

## Buyer Sitdown Series Transcript - Senior Director Global Media at Revlon

- Bryan: Lauren, thank you so much for jumping on with me. Can you tell our, what you do, your name, where you work?
- Lauren Wexler: Sure. Lauren Wexler and I work at Revlon as the senior director of global media.
- Bryan: What are your normal day to day activities, like what do you focus on?
- Lauren Wexler: Sure. My responsibility is the strategy planning and buying of all media sites, whether it's print, digital, out of home, television for all the consumer brands within the Revlon portfolio.
- Bryan: How many like sales people, I know you've been in media for quite some time, how many salespeople have been reaching out to you over the years do you think?
- Lauren Wexler: Every year?
- Bryan: Sure. Or in total.
- Lauren Wexler: Oh, in total, thousands.
- Bryan: How do you incorporate what you have to do day to day in all your priorities and objectives with all the salespeople who are trying to sell you something? How do you think about that?
- Lauren Wexler: Sure. I would say there's probably a hierarchy of ones that I'm currently working with, ones that I know that I'm not working with, and then ones that are complete cold calls, and that's sort of the hierarchy, from top to bottom, that I would think about it. The cold call ones definitely get either completely deprioritized for that day, and if I have time at the end of the day, or at night when I'm finishing my emails, I'll read through them and think about if it's worth responding based on what I'm currently working on. Some of them I will either not be able to respond to or some of them I will forward to our agency partners whose responsibility it really is to further evaluate vendors for me.
- Bryan: How do you feel about the people that you don't know that are trying to reach out to you and sell you things?
- Lauren Wexler: Honestly I do feel bad because I would say I'm a pretty empathetic person, so as much as I would want to respond to a lot of these people there is just not enough hours or time in the day, based on how quickly things move and my day to day job. I just don't have the bandwidth to be able to respond to these people.

Bryan: How did you approach it when you first started? How did that affect you?

Lauren Wexler: Sure. Sure. I think that when I first started I definitely paid a little more attention, I also worked on the agency side, so a larger part of my day to day job was responding to vendors who were reaching out to me. I think that the way that the world has moved in terms of how many companies there are from a digital standpoint, the volume of those emails has increased tremendously. Because there's many more places for people to sell, and back in the day it was just like your print and television sales reps, now there's thousands of people that want your money.

Bryan: What frustrates you about it?

Lauren Wexler: Probably the most frustrating are the copy and paste emails I'll say, or the ones that you can literally tell are like, "Dear client at," and they just put your name in. Or, but some of them are completely disregarding how busy you are and I am so not a self-important person, but the ones that you tend to respond back to are the ones that say, "Hey, can I get like five minutes of your time just to give you a quick overview. I know you're really busy."

The ones that appreciate or at least give a nod to knowing that you may not have time for them, the ones that aren't like overstepping that first email or correspondence. Because I've had people say, "Hey, do you have time tomorrow for an hour?" It's like, really? I think if they give you, if they approach it in a way where they acknowledge-

Bryan: Yeah, it's like how do you figure what this week [crosstalk 00:04:06].

Lauren Wexler: It's like, "Delete, delete."

Bryan: It's like, "Are you kidding me?"

Lauren Wexler: Exactly, exactly.

Bryan: What annoys you about it?

Lauren Wexler: I think it's like the disrespect for how many other things we're doing or the amount of other emails we're getting that are just like that, that's the first thing, and the second, and again, not to sound self-important, but my other frustration is probably the lack of respect for thinking that I'm working on things that are not necessarily more important, but in the pecking order of what my daily job is, it's to make our business, create value for our shareholder and increase our market share, right.

There's lots of things on that list, and responding to a cold call email is not my priority, so when somebody comes across as it should be it's frustrating. I think there's a way to get people's attention without coming across like you're not respecting their, what they're getting, what the larger part of their day is made of doing.

Bryan: What is, like so people understand, what is your, like what are you looking for? What are your priorities, how do you think about like, "Man, I wish somebody came out and said this to me," you know? What is it you want in your job? Shareholder value, like I get that, but what is it you're really trying to do?

Lauren Wexler: Sure. Sure. If somebody's going to bring me a product that's going to help me solve a business problem, so if that is helping me reach a new audience or a very important audience in a smart way, and you're going to show me that it's not going to take ten meetings to understand what they're trying to sell me. Then they're also going to come with a clear understanding of my business, what my problems may or may not be, based on some research that they've done, that's publicly available, and then how I'm going to measure those results.

