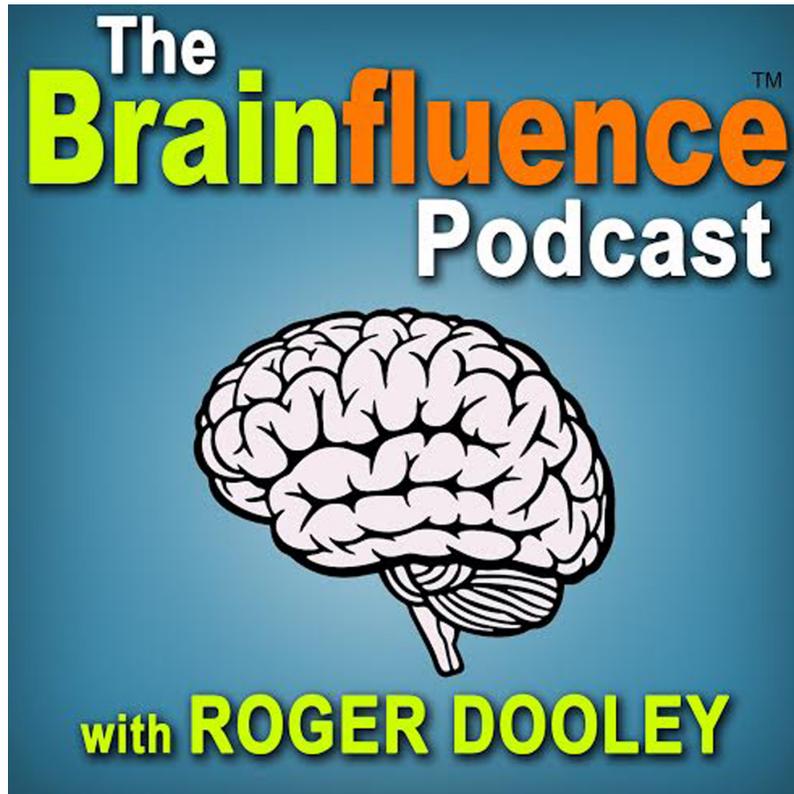


Find Your Customer's Secret Language with Jeffrey Shaw



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Roger Dooley

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Find Your Customer's Secret Language with Jeffrey Shaw

Welcome to the Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley, author, speaker and educator on neuromarketing and the psychology of persuasion. Every week, we talk with thought leaders that will help you improve your influence with factual evidence and concrete research. Introducing your host, Roger Dooley.

Roger Dooley: Welcome to The Brainfluence Podcast. I'm Roger Dooley. Our guest this week is a very versatile person. Jeffrey Shaw is a fellow podcast host. His show is the popular business podcast Creative Warriors. Jeffrey's also a keynote speaker at creative and business conferences and a business coach. For more than 30 years, Jeffrey has been a prominent portrait photographer in the US. He's photographed the families of people like Tom Seaver, Pat Riley, David Bloom, Stephanie Seymour, as well as many high level executives. His portraits have appeared on The Oprah Show and in People Magazine.

Somehow too Jeffrey has found the time to write a book "Lingo: Discover Your Ideal Customer's Secret Language and Make Your Business Irresistible." Welcome to the show, Jeffrey.

Jeffrey Shaw: Well, Roger, I'm trilled to be here with you. Thank you for having me.

Roger Dooley: Great. Yeah. Jeffrey, photographers I've spoken to often comment that they never want to do shoots with kids or animals. I looked at your photography site and I didn't see any animals, but there were lots of kids. Do you have all these other interests to keep your insanity?

Jeffrey Shaw: Yeah. Well, you know what? Actually I have done a lot of animals over the years, but a lot of kids. I actually love being with kids. You just have to work with what works well for you. Your show being Brainfluence, I think a lot of

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what you talk about and a lot about what you do is just that energetic brain connection. I think that's the way I am with kids. Kids naturally love me and I love them in return. It's like dogs, right? Dogs know if you're afraid of them. If you're a dog lover, dogs will come up to you. Same is true with kids. I have always loved children. They love me in return. For me, photographing them was never something to avoid. It's exactly what I wanted to do.

