

## Something Extra EP 025 – Kerry Goyette

**Lisa Nichols:** Kerry, thank you so much, thank you for making the drive today from Columbia to be on the show with us, I'm so excited for our listeners to get to know you and you're already out there, but there are some maybe in our listening audience that don't know what you do and I, I read some of your things recently and was just fascinated. Fascinated by what you're doing and so that's why I reached out and said, "Hey will you come be a guest on the podcast? Because I really, I found it very fascinating and I know that our listeners will too.

**Kerry Goyette:** Well, thank you so much for having me, I'm excited to be on your podcast today.

**Nichols:** Well, let's just talk a little bit if you don't mind just kinda talk a little bit about how you grew up and then we'll get into more things.

**Goyette:** So, I grew up in Rolla, Missouri, so small town, my dad was an engineer and so I definitely got the Math-Science pounded in my brain, and then ended up going to the University of Missouri studying accounting and statistics. Love statistical analysis and then decided to switch my major, so my mother actually started struggling with depression and so I became fascinated with the brain.

So, I wanted to kind of understand how the brain works. Can you control certain conditions like depression or anxiety? And then also I started studying performers and I was just really interested in why certain people could go through some really hard periods in life go through adversity and then come out stronger, and they're out speaking to people, or they're out leading organizations and then other people hit some rough patches and then end up folding or succumbing to depression or anxiety and so I just became very interested in performance and so I ended up changing my major. And the rest is history.

**Nichols:** Yeah, so what did you change your major too? Because I think this is interesting.

**Goyette:** Yeah, so I ended up changing it to social work, and I ended up getting a Bachelors of Social Work and then decided to go on and get my Master's and then after I finished my master's degree, I really studied, I took my focus in the psychometric realm, so I started looking

at personalities and became a certified behavior analyst, and then also became a Certified Forensic Interviewer. That particular training was actually very intense to go through but it actually created a sense of systems thinking I had to look through different lenses and especially if you're interviewing either, victims or perpetrators you have to... They're really looking for objective evidence and kind of objective answers to certain questions.

So, we had to get trained, it was a multi-disciplinary team, so we had to get trained by the prosecutor, the MD, the sheriff's department, the police department and what it made me kind of realize is that everybody has a different perspective and everybody's looking through a different lens and so my job as an interviewer was to determine what is the truth and how can I ask questions in a way that will hold up in the court of law and ask questions in a way that the MD is it's going to help them out. So, in organizations, it's really helped me, my clients say that I really kind of see things systemically and I can see how different things play off of how HR will sometimes play off of some of the issues that are going into some of the problems. So it's been really fascinating. One of those trainings where you don't realize it can help you in other areas in life but it just changed my mindset.

**Nichols:** Yeah, what's so interesting about that. You've done a lot of different things, right? But each one of those things has really helped you, you built on each one of those things and is helping you do what you do today. It's kind of a preparation journey. And sometimes I think, especially young people, they may not know a lot of times they don't know what they want to do, but I think the point is to get moving and then things can change because you pivoted.

**Goyette:** Yeah and I think life is a journey, right? Yeah and I think sometimes you just have to go out there and you have to experience it, try it, see what you like. And again it's not, I don't have any regrets about what I did initially. Now I'm doing consulting for organizations, but I just felt like that was a great steppingstone it gave me a really solid foundation. I mean, I know a lot more about behavior and emotional intelligence and kind of diving into the psychological aspects than most consultants just because they started out in the clinical world. So it gives me a level of depth that I think maybe others might not have.

**Nichols:** I find it really fascinating. So let's talk about what you're doing today, because you're an entrepreneur.

**Goyette:** I did! So, Aperio consulting group. In Latin it means to reveal... So, it's all about revealing the full potential and that's based on the stat that less than 20% of individuals and

teams actually realize their full potential. So my kind of goal in life is always if I can get teams or individuals closer to their full potential. I mean, gosh, amazing to think about all the problems that we can solve in the world.

**Nichols:** Right, and so that's what you're doing today, you're building high-performance cultures high-performance team, you say "We believe that work can be both productive and rewarding, when the right people are in the right place with the right training and the right leadership" and I absolutely love that. So can you unpack that a little bit for us because you kinda have to have all those components working together, do you not?

