

Beth Perl Berman

The Rest is Still Unwritten

For Beth Perl Berman, life was relatively simple. She had been home raising her two sons and facilitating group assault prevention discussions in schools, when business opportunity knocked so loudly she could not ignore it.

In Beth's case, that call to action was an advertisement a friend passed to her for a recruiting position at a local firm. As a longtime recruiter herself, Beth's friend knew Beth would excel in the role given her natural knack for forging deep connections with people.

As she considered her potential new job, Beth envisioned connecting people with better jobs, and thus, better lives. "The work seemed like a great way to help people out and make a difference," she muses today. "It was an opportunity to help others find their way, just as I always had as a mother, confidant, and friend. I'm a big believer in making an impact, and it seemed like a perfect fit."

The reality of recruiting, however, proved a bit different. Beth did get to connect candidates with jobs – sometimes. But then there were the candidates her clients rejected. "I had pictured helping job candidates elevate themselves," Beth laughs. "But I hadn't processed having to turn them away when client HR departments rejected them! My actual job was to focus only on what the client wanted, not on what the individual needed. Far too often, the candidates I'd invested time and energy in helping ended up getting tossed. Even though I was cautioned by the company president that I was 'not a social worker,' bursting candidates' bubbles really brought me down."

After year one, Beth simply could no longer stand rejecting candidate after hopeful candidate. She did not want to be the source of constant dream-crushing. To refresh her spirits, she transitioned to the business development and marketing arm of the business using skills she'd

developed in her highly successful corporate sales and marketing career.

Then, during the 2008 economic downturn, crisis became opportunity. As the demand for job candidates – and, by extension, recruiting services – fell precipitously, the business had to shift away from recruiting. "Nobody was paying for candidates anymore, so we pivoted as a job search coaching business," she recalls. "I became a partner in this business and marketed it on a shoestring. I helped develop, and deliver, our content and our coaching services."

Here, Beth hit her stride as a natural coach for job seekers, adept at helping them market their best selves. She coached them in developing resumes, LinkedIn profiles, and interview skills, all with an emphasis on communicating their value. Mostly, she helped candidates beaten down by the impact of recession and hiring freezes regain confidence in themselves and find their drive to move forward. After thriving in the

role, Beth ultimately launched her own job search coaching business in 2011, setting the stage for her current successful, high-impact business model.

Today, Beth is the CEO of Compellications. Initially founded to help job seekers, it is now focused on helping business leaders, entrepreneurs, and owners build cohesive teams, and deepen their customer base by marketing themselves "compellingly." By helping them articulate their value in a way that connects, Beth helps her clients gain measurable increases in productivity, revenue, and profitability. "Compellications focuses on helping clients communicate and connect in a way that compels the right, best-fit people to buy in, buy, and advocate for your success," she says, drawing on the recurring thread of wisdom acquired in her past successes in sales, marketing, leadership, and job search coaching. "Whether you're an



established leader, a salesperson hyping your wares, or a job seeker looking for your next step, you are always marketing yourself. To influence—internal or external—decision makers, be compelling. To lead others to a desired action, belief or commitment, be compelling. To win, be compelling.”

To this end, Beth offers a variety of trainings and services via Compellications, including its centerpiece, the WHY-based workshops she is certified to deliver. This approach helps people answer one central question: why do you do what you do? “It’s all about focusing on the question, what drives you?” Beth says. “What lights you up and places you in your zone?” She explains, “Articulating and understanding our core drivers is the basis for connecting, inspiring, and influencing others.” Her work empowers people to understand one another through their innate personal makeups. This approach, applied to each member of a team, and directed at ideal clients, is the true game changer.”

Beth is not shy about the secret sauce behind her clients’ success. “Discovering and expressing one’s WHY is the essence of what makes people feel and become successful,” she explains. “My personal WHY is that I am driven, probably to a fault, to contribute and make a profound, positive, rippling impact. I want to make a difference; I want to make my mark. I love helping leaders and teams get clear about themselves and articulate so they reach their true potential.”

Helping clients find and connect around their WHY is a crucial component of Beth’s Compellications™ process. She believes teams and individuals simply cannot win in the current disruptive economy without forging connection. “A sustainable competitive advantage comes from providing compelling answers to the ‘why you’ question—answers that connect others to you and your company,” Beth says. Her mantra, “Lose your value proposition and find your compelling value connection™”, reflects her conviction that every win emanates from deep connection with those you want to influence.

Beth credits her success to capitalizing on her natural attributes and leveraging them, in the same way she teaches her clients to. “I’m told repeatedly that I bring a contagious, sometimes playful energy that draws people out and cultivates trust,” she explains. “Within

organizations, team members connect deeply when they become clear on why they—and the organization—matter. They thrive when their work aligns with what lights them up and places them in their zone. They bond and collaborate when they can see how their leaders and co-workers are driven. When team members are deeply connected to their work, to each other, to what the organization stands for, they become loyal advocates. When you create that connection and openness as a leader—with and within teams and, of course, with customers—you’re unstoppable.”