Roger Dooley: Oh, interesting. It must be a challenge to get ... Some of your family portraits may have at least a couple of adults and not to mention maybe four kids or something in them. Is it tough to get everybody looking decent at this ... They're looking at it with a decent expression on their face at the same time?

Jeffrey Shaw: That's funny. I work with a very affluent clientele and I for years have said five is the new three. Everybody seems to be having five kids these days. It can be, but again there's some very interesting things that happen when you work with a clientele that I do, this very affluent clientele. The kids are incredibly well behaved and not because they've been disciplined, but because they've been raised to be well behaved. The kids are really well behaved. Everybody's polished. Honestly I've always said I think I'm one of the most naïve people in the world because I work with the most amazing clientele that always show up looking good. They're well put together.

The kids are well behaved. It's really not that challenging. I'm pretty engaging I have to say when I'm at a photo shoot. I consider myself somewhat of an introvert by nature, but you wouldn't know it if you saw me on stage and if you saw me photographing people because I will do whatever it takes to get people's attention. I'm very

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conversational that way and people stay engaged. Yeah, I don't know. The bigger challenge is the environment. I photograph entirely on location. To me the sun is my nemesis, right? I'm trying to deal with an overly bright day and those challenges, but the people I have to say, Roger, are pretty easy.

Roger Dooley: Interesting. Maybe not quite as challenging as what JC Penney photo studio photographer has to deal with. He got six kids or something, although in the studio you don't have to deal with variable lighting I supposed with sun emerging from behind clouds and such. Jeffrey, I read in your book that your first job was a catalog company. I can relate to that. My first entrepreneurial venture was a catalog company too. Mine was in the home computer market way back in the days when the idea of having a computer in your own home was just getting started. What kind of company did you work for?

Jeffrey Shaw: It was my first big job. It wasn't my first job. First off, I've been an entrepreneur my whole life. My very first entrepreneurial experience, which was the first thing I did to make any money, was I actually sold eggs door to door. I lived in the country and I struck a deal with a local farmer that I would collect the eggs and he would get the little cartoons for me. I would go door to door selling eggs, which actually was quite profitable by the way. I did very well with that. My mother owned and still owns at 80 years old, she owns a beauty parlor. That was a gold mine. I would bring over cases of eggs on Saturdays and everybody would buy them.

Roger Dooley: Wow. A captive audience there.

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Jeffrey Shaw: Right. Captive audience. I was a clever entrepreneur at 14 years old. That was actually my first job. As a photographer to what you're referencing is one of my first biggest jobs was this catalog company. It was mail order, right? We're going back, Roger, as you were saying. Before online shopping existed, mail order shopping was a big deal. I photographed, gosh, I don't know, hundreds of products probably for this catalog. They fell behind their payments. They didn't give me money. I was young and naïve and I kept going along. They put the catalog out there. They didn't get the huge surge of business they expected.

Folded. Went bankrupt and stiffed me for 25 grand. Now I'm 20 years old. First year in business. At that point I was paying myself like \$150 a week. That's about all I could scrape out of the business. To lose \$25,000 was just incomprehensible. I've never seen a dime of it. I mean I keep thinking. Every now and then I go into Connecticut State site to see if there are funds ... You know how things in bankruptcy, funds might be sitting. Every now and then I check are there funds waiting for me somewhere and they can't find me, but yeah, I completely got stiffed out of that. Huge learning lesson in your first year in business.

Roger Dooley: Wow. I'm assuming that was in the film days when you actually had to pay for film and pay for chemicals and processing and all that. Not just like your time.

Jeffrey Shaw: It was like three months of shooting. Yeah, it was painful.

Roger Dooley: Well, I guess all things are life lessons too. After that you probably we're a little bit less generous with credit after that one.

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Jeffrey Shaw: Yeah. Exactly. I shouldn't have let them fall behind with the payments. I should have stopped shooting. Yeah, you do. You learn, but I can't say I've never done similar things. I've never been screwed since then, so that's the good news.

Roger Dooley: Jeffrey, the foundation of the ideas in Lingo really sort of began with the evolution of your own photography business. What was the turning point with that when you sort of had the light bulb go off in your head that maybe you weren't doing things the right way or the best way?

