

Chris LoCurto: Welcome to the Chris LoCurto Show where we discuss leadership and life and discover that business is what you do, not who you are. Welcome to the show folks. We are sitting here in Franklin, Tennessee, where it has gone from very warm to very cold and apparently, we're going to have very warm weather again in a couple days. It is the strangest thing on the planet, how fast we can go from 30 degrees to 70 degrees and back down to 30. I hope you guys are having a fantastic day and I also hope that you are signed up for the free webinar that we're doing tomorrow. When I say tomorrow, what I mean is the 2nd of March. We're doing our free training for you, which is the Leadership Road Map. It is your leadership road map. It is the pillars of the things that I teach so many of our clients, so many of our mastermind clients, so many of our coaching clients. These are huge, huge pieces that we work on to help them absolutely change their business and change their lives as well.

If you would like to be a part of that webinar, it's very easy for you to do. Text the word Cloweinar, CLOWEBINAR one word to the number 33444 and we will send you the registration and you can pick one of your two times. There's two times that we're going to be doing it, so pick one of those times and we will get you in or you can go just directly to ChrisLoCurto.com/webinar and get signed up right away. Do not miss this webinar. You're going to want to attend this thing. Also coming up, you've heard us talking about our May event, our Next-Level Leadership Live Event that is coming up in May. Three days of incredibleness. Yes that is what I'm going to say it is. It is incredibleness. It is going to be amazing teaching, a lot of lot of powerful, incredible stuff.

On top of that, we have got my mentor and buddy Rabbi Lapin that is going to be there speaking as well. Do not miss out on the VIP experience. That is where we have even more stuff. We have food. We have three incredible lessons on top of everything that we're going to be doing which is going to be with me, is going to be with our mastermind experience, which is something you do not want to miss out on it. It is something that our clients are living right now and it is a blast, it's amazing so we're going to do something with that, and then we're also going to have an extra lesson by Rabbi Lapin, a Q & A for that as well. Don't miss out on that. Speaking of the May events, we've got somebody on the show with us today, Bo McDonald who's going to be there at that event. Bo, welcome to the show, so glad to have you on.

Bo McDonald: Thank you. Thanks for having me.

Chris LoCurto: You are here in Tennessee with us because we're doing our quarterly retreat for our mastermind groups, our accountability groups and so that is kicking off this afternoon. You're here and decided to join us on the show, so glad to have you on before we're doing this event so we can talk about something that was so powerful in your life. Before we get into that, tell everybody what you do. Tell everybody

about your marketing company.

Bo McDonald: Yeah, sure. We have a marketing firm based in South Carolina and we work exclusively with credit unions. That's it; progressive credit unions that want to grow. We grew from five; we've got twenty-six clients growing now. A team of two people just about five years ago to thirteen.

Chris LoCurto: It's been so fun to watch the growth happen.

Bo McDonald: You've been there through the last couple of years of it.

Chris LoCurto: Been there through a lot of it. The reason why you came this direction is because you discovered something and it's what ...

Bo McDonald: You have great food here.

Chris LoCurto: ... That is exactly is. You know, coming here, you're going to get good food, good wine and some great events. You discovered something very important about your leadership and it was a comment that you had made actually in passing that it was like, that is how so many people end up where you are and don't know what to do with it and as you called yourself an accidental leader, explain what that means.

Bo McDonald: I think a lot of people end up that way. They have a great idea for a business. They get there however, what happens through a lay off; just going out and doing it and they grow and they realize after they start hiring people... They probably don't realize they're a dreadful leader but they realized that their employees are dreadful. But it might be the other way around. It's all in the numbers. If you run through three or four employees in a couple of months, there's a common denominator.

Chris LoCurto: I are it. Here you find yourself being this as you say accidental leader where so many people that are listening got into leadership; some of them were seeking it, some went after it. A lot of our demographic, a lot of people that listen to this show want to be leaders, but a lot of them found themselves in the same spot you did. Some are in leadership. Some are entrepreneurs where like you said, you decide you're going to make a widget and sell it and think, "Well, that would be a good thing to do," and not realize that it outgrows you in the process. Being an accidental leader, what were the things, like you just talked about going through about three or four employees in a few months; what was it like, what was it, what did you experience and what were the huge signs to you that maybe it was you?

