

Corey Andrew Powell (00:02):

I'm joined today by Madeline Mann an HR and recruiting leader who has built an audience of over half a million people, and she's known for her award-winning job search YouTube channel, Self-made Millennial. Madeline, Welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Madeline Mann (00:17):

Thank you so much for having me good to be here.

Corey Andrew Powell (00:20):

My pleasure. And I am so happy to have you here for one major reason. Of course, young people getting out of college at some point, and they're gonna be looking at getting their dream job, or at least just surviving the interview process. <laugh> so I think you are, a master at being able to help them do that. So let's just jump right in. You are a lead HR, as I mentioned, tell me, why did you begin the Self-made Millennial platform? How'd that happen?

Madeline Mann (00:47):

Corey? It all started when I was the head of HR at a tech company, and I was the one who was reading lots of these resumes. I was in the back rooms with these executives, determining who going to get the job and really hearing all of their feedback. And I thought, heck if only these people, these wonderful, talented people who were applying to these jobs, if they only knew the mistakes they were making or what, the things that the people who were landing the jobs were doing, they could make much bigger leaps in their career. And so the first thing I did was I started replying to applications.

So like when someone would apply and they would get rejected, I would actually tell them the reason why their application was subpar. And I thought I was going to be the job seekers' hero because no one does this. And I'm telling you right now, Corey, I learned why no does this because people do not respond well to feedback <laugh>

Corey Andrew Powell (01:48):

Oh, I didn't think about that. So they didn't like the, the criticism.

Madeline Mann (01:51):

Exactly. People got pretty snippy about the criticism. And of course there was people who were very happy to get some feedback, but it ended up, so they ended up saying, okay, well I just re-edited my resume. And can you review it again? And can we hop on the phone? And it ended up spiraling into a lot of time and emotional labor. And so it was just like, wow, okay. This is, this is a lot to handle. So I took to YouTube, I thought, okay, how can I help people and give them these tips that I'm seeing firsthand? Because a lot of the career content I was seeing at that time was a bit outdated. Um, and wasn't quite as actionable people kept talking in these broad strokes of you should network.

You should, you know, be proactive. Yeah. And it's like, but how so? I just started putting out content. And from there it really took off across YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn, and it has been an absolute rocket ship.

Corey Andrew Powell (02:48):

Wow. That's so amazing. And it's so true because especially when you're new as a younger person, maybe getting out of college, you don't have that experience of the corporate interview specifically, and you kind of walk in there blindly. And I was realizing that there's not many, well, maybe now there are, but when I was entering the job market, there weren't many resources for me to kind of go through the practice of it and learn the specifics or have that, that inside information that you are providing.

Madeline Mann (03:14):

Yeah. A lot of us are given advice from our parents or from our, our colleges and a lot of that, you know, and I, I know these people and they're very hard working and you know, they're really focused helping with careers, but a lot of them are career counselors. So their entire career has been in career counseling. So they've never actually seen them behind the scenes. So a lot of what they learn are these things that have been passed down, articles that have been just regurgitated online. And so, it ends up being the stale vice when, I mean, the world is moving so quickly.

I remember when the coronavirus hit, I had all of this new content out because I said there were rules have changed. Here's how you approach companies in this way. And so it really just making sure you're nimble in your job search process is really important,

Corey Andrew Powell (04:00):

Right? Because the environment changes so quickly. One thing you also speak about is the, the aspect of personal branding. Many people don't understand because they think of branding in the aspect of a corporation. But tell me why is personal branding, something that is really important and can impact your job. Search

Madeline Mann (04:18):

Personal branding is the secret to having job security long term, because it really sets you apart from all the other people who say, I am an, an executive assistant, just a bunch of executive assistants on LinkedIn. All the headlines are the same, but what makes you different? What is the feeling I get when I read your resume or get your LinkedIn profile? What is the feeling I get when I interact with you? It's all part, part of your personal brand. People think of a brand as, uh, a commercial or something, really a big campaign, but really it's the feeling people get when they interact with you.