Jeffrey Shaw: Sure. After photography school at 20 years old, I returned to my hometown. Now my hometown is Hopewell Junction, New York. You can get a feeling for what the town is all about just by its name. It was a small country town, a couple hours north of New York City. I had very grand ideas. Honestly, Roger, I've always thought and still believe that being a portrait photographer is an incredibly invaluable thing because we create heirlooms and things that people hand down to their families. I approached my photography business in the classic way that I will say most entrepreneurs do and that is backwards, right?

Most businesses are built backwards because entrepreneurs have a great idea, something they're excited about, and they create that business and then they try to fit people into it. It's a classic mistake, and that's a mistake I'm trying to correct in Lingo. That the way to build a business is to really know your ideal customer. Of course, assure that they're where you're are. If they're not, then hey, something needs to shift. It's to understand the lingo, the deepest mind ... The essence. It's more than a mindset. It's their essence. To understand their essence, their lingo and build a business

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for them so that everything about your business speaks directly to that ideal customer.

In my hometown, I got it completely wrong. I went back there with big ideas of being a successful photographer and charging a lot of money. I realized the turning point was when a woman said to me she couldn't afford me. She specifically said she didn't have the luxury of worrying about her children's memories. I realized that you can't sell what is truly a luxury item in a community that isn't sure if they can pay their rent. That was the turning point. That's when for the first time after three years of struggle I realized that I was a luxury product and I needed to speak the language of luxury shoppers, which I knew nothing about at that time.

I grew up very lower middle class. I knew nothing about luxury and affluence. I then set out on a three month quest to understand the psychology and brainfluence if you will of people that went to high end brands. I didn't study the brand as much. I wanted to understand who the people were that bought high end products. Because if I could understand their emotional triggers, which is what Lingo is based on, if I could understand their emotional triggers, I could recreate those emotional triggers and be the photographer of choice for affluent people, and that's exactly what I did.

Roger Dooley: Did that seem a little odd? Did you share this strategy with anybody? I mean saying, "Okay. I'm going to spend a few months hanging out in places where wealthy people shop to better understand them," I would guess that would earn you at least a few quizzical looks from friends like shouldn't you be out marketing your business or taking pictures or something?

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Jeffrey Shaw: Honestly, it's a great question, Roger. It never even occurred to me whether it was weird or not. To be honest, I didn't associate with many other photographers. To me it's just what made sense. It's been interesting how many people have asked me as I do podcast interviews that the surprise of it is they're like, "Well, why didn't you turn to other photographers?" That's I think a key component. I think a lot of people turn to solutions in their own industry. I'm of the frame of mind that your best solutions are outside of your industry. What can you open yourself up to? I didn't turn to other photographers to figure out what they were doing.

Because to be honest with you, I didn't see any models in the photography industry that really impressed me. I just wanted to create my own thing. It didn't seem odd to me at the time. In hindsight, I kind of questioned who that 23 year old kid was and what the hell was on his mind 30 years later I look at it. That's the basis of the book Lingo. This story, by the way, how the concept of Lingo came out, as is often the case, the story that's closest to us and that probably other people could most learn from is so obvious to us we don't see it. I didn't think this was odd until somebody pointed it out to me. They're like, "That is the most unusual strategy for building a business."

I realized that I've built all my businesses that way, and as a business coach, it's a very similar strategy where I teach people to understand the lingo of their ideal customers. It's a process I do. 30 years after the fact it occurred to me that this was an effective strategy that needed to be taught, which is why I wrote the book. Interestingly enough, Roger, 30 years after the fact it's more relevant today than it ever has been because I think your typical consumer is ... They no longer buy into being

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a buyer persona and an avatar. It's not enough anymore. They won't give you their money if they feel like you just get their behavior or they fit your demographic.

They will only give you a relationship of trust and give you their business until they feel like you get them. You know them and feel them at a deeper level. It's interesting to me that Lingo, although it's kind of an older story in my life, it is far more relevant today, which I think is why it needed to be delayed and written now. It's more appropriate now moving forward in the world of entrepreneurship.

Roger Dooley: I think it's interesting, Jeffrey, just because I think few entrepreneurs would say, "Okay. I'm going to take a few months just to do some primary research out in the field," as opposed to saying, "Okay, man. I got to step up my cold calling or my advertising," or whatever the way they generate business is. It's really great.