**Goyette:** You do. And I think so often people only focus on maybe one or two of the components but you really have to have them kind of playing off of each other. So the right people is really based on... I actually kind of stumbled into that area of my work but I would work with teams and try to get them performing better. We get them performing better, and then all a sudden they would hire and it would be the huge disruption. And so what I found was they were terrible at hiring the right fit.

So, I dug into the research again I go back to all the lessons my dad taught me in engineering. But okay, so what's the data around that? What's some of the evidence around how the current hiring practices work. And so what I found is somewhere between 14% to 22% success rate in hiring the right people. And I dug in to why is that. Looking at the neuroscience and we make the decision in the first three to five minutes and it's made in the emotional centers of our brain and really what we're asking is, when we want to ride with this person on a road trip to California. If the answer is yes then we spend the rest of the time, kind of rationalizing our decision. So I always tell clients you're better off putting two resumes up there and throwing a dart you'd have a better chance at getting it. And simply, we just tend to hire people that we like, right? And so the people that get favored now some people are you like... Well, but you would hate to have machines decide it for you, and I'm like, "Well but it would be more objective. Is it any better to say? I'm going to hire somebody that's like me or that I like because interviews are shown to favor people that are attractive people that are extroverted, and people that are manipulative and so I say that's where I see a lot of introverts thrown out of the candidate pool when it's really, they really should be in the candidate pool, but... Again, they don't interview as well, they're quitter they're more humble, right?

So, they're not going to come off as dynamic and exciting in an interview. And so that was the first place I noticed there was a disruption, people were hiring and they were hiring a poorfit and

so what we did is we went through and developed a process because I wanted to figure out can we make it more objective? So sure enough, you can't mean people are people, you can't get a 100% match, but you can get the job matching rate from a 14% up to around 80 to 90% if you use a more objective process.

**Nichols:** So what tools are you using, do you have a proprietary tool?

**Goyette:** The tool that I developed and then we also used some assessments to evaluate candidates but the first part of it is really... And again, you can do this on your own, you don't nearly have to use our exact proprietary process, but you really need to outline the role objectively. And so, really looking at, what are the top three to five key accountabilities, what are the priorities, what are the KPIS or critical success factors, then what are the competencies the top competencies that are going to help that person succeed, in that role? If you do that first, just that exercise alone, will get you part of the way... Because now we've made it more objective and so now we look at... Okay, so what kind of person would that be?

Are we looking for a detail-oriented person? Okay, if it's super detail-oriented is that person more likely to be introverted or extroverted? So, you can start having conversations to try to manage your thinking in the process. Because I found them when my clients get in into an interview, they fall in love with somebody, and then it's like it doesn't matter. So you can do that first. I always take them back. Wait a minute, but you said you needed this, that this is what you need. You said this, I didn't say you kind of came up with this list but now you're saying you like this person so tell me why?

So, I really hold people accountable to really matching it to their benchmark. What is it that you said you needed? And are you following that? because even when you do that, people inherently are like... Well, but I think that I think about it,

**Nichols:** That is absolutely huge. So, doing that using more the analytical piece, the objective. He is not as much of the subjective... You can get your success rate you said from 14% up to 80-90%.

**Goyette:** We've at points gotten it up to 92%, and that's when we're even a... If we take it a step further, I've gone into organizations, and we've actually done a mini-study and we've looked at their top performers, compared to their low performers and we start to tease out what's different

then we cannot just look at sales in general, and say what's critical in sales, but we can say... What about sales in your organization and then the great thing about doing that?

We did that for a client, in Denver, and what they found was they were having a hard time. It was a sales position, but it was a little bit of a different sales position, so they really had a hard time. Number one, finding people that could be successful in that role. And then number two, finding the right people. But once we benchmarked it and then we did a study to tease out what were the differences between their top performers and low performers, we actually were able to open the candidate pool up because we found that in a sales role, which is kind of unique, both introverts and extroverts could be successful. That's not where it came down to it came down on some other competency factors, some of their traits, and how they approach problem solving. But what we did find is the difference then came into the training, the extrovert you could put immediately into a sales role the introverts needed time to understand the process and how they approach it, so we put them into a more support role for year one, and then they transitioned them to year 2. So what the CEO was just so excited about was it opened up his candidate pool. And he had two different paths for different styles and then it worked, it worked beautifully.