Bo McDonald: Really it all came together for me after I took the DISC profile. That's when I realized that my mindset was all wrong. The people I was hiring, to me at that point, they were tools to get a job done. They weren't people. We had clients, they need to be served, stuff had to be done and I never took them as people. I never treated them like people. As soon as you pointed that out to me, it took me a little bit of pride to admit that I was wrong and that I was treating people like that

because it's hard to hear. If you're a decent person, you don't want to be told that your mistreating people because that's just not good. As soon as I got through it and realized that is exactly what I was doing, I wasn't giving people the opportunity to fail. I was micromanaging and I was losing good talent because of it. People that had a great skillset, I just would not allow them to use it.

Chris LoCurto: That is so powerful to hear because so many people that I work with, so many leaders have ... We get in these roles because we're taught by bad leaders obviously. Coming up through business and becoming an entrepreneur, all those things. Are you looking back on your life and saying, "Well, I had phenomenal, incredible teaching leaders in my life," for you like, "No, they were pretty much like everything else.

Bo McDonald: Yeah. I mean it was the people that I looked back and I thought we're great leaders, were not great leaders. Those are the people that I actually took leadership advice from.

Chris LoCurto: Absolutely. That is exactly how we learn. I say that all the time. I'll get some people that will come and beat the daylight out of themselves because they're like, "I should have known this." Who would have taught you? What was modeled before that influenced you in your leadership and as we look at that, we usually find the same, exact thing the perpetuation of bad leadership and believing that you're doing a good thing. The part that you mentioned is having to let go of some ego, some of that pride. When we're in a leadership role, there is a certain level of pride that comes with that position. There's a certain level of ego that comes with that position and the reason why is because we've been taught.

"Well you're in leadership, you are a leader now and that means that everybody is supposed to focus on making you successful" That is something that obviously we talk about here that that's is not it. As you look at the change, the transformation, you decided at that point, "Hey, I need to get some help on this." We started doing our coaching program, not long after that doing our mastermind program, as well the accountability groups, all that kind of fun stuff. Looking back on that, what would you say ... Was your leadership holding back your business? What was the impact of doing it the way that you've been taught?

Bo McDonald: It went from being focused on me, to focused on my team. I didn't grow up very privileged, so for me to have a successful business and see more money than I've ever known, when you hand out a \$30,000 check to someone every year to work for you, you've got the mindset, "This is my money." It was a bad, bad mindset. Much like most of ...

Chris LoCurto: It is your money and it's understandable.

Bo McDonald: ... There's nothing wrong with that.

Chris LoCurto: There's nothing wrong with that but ...

Bo McDonald: You just have to change the way you look at it.

Chris LoCurto: Yeah. Absolutely.

Bo McDonald: Like a lot of people right now that are just listening to the podcast or reading your blog, just starting there. It's a great start, but when I started taking the next step, I think it was the mastermind group, was the first thing we did? Just in our call once a month going through some of these issues that, "Well, my employees are wrong because," and flipping that conversation and slowly learning wait, maybe I had problem all wrong. Then taking the next step into life plan, where I learned that the way that I was leading was more than just a couple of bad bosses having some influence on me but there's a lot more to it. The more I dig into it, the more information I get. The more I can change, the more I can be a better leader. I could not have a staff of thirteen right now if I were where I was three years ago.

Chris LoCurto: How big was the staff back then?

Bo McDonald: Three years ago, we had four people.

Chris LoCurto: Yeah, and struggling and transitioning. You've brought Meg with you to this event?

Bo McDonald: Yes. She is the ... If I get hit by a bus, she inherits the kingdom. She's the number two.

Chris LoCurto: Here is one of your top leaders in your business and I love having Meg around because she has watched you more from in your own leadership. She's watched this whole process. If she was sitting in here, which she's actually on a client call right now, but if she was sitting in here, what would she say about watching that transition?

Bo McDonald: Are explicit okay on this?

Chris LoCurto: We could be bleep those out. [crosstalk 00:10:53].