Jeffrey Shaw: Hey, let me offer you some real facts to this. I took three months. People have asked this. I took three months to reinvent my business knowing I was moving it about two hours away to a new community. I say it. I had a physical studio in my hometown, but I was shifting to working out of my home, but choosing the target market that I was going to work with. It's a more affluent town in Connecticut. It was two hours apart. There was about three months where I'm learning the lingo of this new clientele that I'm heading towards while I'm still maintaining this business that's not doing a whole lot of business anyway in my hometown.

Took me about three months to redevelop myself, launched the business, and in one year, my business multiplied five times. That's the difference between

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barking up the wrong tree and aligning with the lingo of the right people.

Roger Dooley: Can't beat that. I want to get into a more detailed understanding of your lingo strategies, but I thought I'd interject something for our listeners that I found about using the right language that's very sort of nuts and bolts practical kind of thing. I spent years in SEO, search engine optimization, helping clients do better in Google and other search engines. One of the most common mistakes that I saw in business was that they use different language than their customers. Even though they shared this intersection of a product and a need, they often called it different things. In fact, probably the funniest example was I had a big client in the RV industry.

They're one of the biggest manufacturers of recreational vehicles and manufactured housing. They came to me. "Gee, Roger, we're one of the biggest players in the space and we do not appear at all for mobile homes. When somebody searches on mobile homes, we are absolutely nowhere to be found." I have to point out that nowhere on their website, which had hundreds or perhaps thousands of pages, did the word or phrase mobile homes appear. They said, "We can't actually use that because it's sort of a derogatory term. We call it manufactured housing or manufactured homes." This disconnect ...

Jeffrey Shaw: Right. I think consumers don't call it that.

Roger Dooley: Right. Yeah. Exactly. It was a disconnect. Even today, I was curious. That's been many, many years since I was working on that stuff, but I jumped on Google and did a search for mobile homes. I think on the first page of

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results there was only one actual manufacturer. The rest were all dealers and such who had no compunction about calling what they were selling a mobile home because that's what their customers called it. I think that many of those companies are still sort of afraid to use the same language that their customers are using.

Jeffrey Shaw: Yeah. As I always say, when you're not getting the results you want in business, it's either that you're speaking to the wrong people or you're not saying the right things to the right people. In the secret language strategies I refer to, it's a five step process. Words, the actual application of words is the fifth step. This is designed by the way, this five step strategy is designed to be somewhat linear, step one through five. Five is actually words. When I speak of lingo, I'm speaking of it in two components. Like I said, I actually put the jargon at the end because lingo is an essence to me. Teenagers have a lingo. Babies have a lingo.

You know how you've probably have seen videos of like toddler twins can communicate with each other and nobody else understands what they're saying. It's gibberish, right? They have their own lingo. Lingo really is an energetic essence more than the specifics of a jargon, although the specific words are a part of it to your point. They are significant triggers. I actually place those triggers, the use of words, as the fifth step. Yeah, as I said earlier, businesses are built backwards. When somebody goes into business, the first thing that they do is they build a website.

They launch a website, which is loaded up with words, but they haven't taken the time to know if those are the right words to trigger the right customers. Then they wonder

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why. One of the things I talk about in Lingo is the 80-20 rule. That I'm out to buss up the Pareto principle, the 80-20 rule, because what that really says is the rule of the Pareto principle is 80% of your business comes from 20% of your customers. What that's really saying, Roger, is that 8 out of 10 customers are a waste of time. I don't know about you, but we're all way to busy and it's so hard to get anybody's attention in business nowadays. We can't afford for 8 out of 10 customers to be a waste of our time.

Your business needs to speak the secret language of your ideal customer. You're on the same wavelength. They get a lot of people won't. That's how it filters it out and brings the cream of the crop forward and you wind up with a business that hopefully has 90% of your customers are the right customers. That's the goal of the book.

Roger Dooley: Right. Okay. Jeffrey, if the specific language is sort of a later consideration in your process, where does an entrepreneur or even perhaps a larger company or brand begin in understanding and developing that lingo?