And so there are ways that you can really intentionally change that really think about, okay, what impression do I want to leave? And making sure that each touchpoint someone has, and then most of these touch points are digital. They are online making sure that that feels similarly across platforms and across different job search resumes, cover letters, all those things.

Corey Andrew Powell (05:20):

You have this thing called —and I love this cuz it's one of my most terrifying questions ever in job interviews - the "Tell me about yourself" worksheet. That question -it's a mainstay question in job interviews, but it can be a very, very intimidating question. So tell me a little bit about the, tell me about yourself worksheet.

Madeline Mann (05:38):

Oh yes. I have gotten so much feedback on this worksheet of it has completely changed the game of people's job interviews because it is often the first question a company asks you at the very beginning of the interview. And as someone who has, you know, interviewed thousands of people, most people blow it. And, the main way that they blow it, Corey is they take it for something that it's not a lot of people say either, this is my moment.

This is thee question. And I'm going to spend 10 to 15 minutes going through everything. I've done, blow them away. Or the second part is they, they interpret it as well. Let me tell you about myself. So I grew up in Los Angeles and I went to, you know, this school and I thought about majoring in this, but then I decided to go into this and it's like, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Madeline Mann (06:32):

You don't need to know all that information. Really what this question is about is this person switching context, they just were in another meeting they're coming to meet you. They're either looking at your resume for the first time. Or they looked at it maybe several hours ago or several days ago, they need a refresher. They need you to give them about 60 seconds of information so they can orient themselves. And then they can dive into the questions that they actually want to ask you.

And so it's so important that in this question, you are addressing things that are interesting to them that are relevant to the role that kind of get to the core of just basically, you know, what kind of professional you are. So we can move the heck on to what they're actually going to ask you that is pertaining to this role.

Corey Andrew Powell (07:14):

You mentioned the antiquated aspect of the job search. Now we have of all these new tools because we're in the modern world. One of them being LinkedIn. Here lately, LinkedIn for me, has seemingly changed. Well, my observation has been that it seemingly changed. It's becoming much more like a social media platform, almost aligned with a Facebook.

There's all kinds of conversations that have nothing to do with employment. It it's like a rabbit hole in a way. So I'm curious to know if you really believe that LinkedIn is still a viable tool for job searches. And what do you recommend is the best way to sort of use that tool and not fall down that rabbit hole?

Madeline Mann (07:52):

Yes. I would say that I have been on the LinkedIn train for years now, building up a following there and, and adding content. And for so long, I feel like LinkedIn, and I think it still is this way. It's been kind of judged as like the, the ugly stepchild of social media. <laugh> . Everyone makes fun of it. Everyone's like, you know, it just is not even when you hire a social media manager, they might just throw in LinkedIn. It's like, oh yeah, I kind of know LinkedIn.

And they don't really know anything about because they, they kind of disregard it as a legitimate place to build your personal brand, to build an audience. I have actually, I have a program that I started that is called LinkedIn for thought leaders, where I have brought hundreds of people from basically tiny audiences to massive audiences where they're, they're getting inbound job opportunities every month.

Madeline Mann (08:39):

They're getting inbound speaking engagements, they're getting inbound clients. Hmm. And that is because the organic reach on LinkedIn is so good. Meaning on an Instagram or a Facebook. Typically the only people who see your content are people who are following you or you're paying for other people to see you. Mm-hmm <affirmative>, but LinkedIn actively shares you with, with this, your second degree connections, even your third degree connections. And so you can get bigger reach and, and all that stuff on LinkedIn. I do think you're right, that it is moving in this more colloquial direction. But I think that's also due to the fact that people are starting to catch on that LinkedIn is viable, that LinkedIn is a place that you can attract these opportunities. And I've found that with the right approaches on LinkedIn, like I said, it's all bound opportunities. It's incredible. So you're not actually applying to jobs. Jobs are coming to you. Mm-hmm, <affirmative>, you're actually pursuing clients. You're not actually pursuing speaking engagements. They're all inbound. And it really is an amazing full search engine and also a place to connect with people. So I, I could not say enough, kudos towards LinkedIn and, and focusing on that as a platform in your career.