**Nichols:** So that's the right people in the right place. Do you see with the organizations that you work with? Sometimes they have the right people, but they're just not in the right seat. That's more the organizational development of the hierarchy of the company. What have you seen there and how do you... You may have somebody and it's the right person. They've got the value they've got the core values of the company, all of those things, but they're just not in the right seat. So what do you do to right the ship then?

**Goyette:** It's usually a mismatch. And I think once you dig into the strengths of that individual what they bring to the team, and again, you can take it a step further and run some psychometric assessment on them, and then you can start to see, Okay, where are their strengths, what skills and experience do they have, that can translate and that's where I think companies are going to have to be. They're going to have to think a little bit more creatively and differently, about job matching. because I think, historically, it's all been... What experience do you have?

But again, if it was that easy, why the 14% success rate? And so it's really not so much about experience and kind of one of the other conditions that we're kind of walking into is that the talent we have a severe talent shortage going on with the boomers exiting the workforce. We just have the birth rate went down after the industrial revolution. Because parents realize that

kids were more of an economic liability and so we just have fewer people entering the workforce, so there's a real kind of grab for talent. We can't get the exact experience and then exact everything that we want, so we're having to think about things a little bit differently, but what we found is if you can kind of think of what kind of mindset, what you need for that person that then you can start to put them in the right place. So we've had a lot of situations where we've just had an employee mismatch great for the culture, but just wrong job fit, and we move them around. People are always surprised like... Oh my gosh, they just flourished. We had even one it was actually a Warehouse Employee warehouse manager.

We assessed him and just said, "Gosh you make a great sales person. Of course, the CEO was very... No they have to have a college education or does it have a college education? And so we finally pushed and pushed and got him in there and sure enough, within one year he was number one in the region within two years, he was number one in the nation and so the CEO was like, "Okay I stand corrected... And I'm like, "Okay you didn't have a college education but man, he had what it took not only that he had the experience of the warehouse. So you have that kind of really in-depth knowledge of what's going on internally. It really helped him but yeah, more importantly he just had a great profile.

**Nichols:** I love that, I love the leader. Had to have a different mindset, right? You look at the mindset of the person that's needed, right? But then the leader themselves has to change their mindset. Right?

**Goyette:** It's both. And I've had one company literally they told me that they've had a position open for seven years and I'm like "Okay we then we need to think about this differently"... So it's amazing how headstrong and just how dug in people will get around to experience. But I will tell you, you're going to have to start thinking a little bit more creatively going forward

**Nichols:** We're going to take a quick break and then we'll be back Kerry Goyette. So we kind of talked about the right people in the right place with the right training, in the right leadership? So we didn't really unpack the right leadership, so can you talk a little bit more how important is it to have the right leadership?

**Goyette:** Yeah, it's becoming much more important than it ever has been in the past. So going back to my comment about... We've got a real talent shortage going on. We used to leaders had to hit their metrics and so as long as they hit their metrics, they were fine. Now, there's kind of an interesting dynamic going on because we have a shortage for talent on top of that millennials

now comprise more than 50% of the workforce and they have different needs, different contexts with which they grow up and the older generation doesn't really understand them and so... So we kind of have this interesting trifecta of issues happening what is coming out of it, and what a lot of researchers are stating is that now leaders, not only have to hit their metrics.

Oh, but now they have to retain teams because now we're in a war for talent and it's a competition, so whoever can win the best talent wins on top of that, you have to retain a team of millennials and these are people that we just don't understand. And this is an era where they have a choice. So this is what some researchers will call the era of choice and so they will not stick with a manager if the manager is toxic because they have a choice and this is also the first generation that will take a job, leave that job because of the leader and take another job for less money but better environment. CEOs are now demanding from their leaders. You have got to figure out how to retain them.

So, I am seeing leaders. It's over the past 18 months. I have seen a shift and leaders that have been a leader for 25-30 years, and sometimes with the same company, they're actually getting fired. I had a leader with two degrees from an Ivy League school that got fired and it was simply just could not pivot could not retain the team and he was a real jerk, smart, knew everything but the CEO eventually said he became an economic liability.