Jeffrey Shaw: Well, the first of the five steps which is you can't go pass go until you understand the perspective of your ideal customers. You can think of it as the classic phrase "walk a mile in their shoes," but you literally have to walk a mile in their shoes. You really have to understand the mindset, the essence, the behaviors, the lifestyle. It was a big thing for me to learn the lifestyle. Because when you learn all that, it gives you the words. For example, if you're marketing to an affluent clientele, you don't use words like discount, right, because that doesn't resonate for them. They couldn't care less. They love the word upgrade, right?

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If you understand their perspective, their perspective typically ... When I say they, this is a tricky thing about lingo. There's a commonality amongst your ideal customers. I have an audience. I have an audience that follows me on my podcast. I have a closed Facebook group. I have an email list. I have social media following like all of us do. For the most part, if I were to somehow get my entire world of followers in a room, I think they'd all get along, right, because there's a commonality. I get their goals. I get their challenges. While we are and should be treated and respected as individuals, at the same time there are commonalities in your ideal customer.

I work with affluent. I have to understand these commonalities. What I found is that they wanted upgrade. The priority was not saving money, but they loved to be treated a little more special, right? Once you understand that perspective, you then know the right words. To put the word discount on my photography website would be a complete mismatch, right? If I talk about running a promotion, and I do run a promotion every year for my clients where they pay a significant deposit and I upgrade their account with a \$500 savings, right? There's no discount. I'm not saying, "Pay this money. I'm going to give you 20% off." You prepay a deposit and I upgrade your account with a savings.

Perspective is number one. You can't go pass go until you're willing to ... What I often say, Roger, is without assumption, without judgment. You have to empathetically come to understand your ideal customer.

Roger Dooley: At its most basic level, pricing is a utility. It's a number that a customer can afford presumably, at least if it's done right, and also ensures a reasonable profit for the seller,

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but there's a huge amount of psychology in pricing. I know I've written about it and many folks have. There's actually a couple books on psychology of pricing, but Jeffrey, I'm interested in your take on pricing psychology and how that affects your process.

Jeffrey Shaw: Sure. That's the feel, Roger, or actually this topic around pricing. Honestly, what you and I do in general because we're kind of playing in the same field. You're being about brainfluence and Lingo, I think there's a huge connection here which is what made it so kind that you extended an invitation. I think there's an important thing I think that needs to be said here is that this is not intended to be manipulative or conniving, right? I actually qualify that right in the beginning of Lingo. Because when you start talking about pricing psychology and understanding people's psychology to get them to buy, people can start misinterpreting that you're that kind of person, which I am far from.

What it is whether it's pricing psychology or the entire process that I teach in Lingo, really what this is is an empathetic approach to understanding someone's deepest essence. I personally don't think there's anything more meaningful thing in life than that, right? When we look at our personal relationships, there's nothing more meaningful than knowing what your significant other wants before they even know to ask for it, right? That's how I feel my role is as an entrepreneur.

My goal and the goal for others through Lingo is for people to understand the essence of their ideal customers so well that you are in fact almost a step ahead of them, and you're doing things from a place of empathy, not manipulation. In pricing, it's really important that people

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understand that when it comes to pricing because there's a psychological response to both prices themselves and the visual look of pricing. The way I reframe the whole thing with pricing is that pricing creates perception. If you first understand that, it gives you a tremendous amount of power because you can position any product or service in the marketplace based on how people perceive your price.

If people feel that you're too cheap, there's a whole market of people that will not buy it because the perception is that it must not be good quality and we've all done that, right? We've all said, "That must not be very good. It's so cheap. It's too good to be true." Right? Then there of course on the other end where you have high end, people will perceive it as either outrageous and nobody's paying that, or but if there's evidence that people are paying it, what you wind up saying is, "Well, that's just not for me, but obviously there's a market of people for it." Believe me. I've come across many things in my life. I thought that's just insane.

I can't believe that there's a \$5,000 bottle of champagne. Like so out of my realm of thinking. If there's evidence people are buying it, I'm like, "It's just not for me."

Roger Dooley: Actually wine's a great topic because there's quite a bit of research showing that people's perception of wine is influenced by what they believe the price is.

Jeffrey Shaw: Absolutely.

Roger Dooley: There's a great body of research.