Corey Andrew Powell (09:57):

You mentioned earlier, too networking as a kind of a broad stroke. If someone were to say, oh, well, you should network more. And I have always said, especially even when I was in high school, that when I got out, I was like, I wish there were someone who had stressed more the importance of me meeting people and talking and connecting and having taught me how to do that. So the importance of network and share that your view on why that is really a tool that can make or break a person in the job market as well.

Madeline Mann (10:26):

I would say that that networking is so important because when you look at your job search, you should not measure it by the number of applications submitted. You should measure it by the number of interactions with people you have. Hmm. So an interaction could count as yes, landing an interview. It could be you speaking to someone at a company could be even counting as you speaking to a former colleague or a friend telling them that you, you know, a job surgeon and asking them if they know anyone at certain companies or, or them giving you some advice about what to do, basically you, you're never going to land the interview if no one sees your resume.

And the problem with applying online is that you can feel good about putting your resume in a database, but it's not like school admissions, where the university has a bit of a promise to the person who applies that they're actually gonna read it. There's so many applications that never go read. Yeah. And so it's so important that you are building these relationships, getting your foot in the door any way possible and truly the best way to make sure your resume is seen is through these relationships and networking.

Corey Andrew Powell (11:41):

It's funny you say that because I can recall, like, in my job searches, I say, okay, I'm gonna spend a day tomorrow applying for jobs. And I'm like, you know, filling out all those forms and everything online. And then at the very end of the process, after a few hours, I kind of kicked back proudly and I looked that I've sent out 15 resumes today and I'm like, ah, I've done it. But you're just saying, no, that really wasn't it. The quantity of how many resumes you sent out was really not it at all. It was about trying to nurture real actual relationships. And that brings me to another component of the workforce —women in the workforce who have a whole set of other problems because of sexism and misogyny and those sorts of things.

There's this sort of old school thought where some women might not want to ruffle feathers in the job search or in their jobs. And so they will have this idea of like, kind of be seen and not heard if you will, but you have a whole other take on that. You just say, no, it's about how to be seen and heard to get that promotion. So explain a little bit of your notion on how women move forward and cut through some of that bureaucracy and sexism.

Madeline Mann (12:50):

I would say... Yeah. Especially when it comes to promotions, it's really important to say that you want a promotion. And now I know that sounds maybe simplistic or whatnot, but it's so interesting. Um, I'll give you an example of, I was working with this client and she was really upset that her boss didn't recognize her or didn't nominate her a leadership program. Like it's, it's like a, it's not for people who are in leadership, but, but an accelerator program to kind of nurture them. And she was upset that he didn't, you know, offer her up. And when she brought it up to him, cause I kind of coached her through how to have the conversation. He said, I didn't realize you wanted that. I would've loved to recommend you. And this guy just had a million and a half things on his mind and wasn't proactively thinking about, you know, we could say, you should have thought about it.

Madeline Mann (13:43):

She's your direct report, all that stuff. But, but one of the things is you saying, I have my eye on a promotion next cycle. What can I do to achieve the right goals to make that happen? My path. So speaking up and not saying, I need a promotion now, which I think a lot of people are uncomfortable saying. And I don't actually think that if you're only ever speaking up about a promotion, when it's review time, when it's finally the week when they're making a decision, you've spoken up a bit too late. I'm not saying still can and speak up, but I'm saying that you wanna start having that conversation early.

And the conversation is actually a lot easier. If you say, what is the path to that promotion? What is the path to this raise? What is the path to getting into this leadership acceleration program? And he says, if that's a goal of yours, I will absolutely recommend you next round. Right? So it's amazing how just starting that conversation can really start getting your manager on your side. And now you're on the same team working towards that goal.

Corey Andrew Powell (14:43):

Thank you for listening to motivational Mondays presented by the National Society of Leadership and Success and available wherever you listen to your favorite podcast. I'm Corey Andrew Powell, and I'll see you again, here next week.