To me that's like a clear win on both ends, and I've seen people do that before. When you don't, when you come in and you're not up to those standards, it's almost like, "Well then why did I take the time to set up and hour out of my day with you if you're not prepared and you don't know anything about my business?" They're not offering me any unique and different.

Bryan: Right. How many emails do you get like say on a daily or weekly basis per solicitations?

Lauren Wexler: I would say, so like cold call emails or ...

Bryan: Yeah, well, why don't we start with like how many emails do you get say daily, about? Now, and then like what percentage of those are like cold emails?

Lauren Wexler: Probably like two hundred, a couple hundred a day I would say, and then maybe one percent would be cold call emails.

Bryan: Okay, so you're getting say only two cold call emails a day.

Lauren Wexler: Yeah, probably. Probably.

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Bryan: Okay. What about phone calls?

Lauren Wexler: Those are probably, there's probably some that go to my spam that I don't get. I would say maybe let's do like five, five or ten, in total.

Bryan: Five or ten. Okay. What about like phone calls, voice mails?

Lauren Wexler: The phone calls are funny. I-

Bryan: How do you think about that?

Lauren Wexler: I tend to get a lot of them and I never, I rarely have time to check my voice mail. Email for me is the best way to ever get in touch with me, and the subject of the email will, it's usually the best way to get to my attention. Voice mails and phone calls to me are like not, those are even lower on my priority list of ever checking.

Bryan: Do you know that JP Morgan and Coca Cola actually cut voice mail for their workers last year?

Lauren Wexler: You know what, I'm not surprised, but I had no idea. It makes sense because I, it is to me it's an inefficient use of anyone's time is to sit there and listen to a voice mail when you can literally email or text me what you want to know, or what you need. I mean that's the way I even engage with my agency guys, I mean we text each other, that's quicker than email.

Bryan: Are people doing text outreach when they don't know you? Or do you go about that?

Lauren Wexler: No, never. Never, never. That's I think crossing the line, I think. I have-

Bryan: Yeah, I know, it's kind of unspoken boundary, right?

Lauren Wexler: Totally, but I have texted with vendors, per say, who I have relationships with. When things are needed or if we're working on a project together. That's like when the relationship is much further down the line.

Bryan: Yeah, I do that too. Like an internal, like we'll text to escalate things to make sure stuff will get seen.

Lauren Wexler: Exactly.

Bryan: What about, how many calls do you think you get a week?

Lauren Wexler: It's so manic, I-

Bryan: Or do you not even know, because [crosstalk 00:08:59].

Lauren Wexler: I wouldn't even know. I wouldn't even know and I'm also not at my desk a lot, and if people don't leave voice mail I won't know that I've had a call.

Bryan: What about LinkedIn or social? What else have you seen people do?

Lauren Wexler: I have beyond a ridiculous amount of LinkedIn cold calls, and I, whether it's email messages that they're copying and pasting because we have two people in common, or they think that I could be relevant to add to their own LinkedIn list. I mean for the most part I tend not to accept people that I'm not connected with somehow or somehow that I think could benefit me at some point in my day to day. There's a lot of random people adding me on LinkedIn.

There's also people that do it when they know I'm going to have a meeting with them or they actually will link, they'll send me a LinkedIn message and then email me with my business, at my business email, to try to set up a meeting. Sometimes honestly that works, because that will get your attention, but if it's just super random and they just assume that I'm on LinkedIn, for the most part I won't pay attention, because I just, you don't have enough time.

Bryan: What about any other creative ways people try to reach out to you over the years?

Lauren Wexler: I mean people have just showed up at our office with like, "Here's a notebook from our company and we're trying to introduce you to it." That is not recommended at all, I will say that. Emails, phone calls, friends of, using, if you're actually friends with somebody that I know, that will work on me, that will always work on me. If you're legitimately friends or know somebody that I've grown up with or worked with before, to me that, and for me as a business professional I always will take as a courtesy meeting, and sometimes those actually work out to be business relationships. I think that's a-

Bryan: What are-

Lauren Wexler: Yeah.

Bryan: Go ahead.

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Lauren Wexler: No, no, no, it's okay.

Bryan: What are some of the worst examples you've ever heard, or you get, when it comes to say email or phone or LinkedIn?

Lauren Wexler: Mentioning, talking to me but mentioning one of my competitors as if I work there, not like double checking who they're actually emailing. I've had that many times. Many times.

Bryan: They haven't changed the name yet?

Lauren Wexler: Nope. Or emailing me something that should have gone to somebody else with a different name, I've had that happen. People that are reaching out to me for something that I completely have nothing to do with at my company, and by going on LinkedIn you can see that I don't oversee IT recruiting, for example.