Jeffrey Shaw: The label. I mean I buy by label. I know nothing about wine, but I buy by label. It's like that label feels

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sophisticated enough. Wine's a great example because sometimes you wonder what is ... This is something I say all the time to my coaching clients. I'll say, "People don't hire you because you're the best. They hire you because you get them and they get you," right? I don't know how much of a difference is there between those wines. I don't have a sophisticated enough palate to tell the difference, so I'm not buying on the difference in quality. I'm buying on kind of what gives me ... It's a reasonable price point.

I don't want to tell my guests I bought a \$4.99 bottle of wine, but paying \$50 for a bottle of wine is not my thing. The label is sophisticated. There's other things I look at. Pricing perception allows you to literally position yourself in whatever market you know that your ideal customers are comfortable with, and it should magnetize those ideal customers. This is I think something people get all tangled up when it comes to pricing because most people are uncomfortable with their pricing and therefore they think if I'm too open about my pricing or if I'm too expensive, I'm going to repel people. My feeling is no. Actually it's the opposite.

When your pricing psychology, when your prices are at the right price point, high enough, low enough, just perfect, if your price point is perfect for your ideal customers, how you portray that image, the way it looks influences how people buy. When it's aligned, your ideal customers know that you're for them.

Roger Dooley: It also affects how they perceive your product so that ... Going back to the wine analogy, if at your next party you put a \$50 price tag, not that you would label your party wine, but a \$50 price tag on it, there's actually research using fMRI brain scans that shows your guests would not

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only likely say it tasted better, but would actually experience a better wine. Their brain would light up more because they think it's a \$50 wine. I'm sure that applies too to a service like photography where there aren't sort of absolute standards.

In other words, the thing about wine is everybody's palate is different, and almost nobody except a handful of sommeliers can really evaluate a wine objectively. For everybody else it tends to be a very subjective evaluation. Even sommeliers can be fooled.

Jeffrey Shaw: How would it feel if you went to a party, a beautiful cocktail party on a penthouse in Manhattan, and what was being served was boxed wine, right? I mean this is boxed wine company or wine companies have been battling against because there's a lot of companies that would like to succeed in boxed wine because there is a convenience to it, right? There's an environmental friendliness to it. It's easier to bring to places. I live here on Miami Beach. No glass on the beach. Boxed wine has an advantage to it, but hey, there's no doubt right now even still because we haven't grown as far as ...

No company has really succeeded quite yet on overcoming that mental obstacle of what it feels like to be served boxed wine.

Roger Dooley: Believe it or not, I actually wrote about boxed and affordable wines in a blog for years. There was a period of time when it looked like they were going to take off. People were introducing sort of adventurous boxed wines. Unfortunately it hasn't really happened. There are a few that are reasonably acceptable, but I think for the reasons you described, even though they're super practical

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especially for folks who want to have say a glass a day, you can't open a bottle and have a glass a day unless you go to extreme lengths to preserve it, where boxed wine's pretty simple. That's the whole power perception I guess.

Also, if you want to be not so be fuddled by labels in the store, there's an app called Vivino now. You can just take a picture of the label and it'll give you crowdsourced ratings for wines. It gives you sort of a rational tool to evaluate as opposed to, "Kangaroo, nah, I don't think I feel like Kangaroo wine today." Let's move onto a another little interesting story from your book. There's a little diamond on your business card after your name. Tell us about that.

Jeffrey Shaw: I love the fact that little diamond has followed me for 33 years now. When I was reinventing ... Well, actually I guess I should say 30 years. When I was reinventing my business, it's again three years of struggle. I'm reinventing my business. I'm moving into the high end market, luxury market. Everything I had learned by the way in this strategy, it's all predicated on a single visit to the department store in New York City called Bergdorf Goodman. Bergdorf Goodman is one of the highest end stores you'll ever go in. One of the things that intrigues me about it is that it is smack on 5th Avenue and it's eight stories high.

It's a big building. Very striking and beautiful. It's right next to the plaza. Tens of thousands of people walk by it everyday and have no idea it's there. That's the point. That's the point of business, right? If it's not for you, you would have no reason to know it's there. The whole book of Lingo, one of the opening stories is this visit to Bergdorf Goodman I did as a 23 year old and studying the

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psychology of people that went there. Everything I was saying. Then I was reinventing my business. One of the big changes, one of the lessons I learned from that visit in Bergdorf Goodman is that you can command more respect and a higher price if your business was in your name.