Bo McDonald: Yeah. Probably not. There are points today when she gets upset about something and I'm just playing it cool and she'll say, "Bring the old Bo back for three minutes. Yell, scream. Do something." She is in charge of our team. She handles all of our staffing stuff and I think she's seen me go from where I was to where I am today of being someone who I wouldn't over state it and say caring and Gandhi-ish. That's probably overstating it but at least someone who understands that these are real people. They go home to a family. They have hopes and dreams and if I'm going to get the best out of them, I have to understand that, appreciate it and treat them like that.

Chris LoCurto: Absolutely. Absolutely. She has changed ... She's grown in her leadership ...

- Bo McDonald: Most definitely.
- Chris LoCurto: ... with the team by watching you, by being part of this. Now let's talk about that because we've gone from the early stages and we've morphed the mastermind group into just ... Well, I don't know, how would you describe? I think it's this crazy, powerful process. What would you say?
- Bo McDonald: The most awesome thing about that is having the fellowship with other people that; that day that you think you're all alone in this, I'm the only one struggling with this. You get on a video chat with five or six other business owners. Sometimes you realize my problems are nothing compared to what other people are dealing with. You also realize there's someone else who has dealt with exactly what you're dealing with and you can learn from their mistakes but you also get the chance to give back into those people. They're going through problems and you've got the chance to help them and make a difference.
- Chris LoCurto: That's what I love about doing these retreats, like the one starting this afternoon. Of course this is a Thursday. This is a Tuesday show but we did this on Thursday right before. We've got this retreat starting this afternoon and we go all through the day tomorrow. The thing that I hear over and over and over again is how great it is as a leader and entrepreneur to come around people that are experiencing the same exact thing that you are because before coming into this, were there people in your life that you could about, talk through, that could guide you or help you in process your leadership before doing this?
- Bo McDonald: There were but they were of a different mindset. So the advise I would get toward the conversations we had were a lot different than what we have in this group.
- Chris LoCurto: Usually people love to help, they want to help but if they've not been in a leadership role, if they've not in leadership or even being an entrepreneur, the advises, like you say, is of a different mindset. It is not understanding what's happening, what's your experiencing, what your commitment to those clients are, what your expectations are of your team. It's so difficult to try and get people in your life, even family members, that's probably the place where a lot of family members don't understand; because they don't go through the same thing. If you've got the working parent coming home to the stay-at-home parent, they do not understand exactly what that person's going through. It's in a different world. With all of these changes we've gone through, we spend the last couple of years going through you, going through your leadership, what it was like being thrown into leadership because of your own success, what would it be like, success wise had you not come through this? Where would you be, what would life look like for you?
- Bo McDonald: I don't even want to think about it. I know the kind of person I was before and again, I don't want to overstate it and say that I'm perfect today. I've come so far in the leadership stuff and having other people go through it with me, my leadership team at the firm, so then it's just not me talking about Chris and "I have to hear all

of that Chris stuff again." Uh, here we go. If they're actually going through it with me, they know where my mind is, they know what I'm thinking and the people that are under them can experience that too.

- Chris LoCurto: It's been great to have team members. You've brought team members in on the calls. Obviously, you bring a team member to the events. It has been awesome to watch them experience what you're experiencing because a lot of team members, most team members on the planet never get to experience what that leader is experiencing especially when they're walking through an incredible process of coaching and mentoring and the mastermind process. How have they changed? What have you seen in them as we've gone through this?
- Bo McDonald: Huge changes, specifically one that, she's had a lot of issues in life and to see her come through calls with you and to know that, we were responsible for that. We were able to take this one hurting person and maybe not make them perfect but see incremental changes. Every time there's a call, they're working on stuff. They're noticing stuff about themselves. They're treating the team differently. They're enjoying life differently. It's a pretty cool feeling knowing that as a leader, you have the power to not just take from people but give back to them as well.
- Chris LoCurto: Right. Gosh, that is so incredibly important for people to understand. As I've always said forever, it's your job as leader to make your team successful and not the other way around. If you go into this thing thinking that they have to make you successful then what you will find is you're going to get half their ability, half their talent. Something else that is so vitally important is you are and I tell my team, "Listen. Our clients are who put food on the table but I'm the one who writes the check and pays to put food on your table but they pay me. They pay our business. They're the reason why we're here, they're the reason we're doing the things that we're doing." I have a fabulous team, I believe. I have a fabulous team that I hear over and over again, when client's come back to this office, I've heard over and over again, "Chris, whenever I'm here I feel like home because of just the experience and everything that we walked through." That is exactly what I want to hear from my clients. I love having that. You've noticed the difference in your clients as well since the early days, the struggles, all that into where your team is now absolutely [rocking 00:17:34] with your clientele. Talk about that a little bit.
- Bo McDonald: Yeah. We have the same principles that we applied to our team, we applied to our clients now. Whenever we bring on a new client, they do a disk profile and we walk them through, "Here's your communication style, here's mine. Here's where we're going to struggle. We need to realize that." Just doing that alone, we don't have a ton of lines, we have 26 right now. To be able to do that one on one and understand you know, if someone has a brusquely personality, they're not just being mean but internally we know how to handle that and how to lead them and guide them. When we start spouting "LoCurtoism" as we call them around the office, our clients may not get it. We have a better understanding of people in general that we can work with them better, we know how to help them.