That didn't happen before. And so, these older leaders that just say... Oh, we just know I'm not going to do that, I'm going to keep doing things the way I've always done them. I will tell you, you will be kind of sorely behind the eight ball.

The market is it's just the law of supply and demand and sort of a... The market is demanding that, on top of that, we've got advancements in technology. So there was a really good article written in MIT Sloan magazine and they were talking about What does AI mean for management? It was a really well-done article and basically the crux of it, they had multiple things, but one of which is it's demanding more emotional intelligence from leaders because now there's around, there's judgement around the data that we need. Our brains were not designed to encode information and so, we have to figure out... We have all this data now what do we do with it? And so that's where I was at a symposium and listening to one of the chief strategy officer at IBM, and that's what he said. That's our number one focus is they totally get that our brains are not wired to encode data, so how do we use all this wonderful data that we have to make better decisions?

**Nichols:** So I just think that even the environment is demanding that we increase our emotional intelligence and increase our leadership capacity. Well, you've got the perfect segue, because I want to talk about emotional intelligence, I find this so fascinating. Different people define it differently, Kerry. How do you define emotional intelligence?

**Goyette:** I get asked this a lot. I did a keynote out in Vienna, Austria. And so, it's a really hot topic right now. I get asked to speak on it a lot. What I find interesting is when I kind of pull people and say Okay, who thinks we need more emotional intelligence, all the hands go up. But then when I say... Okay, so what is it?

We know it's something good. We know probably need more of it, but that's one thing I kind of love to do is like, "Let's take some concepts and really break it down. What's practical about it? And so most people will say it's managing your emotions, most people will say, it's... Well, my interpersonal skills, how do I better relate to other people? And that's part of it, but I think what's come out in neuroscience that I think is so critical to emotional intelligence, and this is in my book I talk about this, but you have to understand the brain, the way it processes, information you have, if you kind of use this analogy while this is a podcast I'll kinda walk you through it verbally but if you just take your hand and you take your thumb and cross it across your palm and then wrap your four fingers, around almost like a fist, you can see that your thumb, that's kind of just a crud representation of the human brain, but the thumb represents the limbic system and that's where all of your emotional processing takes place, the four fingers represents your prefrontal cortex, which sits right behind your skull plate. That's where all of your cognitive analysis your logical reasoning takes place.

When we are talking about emotional intelligence people say We need more of it, but it's kind of an afterthought if I have time as a leader or even as an individual, contributor, you... Yeah, I want to grow in that, but it's always way down on the list after their technical skills.

But I will tell you, as a leader, it is so much more predictive of success. And so the reason is because we think and process information, our prefrontal cortex, but our limbic system, it's unconscious and it's automatic, the brain is really, really, pretty efficient and it runs amazingly well. The reason it does that is because most of the day we're operating from our limbic system so the pre-frontal cortex is, is where we think, but this is where we act. So, if where we're acting pretty much over 90% of the day is coming from our emotional centers. Well, gosh, then do I want to be driven by that. Or do I want to take control and get in the driver's seat and decide how I want to act?



We've all experienced it. And the Limbic system, is responsible for the fight or flight. We used to think that was only around physical threats, but now, neuroscience is now proven that it's around social threats, and so it's why we see kids these days that are in middle school and high school, struggling with depression and anxiety. A lot of old timers will say, "Well I don't get it. Their life is so much better than ours, used to be."

Yeah, physically but what is much harder, the emotional side, it's the social side because if I get called out or bullied and now it's on social media. Used to back in the day was in high school, walking down the hall, one person, maybe two, or three around them, heard it. I go home, it's gone, it's nowhere. But now on social media, it's a much bigger threat. It is a huge threat to the limbic brain, and so the brain will go into fight or flight, and so it fight-or-flight happens all the time in the workplace.

We don't realize it, but as leaders, we unintentionally trigger the fight or flight mechanism, and the most common response I see in the workplace around fight is blame-shifting. It's not my department at somebody else's Department, so we find ways to kind of throw the blame on somebody else. And then flight is around freezing, I'm just going to stick my hand in the sand and I'm not going to deal with it, conflict avoidance. I'm going to shut down. And so, we all have maybe different scenarios we may be going to fight or flight either one, but usually based on our personality, will be one that is more dominant either the fight or in more of an aggressive dominant personality. And I always choose the fight, and then flight is going to be for more the introverts that like to avoid conflict like peace and harmony.