Prior to then, my photography business was not in my name. It was not my name. My name was not the brand. That was something I was changing. As I was reinventing my business, it became Jeffrey Shaw. I was working with an elderly graphic designer who ... I was 23, so he could have been 40 and felt elderly to me. I don't know, but at the time he felt 80. I don't know, but he's an elderly guy. Very traditional thinking. He kept telling me, this little punk kid, he's like, "No. You should be Jeffrey Shaw Photographers. You should be Jeffrey Shaw and Associates because you're going to want to grow and have other photographers."

He wasn't getting my approach, which was as my business grew and of course I expected that it would, I would just keep raising the prices, right? The goal was never to have multiple photographers. The goal was for my brand awareness to increase, which would command a higher price for a little over an artist model. One time in frustration I said to him, "It's Jeffrey Shaw period. Like get the point. I don't want it to be Jeffrey Shaw and Photographers. Jeffrey Shaw period." Sarcastically at our next meeting when he showed up with mocks of my logo, it was Jeffrey Shaw with a round period at the end of it.

I looked at him and said, "I love it. I will always remember what that means that this is my entire mission. It's Jeffrey Shaw period. Just change the period to a diamond

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because that will look richer and we're good." That's how this diamond came to be at the end of my name. I've continued that. I'm barely doing any photography these days. I'm doing very little. Most of my time is spent speaking and coaching others and writing books and all the things that involve around that, but the diamond carried through. It's more subtle today. It's actually the background of my business card. It's the loading sign on my website when people are loading.

For me it's still incredibly meaningful as a statement of saying, "No fluff. No extra," which again also is aligned with the lingo of my clientele. An affluent clientele just wants you to get to the point, right? No fluff. They don't like tricky clever sales techniques. Just get to the point. I found that although my coaching clientele is a broader range, not necessarily all affluent, I still command that respect. The message of the period is still powerful to me.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, it's great. Something else you talk about is growing a community, Jeffrey. Explain how that's important. I would think that some businesses like well, photography I would expect to be just a transactional business. In other words, for some reason I have a need for a portrait, headshot, a family portrait or whatever, so I find somebody, get it done, and then really I'm done with photography for a while. Can you build a community around a business that is more or less transactional?

Jeffrey Shaw: Absolutely. Actually it's funny you should say that because my mindset doesn't allow me to think about business as being transactional. I had a 60% to 70% repeat rate in my photography business. 60% to 70% of my annual revenue was derived from people I worked with previously. A good chunk of that, about 25% of that,

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was annual. They were people I photographed every year. Right now, like I said, I do a very limited number of shoots and they are only for people that I have photographed every single year. I'm just photographing my annual clients now. I just don't have a transactional mindset, and I don't know that any business should have a transactional mindset.

The idea of building a community is ... That's the point. If you have a transactional mindset, your customers are going to feel like they're just a transaction. I don't know about you, that just doesn't feel great. I mean there's places in life that that's fine. The idea of building a community first and foremost, I believe it's a mindset shift. That instead of looking at what you're doing as building a business, look at it as building a community. Because I think as soon as you think about what you're building as a community, so that people on your email list are no longer just names on a list, they're no longer database, but these are your peeps, right?

This is your community. These are members of a community. As soon as you start thinking about it that way, I believe what it does internally for us is it increases our level of responsibility. We take a greater level of responsibility when we think about our people as our community. I'll give you a quick little tip I just did recently. For years my friends that were on my email list, I had them tagged in my CRM to not receive my emails because my friends are not going to buy from me. They get my stuff for free. I don't want to bother them, right? I removed all my friends from my email list.

Then one day it occurred to me, if I'm truly going to embrace this idea of building a community, then

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everybody on my email list is a friend. I should treat them all that way, so I added my friends back in so that I consciously evaluate. Knowing this is going to a close friend, does it feel like me? Does it feel like the person who they know me to be or does it feel like some other salesperson? What about my frequency? Am I emailing so much that a friend would be like, "Okay. You're just annoying me now." If they're a friend, am I not emailing enough so that they feel like I have forgotten about them?