Chris LoCurto: I think I'm on the week that we've talked about putting up some canvasses of some of the "LoCurtoisms," especially coming out of some of the events we're about to do, your [strap plan 00:18:30] coming up.

Bo McDonald: In two weeks we'll be back here in Nashville.

Chris LoCurto: In two weeks we'll be doing that and there's some "LoCurtoism" that come out of that as well. Looking at where you are now, how would you say or where would you say you are with leadership business wise? We've talked about the changes, but looking at you as a leader coming from that accidental leader to where you are now, how would you describe yourself now?

Bo McDonald: I think of a specific situation, we were just in D.C. at a conference over the weekend. Meg had to have a difficult conversation with me where I hurt a team member and I didn't realized it because I'm just, I'm going a hundred miles an hour, I'm just saying stuff, not always thinking about how I say it. When she pulled me aside and said, "What happened on Friday, it hurt this person. You should probably deal with that." A couple of years ago, I'd say, "Look, you're crazy. They're just sensitive." I can reflect on that now and say, "Wow. That was kind of a Jack like move. I shouldn't have said that. I need to go deal with it," and situations like that, you handle so much differently.

Chris LoCurto: That is important for you guys to hear. I want you to understand this because I have worked for so many leaders in the last three decades. Gosh, I could say the last three decades, that's terrible.

Bo McDonald: You're not that old are you?

Chris LoCurto: I'm getting there that's for sure, where that very comment, "Oh, people are just sensitive. Oh, they're just whatever, fill in the blank." We've all heard that but the people that are listening to the show right now, you've said it. A lot of you have actually said it and not understanding that it's not just a matter of being people being sensitive. Now listen, do not take me the wrong way. I'm not going to sit here and allow my teams members to come in. I'm not going to pay anybody my hard earned money for them to throw their feet upon the desk and be sensitive. That is not the goal, that's not we're talking about at all. That is not the process. Treating people with dignity, treating people with respect and understanding that when you're the problem and you're the one saying something that's boneheaded and that does hurt or doesn't hurt, that's the time to understand all your doing is shutting that person down. I want to know what has the productivity of your team been like since before starting with us and going through the entire mastermind and all the process in what it is now? What's the difference?

Bo McDonald: I have the most dedicated team that I would put out in the industry anywhere. They go to bat for us, they'll stay late if they have to, they don't complain. In fact, the person in question, that I'd probably need to make an apology to the next time I'm in the office, she is our hardest worker, most dedicated and really without her,

we couldn't do what we do. Although a couple more times of saying things like that, she wouldn't be around.

Chris LoCurto: Right.

Bo McDonald: Anytime we're on-site with a client, they talk about how much they love this person. She's a joy to deal with. She's always on top of stuff and to keep people like that, recognize their value is really the success of our business.

Chris LoCurto: Somebody who your clients love, who they love to work with is the very person that with a few more comments you could have run off?

Bo McDonald: Yes.

Chris LoCurto: Isn't that an incredible thing to be in a place where you recognize, hold on a second this is great value to me. If I just treat that person with dignity, if I treat them with a little bit more respect than I'd take personal responsibility for what I've said, I get to keep that talent. That's the difficult thing for people to understand is, when you change your culture, when you change your environment by changing you, by taking personal responsibility, it changes your champions. It changes who's on your team. I want to point out something else that you just said, Meg absolutely felt free to go to you and go, "Hey, that was a bonehead thing to do."