So, when we go into fight-or-flight, that's when we end up not making a decision or not being as emotionally intelligent as we would think we're going to be. And so that's where there's a difference between what I think and what I know to do when I walk in the meeting, but when I walk in that meeting and somebody triggers me, that's when later I'm regretting like, "Why did I say that? Can I just get the words back in my mouth or why did I freeze?"

I know I can think of the perfect response but I froze in the moment, yes. And so when we start to recognize that we can start to choose Oh, look at that. I just went into fight or flight. Now, what is the response in order to get the outcome that I want, I have to clearly start to analyze it because when I analyze myself, I actually put myself back up into the prefrontal cortex, the smart part of our brain, and so when I start to analyze myself and I'm less emotional about it.

So, where we behave is driven through the emotional processing of our brain. And so that's why, theoretically, we can talk about what is the emotional intelligent response and most people would agree on it, but then the question is, then how come when you get into that situation, you're not executing on it, and it's because your emotional centers have taken over, and so that's where... That's why it's so critical, is that if most of our day is operated out of the automatic unconscious part of our brain that runs lightning fast and our brain actually resist using the pre-frontal cortex. Most people... And again, if you're very emotionally intelligent... You have about... At most two hours a day in your prefrontal cortex. And so, again, if I know that... And I recognize it my brain is a little out of resource, it I'm going to protect that.

**Nichols:** Well, there's just so much fascinating statistics around emotional intelligence and why it's important, right? And I'll just read a few of these 90% of top performers have a level of emotional intelligence. Your emotional quotient is responsible for over half of your job performance. In fact, I think you said it's almost close to 60%. People with emotional intelligence, it's proven that they make more money, more income. That's just so fascinating and it is something that we need to pay attention to. So Kerry, let me ask you, if someone is maybe low in an emotional intelligence, is that something they can move the needle on? Do you believe that they can become more self-aware?

**Goyette:** Absolutely, we've done studies and proven it so you can increase your emotional intelligence, having said that. I say that with a caveat, it's not just going to magically appear. It takes intentionality, and you have to work at it work, and so if you're willing to do the work, then absolutely. We've actually even taken students in the UK, and we've measured them, work with them for two years, and yeah, and could very easily see that they increase their emotional intelligence. I do a lot of pre and post-work with my clients, so when I work with teams, I will actually measure I go in with psychometrics, and measure their collective emotional intelligence, and so I'm tracking and trying to get them to increase and move the needle, and so I look at what's getting in their way, so I always deal with barriers first, what are the obstacles, what are the derailers? Where is this team derailing?

Then how can we short that up? Usually it's often around decision-making because our decision making, again, is often through the limbic system, and so they're not making great decisions and then a business making good decisions is pretty darn critical, and so if we can get their decision-making much better, that's kind of the low-hanging fruit. So a lot of times we'll start to remove some of the obstacles or where they're derailing and that's kind of the first order of business. We do a pre-imposed. And then going back to the statistics I also ask my clients to track certain

metrics because again, they want to know that it's great if we increase it, but to what end, because we're trying to achieve a goal, and so I have them track it in their business metrics, and so far 100% of our clients have increased employee engagement which can be tracked. They will increase productivity they may decrease expenses may increase revenue. Kinda depends on what their goals are. They have found that emotional intelligence is a key and if you think about it, it really is, it's not that it replaces your IQ, but if you think about it, as it acts as a multiplier, of your IQ.

**Nichols:** Oh, I like that and I really like that. I know that you have done some TED Talks and it's kind of a little bit of an oxymoron because I know the title of one of your TED talks is "Stop motivating your employees" So, why shouldn't you motivate your employees, Kerry?

**Goyette:** Yeah, and because I think people are using the wrong type of motivation. Most organizations that I'm seeing are using a lot of carrots and sticks and so carrots meaning espresso bars and in the workplace, and I'm not on arguing with any of these things. I've got one client that they're doing Margarita Wednesday's beer on Fridays. And again, that is a great indicator of the talent shortage that we're in, we're all competing for... So we're willing to throw all this stuff.