I actually added my friends back in under the premise that everybody on this list should be treated and respected as a friend and a member of my community. I truly believe if you start ... There are practices that you can do in your business. This is the point of Lingo. Lingo is about really getting people. I want to remove the insensitivity that we've seen in business for a lot of years and make the ... Like I said, I don't know that any business needs to be transactional. I believe wholeheartedly, Roger, at my core that entrepreneurs are on the forefront of changing the world.

I believe it's up to us to decide do we want a world that is based on transactions or do we want a world that is based on relationships. I want a world based on relationships. That's why I wrote Lingo. That's what it can accomplish because I want people to have a business. I want entrepreneurs and small businesses to have a business that are less transactional and more relational.

Roger Dooley: I get that. When you talk about building a community, it isn't necessarily that all your photography clients might get together a few times a year or be part of an active Facebook group of your photography clients, but by basically treating them as friends and incorporating

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perhaps friends into the group to just sort of keep you on this.

Jeffrey Shaw: I do have a community. I have a Facebook group for Creative Warriors, right?

Roger Dooley: Right. That's a different emphasis. I get that because I mean an author, I obviously have a community and stay engaged with them, but that isn't really a quite the same somebody selling widgets. Anyway, I think that's really a great point that the more we can treat our customers as friends and communicate with them that way and imply that they're a part of this community, the better off we'll be. I think it's tougher for big brands. This is something that smaller companies and entrepreneurial companies can do I think far more effectively than a big brand.

Jeffrey Shaw: I agree. It's actually one of the reasons why I'm working on trying to speak at more corporations. I have been speaking all these years to entrepreneurs directly, but there's a huge open door I'm hoping ... It's something I'm working on, but I want to be hired by companies to work with their marketing department and change this because there are some brands, not the biggest brands, but there are brands ... Like ManCrates.com is a brand I talk about in Lingo that I love. I feel like a part of the Man Crates community. I bought a lavalier mic from a company for speaking, which I like to bring my own mic when I'm speaking.

You know what? I feel like I'm a friend, a part of the family of this company. They drop me a note every now and then. They literally call me to check in to see if there's any other equipment I need, how am I finding the mic is adapting to all the different audio systems that are out

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there, do I need any of other adapters. It's a mic. I will tell you, buying that mic, which I bought it online from this company, it could have been a transaction. They don't treat their customers transactionally. I agree with you. I think entrepreneurs, small businesses, we might be quicker to pivot. This is the cool thing.

I'm actually working on possibly doing a podcast series on this very topic because I think there's this interesting relationship between behavior of small businesses and what we can learn from big businesses because there are many brands that get things right, but then there's a lot that big businesses can learn from us because we are more relational. I'm actually thinking about if I can get entrepreneurs and CEOs on the same podcast, it might be a really interesting conversation to meet somewhere in between.

Roger Dooley: That's great. I know we've got some big brand listeners, so maybe you'll get a phone call or two. I think this is probably a good place to end things, although I could keep going I think for hours here. Let me remind our audience that today we're speaking with Jeffrey Shaw, photography, entrepreneur and author of the new book "Lingo: Discover Your Ideal Customer's Secret Language and Make Your Business Irresistible." How can people find you and your ideas online, Jeffrey?

Jeffrey Shaw: Just to walk my talk, I don't like to just tell you about me. I want you to get a flavor for what I do and the psychologies that I work with. My suggestion is go to LingoMediaKit.com. What I've put together that is an infographic, a visual representation of all five steps, which is great because we've not spoken about all five steps. Now you can find out the rest. We spoke about

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perspective and price and a little bit of words, but there are steps in between. LingoMediaKit.com will provide the infographic, also the free chapter on perspective, which is not the first chapter, but I think it's the most important. It's the first step. I give that one away.

There's an audio version of the chapter on perspective as well. You can pick and choose. Actually the audio version has sound effects too. It's kind of fun. That's the best place to start, LingoMediaKit.com. Start there and get a flavor on my approach. I'm not hard to find.

Roger Dooley: Great. We will link there so folks can access those great freebies and to any other resources we talked about on the show notes page at RogerDooley.com/podcast. Jeffrey, thanks for being on the show.

Jeffrey Shaw: Roger, thank you so much for having me. I love the synchronicity between Brainfluence and Lingo. Thank you for having me.

Thank you for joining me for this episode of The Brainfluence Podcast. To continue the discussion and to find your own path to brainy success, please visit us at RogerDooley.com.