Bryan: Right, right.

Lauren Wexler: That is a quick delete. Then also for example, I'll give you a specific example. We don't have an eCommerce business currently, if you go on revlon.com you can see that. We send you to one of our partner retailers. When people email me offering to help me on this specific point of my eCommerce business, that's a clear delete or ignore to me, because it shows that they haven't, it's easy to see that we currently don't have that up and running if you go to my website.

Bryan: Right.

Lauren Wexler: Easy things like that that people are lazy and do copy and paste, it's never going to help. Those, that's probably the most frustrating to me.

Bryan: What would like the perfect outreach look like to you? If you were like say, "Gosh, all right, everybody, here's what I want," how would you think through that?

Lauren Wexler: Honestly it would be a very short email, like, "Hey, Lauren, I know you're doing X, Y and Z, I literally want five or ten minutes just to give you an overview of my company. If you think it's interesting we can set up another meeting so we can get into the details." Yes, I need to learn and stay up to date on technology innovation, what are these other companies that can bring, that can offer me new things that I'm not aware of.

I have to pay attention, but I don't want to feel like I need to sit there for an hour with you if it's not something that can help benefit me. If you approach it as a five or ten minute quick chat, quick phone call, it's much less intimidating for somebody like me to put that on my calendar, than like thirty minutes or an hour. That has tended to work with me as well.

Bryan: When you're on the call for five or ten minutes do those calls go over? I mean you can-

Lauren Wexler: Usually not. Usually the people-

Bryan: Okay.

Lauren Wexler: Honestly I haven't had many people that have approached it that way, when they have it's worked, and they usually will say they're very respectful of your time, and are very conscious not to let it run over, and I really, really respect that.

Bryan: They're building trust with you, right.

Lauren Wexler: A hundred percent.

Bryan: Like being consistent, and especially when you don't know somebody, and that's so important.

Lauren Wexler: It's so important.

Bryan: How can they create like an opportunity for you or a benefit? I mean if you like, I think about it like everyone's writing about them to you, right, and you don't care about them, you care about you, right. All they need to do is put a bit and write about the benefit to you and all of a sudden you'd be interested. What could people say, like what as far as benefit or creating opportunities, or how would you think through that?

Lauren Wexler: For me-

Bryan: How should they think through that?

Lauren Wexler: Sure. For me what happens, and again just to be specific to my industry, what gets my attention is people who send me like a piece of research or a tidbit about my brand that I may not have seen. It's going to benefit me because I'm learning something new or they're telling me how potentially they could help fix this specific issue, but not overstepping that I, or telling me that I'm not running something correctly. It's more of, "We're using our

research because this is what my company can offer you and we put in these additional resources to say, "Hey, we've seen this about your brand and we could potentially enhance it by doing this, or fix this by doing this.""

Bryan: How do you define who to res-

Lauren Wexler: Does that make sense?

Bryan: Yeah, totally.

Lauren Wexler: Okay.

Bryan: I mean it's pre-consulting, right.

Lauren Wexler: Okay.

Bryan: It's like, "Hey, look we did all this work and we want, they might have a problem, we could fix it."

Lauren Wexler: Totally.

Bryan: You're interested in it because it's about you, you're not aware of it.

Lauren Wexler: It's about me.

Bryan: It's like new and novel and unique, right?

Lauren Wexler: Totally. Exactly.

Bryan: How, actually I have a question, how do you relate to it when it's like it's not a priority? Right, they're like, "Hey, here's some research," or whatever, and you're like, "Yeah," like I don't care about that? "That's not on my, what I'm focused on right now." How do you think through that? I think we might have lost Lauren. We'll dial back in. Okay, and we're back. Lauren, are you there?

Lauren Wexler: Yep.

Bryan: What do the emails sound like? If you were to paraphrase the emails that you read, that people are sending that you don't respond to, what do they sound like?

Lauren Wexler: A lot of it is too much information that's not relevant to me probably, the one's that I'm not responding too.

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Bryan: What percentage do you think you respond to?

Lauren Wexler: God, I don't even know. The cold calls probably one or two percent of the total.

Bryan: What about LinkedIn, what percentage do you respond to?

Lauren Wexler: I don't really respond, I'll accept them, either I'll ignore or accept at a minimum. Usually I don't respond to any business inquiries on LinkedIn ever, unless they're also emailing me on my business email.

Bryan: What about phone calls, what percentage do you respond?

Lauren Wexler: Never.

Bryan: What if you pick up on accident?