Bo McDonald: Yes.

Chris LoCurto: How is that having somebody on your team and she's not calling you out and being disrespectful but she's saying, "Hey, listen. This is something you've got to fix." She feels the freedom to be able to call you out without being disrespectful in the process.

Bo McDonald: Yeah. That's important because I never would have known that what I said was hurtful unless there is someone who they valued the team enough to want to say that and have that difficult conversation but felt comfortable doing it.

Chris LoCurto: Yeah. Probably would have been a ton of fear built around it and a lot of ego on the leadership and as well of not wanting to be called out by a subordinate. That's so the difference and I think it has been a phenomenal process watching you go from where we started to where you are now because it's such a different Bo, it's such a different leader. Not just as a leader but as a person. I'm just so proud of how much you've accomplished in this process. One great thing is being able to sit there and look at a Meg and go, "Yeah, yeah. You're right." As opposed to, "Oh, she's attacking or she's just trying to say something to point out somebody's sensitivities or whatever."

Bo McDonald: Now realistically, the first three seconds I go back and say, "Well, that's rubbish." I have to stop myself and she gives me that first five seconds to react like that and then we can have the conversation.

- Chris LoCurto: Let me just tell you right now you're not going to agree with this for five seconds, so just go ahead and disagree and here we go.
- Bo McDonald: And go.
- Chris LoCurto: Now we jump in but it's so powerful and that is what I want you guys listening to understand. When you become focused as a leader like that ... Now what we have done, we've walked through a lot together. You have been surrounded by great entrepreneurs, great leaders, people that are not ... Everybody in our programs, all the teams, everybody that's coming, everybody that's coming in May, these are all people who want to have the very thing that you're getting, that accountability. Somebody's showing you, guiding you, mentoring you but also the ability to receive the knocks from time to time because you've taken quite a few in over the last couple of years.
- Bo McDonald: Just a few.
- Chris LoCurto: Just a few, but they've not been ... It's gone from something that would hurt incredibly to, "Oh, my gosh. This has just grown me." The knocks are no longer ... I call them the knocks. It's just probably not the best thing for me to say. Those teachable moments have gone from being something that would be painful in the old mindset which is where everybody comes from, is that old mind set to the new mindset which is "Oh, fantastic. I'm so glad I see that now. I'm glad I'm learning that because now I can put that in place." Would you agree with that?
- Bo McDonald: Most definitely. It's understanding your shortcomings and once you do that, I think you're open to that criticism to taking the knocks and knowing it's not personal that that person really, really cares enough about you to say something to see a change.
- Chris LoCurto: They're not going to do that if they're going to get their head knocked off. Meg would not come to you, if she knew that the first thing that you were going to do is take her head off and that's any team member period. I've never known you to take anybody's head off. You've always been the good Bo.
- Bo McDonald: We have two team members that are pre-LoCurtoisms.
- Chris LoCurto: They would disagree.
- Bo McDonald: It's very interesting how they interact with me compared to other team members.
- Chris LoCurto: Tell me about that.
- Bo McDonald: I think they still see old Bo and they're afraid to confront me or say anything so they go to Meg. It seems some of the newer team members don't understand some of the changes that I've made in myself; some of them are a lot more free to come to me with issues. Meg is still there on the frontline. They call her the Bo

whisperer that they can go to her with anything and she can translate and I can argue and discuss and yell and we can get stuff done.

Chris LoCurto: That's the Bo whisperer, I love that. We're so going to call her that when she shows up later on today.

Bo McDonald: Expect that on her name tag.

Chris LoCurto: That's absolutely awesome. Looking back, looking back over the last couple of years, what would you say are the most powerful parts of the journey?

Bo McDonald: Really the first thing that hit me was needing to pour into myself before I can pour into others. If you're listening to this podcast, you get done with this thirty, thirty-five minutes. You go to your team, you're all excited and you want to go change them, but if you're not pouring into yourself and changing yourself and investing in you, it's hard to invest in anyone else.