Again, I'm not arguing against that, but I think if it's only that that shallow, and it's superficial and so people are already motivated and then this goes back to motivational Sciences they're already motivated... You can't necessarily motivate them now you can unleash their motivation if you understand what they're motivated by. But I can't make somebody be motivated about the same things I'm motivated for as a leader, if I'm all excited about metrics and love the data and I throw a spread sheet up there and I talk about our financial performance and I turn around and I look at everybody with glazed eyes going, "Who cares? It's me as a leader that needs to shift.

I can't make them love the numbers, but what I can do is create a story about the numbers, what is it that my team is motivated by. Each of my individual team members you should know where do they get the most joy in their life? And if you just ask them, what are the top three things you love about your job and why it will give you a good indication as to what they're motivated by.

**Nichols:** So, just because I was going to say, you know, how would you go about that? Just ask the question. Sometimes we don't ask enough questions.

**Goyette:** We don't. There's assessments for that if you don't want to ask the questions that's a quick and easy way to do it, but if you're willing as a leader, and that's always one of the things I work with leaders on is leaders in general just need to be more curious and ask more questions. And so if we understand what they're motivated by, and then we have the espresso bars and things like that, that's great, but we're also kind of appealing to their inherent intrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation has shown to be six times more effective as far as motivating... the carrots in sticks, do work. I'm not arguing that they don't work, but they work short term and they won't be long-term and sustainable. And so when we're looking for sustained motivation you have to tap into the intrinsic motivation, and you also have to understand different people are motivated by different things and that can be hard for leaders. Some people are motivated by opportunities, and what we can gain by something, and then other people which is less known, because there are fewer represented in our nation by this type, but they're motivated to guard and protect and so they're actually motivated by pain. Now, if I try to sell the person that's motivated by protecting on why everything, why this is such a great idea this is awesome. Let me tell you about the benefits. If we are, if we took our team this direction, this would be...

We would have X, Y, and Z. they're not even going to hear it, that's not even going to budge them but if I switch that and say Okay if we don't do it here, the potential consequences we could lose market share, we may lose talent that is going to get their attention because they're far more motivated to protect. And that's where they did this study with soccer teams, and they found that when they told certain soccer players that were motivated more by opportunities. I need you to score three goals in a shootout. Then they actually perform better and those that were more motivated to protect they said you can lose up to two goals. So they knew that they were still protecting the team if they lost two goals and so, based on how the coach frame the question it increase their performance.

**Nichols:** Oh, we've got a lot to learn. Okay, what do you think that something extra is that every leader needs?

**Goyette:** I would say increasing emotional intelligence because again, as I mentioned in my upcoming book that emotional intelligence is not just becoming more empathetic or reading other people's emotions, or managing my own emotions it really is being self-aware about myself and understanding how I'm motivated what makes me tick, what gets me excited and also having that same understanding and projecting it out to others, and recognizing that they may not be motivated, by the same things you are. And so I have to understand them and motivate them by their style, not mine. And then taking that one step further. So this is kind of

the three circles that I cover and emotional intelligence in my book, but is then understanding the environment, what's going on in the environment that is either helping or hindering us and so if we can really become very self-aware about our own tendencies, our own preferences and where we may derail and then really jump into curiosity, and get to know our team members better how they're motivated, what makes them excited and what challenges them and then understanding what environment is going on. What's at play? We're in a talent shortage. So what else is at play? Is it a strong need for innovation, are we trying to increase volume? So we're trying to scale up what is it that's going on in an environment and when you can focus on those three and have some self-awareness about it, it's amazing to see what leaders can accomplish.

**Nichols:** Yeah, well, I just, I cannot wait. You've got something that's coming up, and I want you to tell our listening audience about it and I can't wait myself, had to get the vinyl.

**Goyette:** Yeah, so I'm excited to announce that I've just finished my first book. It's called the non-obvious Guide to Emotional Intelligence. It's part of a larger Guide series, the non-obvious guide series, and it's going to be out June 1 and so it's available right now, for pre-orders on Amazon.

**Nichols:** Very good, well Kerry. Thank you again so much for being with us. This has just been a true delight.

**Goyette:** Thank you so much for having me. It was a pleasure.