Lauren Wexler: Then, which has happened to me numerous times, I will tell them that it's, so if it's not a good time, which most of the time it's not, I will just tell them that, "I'm so sorry, I thought you were a conference call that I was dialing into or I picked up." Again, "I'm running to a meeting, let's set up a time for a later date. Shoot me an email and we'll figure it out." That's usually what I will tell them.

Bryan: It's the, "Oh, I thought you were somebody else," pickup.

Lauren Wexler: Yep.

Bryan: I've been on the other end of that as a sale person.

Lauren Wexler: I know.

Bryan: You can hear the disappointment in their voice.

Lauren Wexler: I know, I know.

Bryan: As, and it's just crushing.

Lauren Wexler: I'm a nice person, and I again, I hate not being able to give everybody their due time or what they're hoping to get, but I have boss who's expecting twenty projects due within that hour sometimes. You just can't lose one minute and people have to respect that. You have to draw the line sometimes, between nice and business. It's not personal.

Bryan: When have you purchased from say a cold outreach?

Lauren Wexler: It was never an immediate win, I would say for the seller I think it definitely took a lot of leg work and then not giving up. There have been several times where because they did everything I said earlier in terms of starting it right, offering me something new and different, and then I thought it was worth sharing internally with people here and there are several meetings. Again it's them not giving up, even though it may take several months, so it has happened.

Bryan: What would you say to sales managers or CEO's, like to their sales team? What advice would you give them?

Lauren Wexler: I would say just remember that being real will go a long way. To me the most real you can be and unsalesman-esque like, to me is the best advice you can give to anybody who's starting in sales. Because sometimes you feel for people who clearly are straight out of college, they're reading from a script, they're doing something because they've been told to do it and they think it's the right way to do it, but to me it's the exact opposites.

You have to start from the top, and I think just being, telling people to be real, just like if you were to walk up to them in a room, you wouldn't expect them to give you an hour. Right, you would give them a quick five minutes, like "Here's what we do, if you're interested we'll set up a separate time." Or not getting you when your head space is somewhere else, and just act like you're walking up to them in a room, like person to person.

Bryan: Yeah, I think of it like dating.

Lauren Wexler: Totally. Totally.

Bryan: You're just asking for the number. Right, like-

Lauren Wexler: Totally. Exactly.

Bryan: You're not asking to like go away with them for the weekend or get engaged.

Lauren Wexler: Totally.

Bryan: You have to kind of play your cards right.

Lauren Wexler: Yes, take it slow. Take it slow and have patience.

Bryan: Any other parting notes? Anything else you'd like to share with everybody?

Lauren Wexler: Yeah, I mean I think at the end of the day if what you're selling will help the person that's buying it, it's a mutually beneficial relationship, and if you can get to that point with your buyer or whoever you're selling to, that's a win-win for everybody. It's like we need, I need that sales person sometimes as much as they need me, right, because what they're selling me can increase my value in my organization or to my boss, but it has to be at the right time because there's many other things that we're evaluating, looking at, working on, but at the end of the day if it's a mutually beneficial win, it's going to help everybody.

I think, and it's not just you selling me, it's also to me it's like me selling you why should you also put in your resources for my company, and that will come in due time. My best relationships with sales reps or vendors have taken time and they end up being mutually beneficial for everybody.

Bryan: Yeah. Yeah, I mean the, you said something really important, and it has to be a benefit to you. You're there, they're there to help you, right. The communication has to be put in a way that's going to benefit you, the reader, not like, "Let me tell you all about what we do and how we do it."

Lauren Wexler: Totally.

Bryan: Because like, you don't care, because everyone's who cares-

Lauren Wexler: Exactly.

Bryan: Everyone's view of it is themselves, right, like "What's in it for me? What am I trying to do? What are my priorities?" The problem is the person who's sending on the other side of the email or the phone call or whatever, that's their view. Like, "What am I trying to do? What's important to me?" Like whatever, and then they send the email from that lens versus switching the lens to, "What does Lauren care about?"

Lauren Wexler: Exactly.

Bryan: Or what you think she can care about, and how could I potentially help her.

Lauren Wexler: Exactly.

Bryan: Because we have solutions, we have technology, we have products, because they solve some sort of problem, right, they help people in some way. That's

what people need to get to, and that's what we're all about, communicating to people.

Lauren Wexler: That's true.

Bryan: Listen, I really, really want to thank you. I'm sure people are going to love this.

Lauren Wexler: I'm glad.

Bryan: For everybody listening in, we will hopefully hear about what you're doing in the course, and hear about all the meetings that you're going to be getting.

Lauren Wexler: Awesome. Thank you.