I created a shared document. I went over this I think in another show and I created a shared document or folder where I uploaded every candidate — I created a folder for every candidate and then I put all of their documents on there.

Even printed the email, so I told them a specific place to send all of these information. Right at the bottom of that job description I said, "I need you to do these things." A couple of them were optional so I give a way for people to stand out if they want and if they're going to put that much effort in and so I told them where to send it. I printed that email and said, "By the way, I had that in this folder with every candidate."

[0:22:43.6] Exactly how they sent this stuff to me and I uploaded all of those documents in there and shared that with my business partner and so that way, he could also review all of those documents because he and I lived in different places. We weren't in the same room and so we

were both on Zoom completing these interviews but that was very helpful and he could look through those. He could be more prepared that way but one thing we did not do.

Remember, I think I talked about this as well. We didn't talk in-depth about the candidates until after the interview. We did talk some about them but you also don't want to create a bias in your business partner or the other interviewee or interviewer. You don't want to help convince them one way or the other who the best candidate is because I think a lot of the time, it may take you by surprise who the final candidate is and who you have determined is the most qualified for that position.

You want to be careful about that but you want them to review that information and they're going to come up with their own questions. They are going to come up with their own things that they want to ask that candidate about and then just remember as you are going through the interview that you do layout just kind of a plan. Who is doing what during this interview? That was so helpful for us, right? I mean that was so helpful in thinking through that ahead of time and helping us to be better prepared.

Obviously, we want to be extremely professional all the time but when conducting an interview also, we want this person to know that we're a professional business, professional company. We want them to want to work for us. Obviously they do, they've already gone through a lot to get to this step or in the process much less and I also mentioned in another show, having them complete those other tasks, right? Don't forget about that step.

[0:24:25.3] I called them out of the blue and asked them to complete these final, it was like a dozen people that made it to that next step and they completed. I called them in, they went and I may have left a message. I can't remember on the ones that – I think I did, yes, I left a message but I did not tell them what I wanted. I just asked them to call me back and so as soon as they called me back or if I got to speak to them, I said:

“Hello, this is Whitney with Life Bridge Capital. I appreciate you applying to work in such and such position with us. I have a few tasks for you. You've made it to the next level. I have a few tasks for you and I need them completed by tomorrow,” and I left that open, right? By tomorrow and so I said – I didn't say by the end of – maybe I did say by the end of the day tomorrow but I

left that open. I didn't say a specific time just to see how prompt different people would be and how they would respond.

Some returned it by that night, some returned it by the next morning, some at midnight the next night and obviously they're all in different situations or other jobs and families and have a lot going on so you may need to exhibit some grace there. However, you're going to take it on a case by case basis and just see how they responded. How organized were those things? How thorough did they complete those tasks and some things you can think about.

What are they going to be doing in this position and have them do a few of those things or ask them to do some research or ask them to organize certain things or whatever or if they're in marketing, maybe they can create some videos for you or maybe they can edit certain things or audio or whatever. Make an edit to the website if that is their thing or if you are asking numerous people to do that it might be difficult but however, you got to get creative.

You have to think of some task that they can complete to help you narrow this process down one way or the other.

[0:26:08.2] Thanks again. Again, next week I will go through the interview guide and go through questions and helping you think through just that process and just some of the questions that we asked that were very helpful but thanks again for listening and we will talk to you tomorrow.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:26:26.0] Don't go yet, thank you for listening to today's episode. I would love it if you would go to iTunes right now and leave a rating and written review. I want to hear your feedback. It makes a big difference in getting the podcast out there. You can also go to the Real Estate Syndication Show on Facebook so you can connect with me and we can also receive feedback and your questions there that you want me to answer on the show.

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[OUTRO]

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