Chris LoCurto: That is so absolutely true. We always do see that and like you were saying from the beginning, it was everybody else's fault until you learned about your personality style, learned about your leadership and what, "Oh my gosh, maybe it's me. Maybe it's my process is that need to change," which in pouring into you has affected them so greatly. We've got this event coming up today. We've got the big event coming up in May. We have blown it up; we've got this incredible three-day event for people to come to. For people that are sitting on the fence right now, we have had so many people that have come and asked questions and all that, for people that are sitting on the fence, what would you say to them?

Bo McDonald: Forget about the dollar signs, just forget about it. When you leave this, if you come here with the right mindset, with an open mind to understanding that something's are going to hurt but if you take it, process it, learn from it, whatever you spend here you're going to see come back ten fold, when you go back and start working with your team, working on your business. Much like a lot of people listening right now, I've listened to the podcast and read your blog and it's kind of dangerous to take that little bit of information and go try to change your team without really getting a deeper understanding and working on yourself over a longer period of time.

Chris LoCurto: That is so true and that is so funny because at each one of our events, we always have one thing that's painful.

Bo McDonald: At least one. Meg actually dropped me off here in a rental car to go back and take a call. I said, "I'll save some tissues for you." I won't use them all myself, I promise.

Chris LoCurto: We do, we always have that one day that is like, "Oh, crud." Everybody knows coming in all right. There's going to be at least one thing or maybe more that is going to be in your face. Hey, learn this about yourself. That is what I love about the group of people that continue to come and walk to this process. Like I say,

everybody's been with us for years. You've been with us for years now because of this incredible process and because you come in it, looking with the eyes of "I want change" no matter what it is. Now, our goal isn't to beat the crap out of people obviously. Sometimes seeing those pieces like you said, seeing those pieces in your life, those are a little painful at first and then it becomes a thing or it's like, "Well. It hurts a little bit." Then it becomes a thing of like, "Well, oh yeah. I got over that a long time ago." We always do have at least one thing though and we haven't shared it yet with you what's going to happen later on today. What was that one thing that hurts a little bit and then we solve problems.

Bo McDonald: I feel like ever since I've gotten here, there's this big secret.

Chris LoCurto: That's a secret over what's going to happen on later on today. It's fun. I've struggled because the team, they'll all look at me like, "Do not say it. Don't say it. Just leave it alone. Just let it happen." We're looking forward to that. Bo, thank you so much for coming on and being a part of this. I appreciate you, I appreciate your leadership and mostly, I appreciate your friendship. It's been so great getting to know you over the last few years and hanging out and doing events like this. Thank so much for doing this, I appreciate it.

Bo McDonald: Thank you for all you've done for our business, our team and especially the team members in general that have benefited from this.

Chris LoCurto: It is my absolute pleasure. Folks, there you have it. For those of you that are an accidental leader, for those of you that did not think you would be in a place that you're in, maybe you started the business, maybe somebody hired you into a position that you weren't expecting and now you're leading people or you're finding the need to add more team members because of your success, whatever it is, there is great wisdom in what Bo has shared today. There is great wisdom and understanding that as you grow you must know it starts with you. It absolutely starts with you. It's your job to understand you. It is your job to understand your team and it is your job to make them successful if you would treat them with dignity, if you would treat them with honor, if you would treat them with respect. Again, this is not saying that you have a bunch of team members that are coming in and run you, instead you do the things that you need too to make them feel like human beings then what you will find is, you would get way more productivity. You'll get way better results as Bo just shared. The clientele are happier. The productivity is more.

There are a lot of things that will happen in your business and grow your business. Instead of going back and forth between hiring and firing people or losing people at three or four team members, he's now got thirteen. That is a fantastic place to be. That is powerful and that is starting with you. You've got to understand what you need to change, what you need to grow on, what you need to learn in this process. A fantastic way to do that is to be at the Next-Level Leadership Live Event in May. Be there. It will be one of the most powerful things that you do in your leadership period. Whether you're a leader, whether you're an entrepreneur, either way,

make it to that event. Go to ChrisLoCurto.com/events and sign up today. Folks, hopefully this helps you out. Hopefully this grows your leadership. Hopefully this helps you personally in your process as always, take this information, change your leadership, change your business, change your life and join us on the next episode.