Beth’s ability to get this kind of traction with teams is a function of her dynamic, bubbly nature. Her deep self-discovery process engages clients, while keeping things fairly light. “I then help my clients’ energized, aligned teams pull together and focus on marketing to their ideal customers and ideal talent,” she explains. “Together, we co-create powerful, compelling, repeatable messaging. And we have fun in the process!”

Once this synergy has been established, Beth guides the client in developing marketing messaging that emanates from the company’s or the individual’s unique perspective, blended with a keen focus on the target audiences. “Looking at their customers, partners, and prospective talent in a new light, clients help write their company’s authentic story in a way that resonates with their ideal audiences,” she says. “The best part is that leaders and teams ‘own’ the language they’ve helped develop. All levels use it to market the company from the inside out™.”

Beyond WHY-based workshops and coaching, Beth’s Compellications services include communications skills training, workshop facilitation, and speaker services, as well as individual coaching. Incorporating lessons learned from her diverse career, she helps clients boost their ability to influence others. From compelling emails and web content, to intergenerational communications, to marketing, to online and offline networking, Beth helps clients clarify and communicate their value and reach, and surpass, their goals.

Offering compelling communications advice, Beth recommends, “First and foremost, zip it up and listen generously. Focus on your intangibles—your inner drives. Focus on the things that connect you to others, others to you, and team

members to each other. Know your target audience and what, in the end, they want. This is the path to relevance. Share knowledge and demonstrate your capabilities. Represent yourself and your company boldly. Be clear, consistent and authentic in all that you say and do. Let your unique energy shine. That's what inspires people to buy in, buy, remain loyal, and refer you."

Beth's unique methodology and perspectives were shaped by her early life in Livingston, New Jersey. All rest on the fundamental belief that attitude is huge—an idea embodied by her hard-working father, Bert Perl. He urged her to do more, dream bigger, and try harder, always modeling a resilient persistence and optimism. "My father always said 'You're a Perl, you're a winner!'" she says. "I didn't appreciate it early on, but that precise mindset has helped me see possibilities where others see limitations."

When Beth was young, Bert owned four shoe stores. "I remember riding in the back of the station wagon bouncing alongside all those shoeboxes," she laughs. "There were shoes everywhere. Even my *grandmother* hawked shoes!" Bert went on to sell land, and later, he sold security systems while promoting his private accounting practice. "He was the quintessential tin man," Beth recounts.

When she graduated from high school, Beth left home to attend George Washington University, where she discovered a love for both Economics and Marketing. She devoured books on advertising and marketing communications, becoming a sponge to soak up all there was to learn. Thanks in part to growing up around her sales-oriented family, she was a natural in the field, and after graduating with her B.B.A. in Marketing, she was recruited into what was then C&P Telephone. She excelled in sales and ascended quickly to managing the highest-billing, multi-million dollar corporate accounts, and later shifted to strategic marketing positions.

Beth refers to her leadership style as authentic above all else. "In anything we do, it's really about finding your best-fit path," she says. "My main themes are authenticity, alignment with what lights you up, and giving wherever you can to make your greatest impact. I believe in letting your true self shine... boldly. I strive to live this way. I want to reflect it in everything I do and demonstrate it in everything my company does,

produces, and represents."

Careful to incorporate the lessons of her past into her present and future, Beth wears a necklace with three gems to remind her of the nature of time, and to honor the balance and importance of past, present and future. The necklace was a gift from her husband, and she considers it her most treasured possession. "From a past-present-future standpoint," she says, "I believe you have to honor your formative experiences, both in your work and in your personal life. Hard things, like the death of my mother, inform the wisdom we develop over time. We need to take the time to work through them, hold onto the hard lessons, and keep them in perspective."

"The present, on the other hand, is all about focusing on 'the now'." This is no easy feat in the age of distraction. "It's so important to be fully present, for our own benefit and, and for others," she says thoughtfully. "Being present, listening generously and connecting to what matters are powerful practices, in our lives as in communications."

When it comes to the future, one of Beth's favorite songs is Natasha Bedingfield's "Unwritten." "The lyrics are framed next to my desk," she says. "The message is that we need to live our lives fully and be willing to experiment and explore."

One extreme example of exploration gone awry was when Beth and her husband, both avid hikers, unintentionally "camped out in shorts and t-shirts, without a cell signal and without provisions" in Israel's Negev desert. They had veered way off course from their planned afternoon route. Spooked by prior warnings about the indigenous hyenas and scorpions, they spent that cold, dark night on the side of a desolate mountain, and the next day trekked for many hours in the desert sun. Attesting to the power of attitude, Beth shares, "Just before our rescue, dehydrated and feeling it was really a matter of life and death, I turned to my husband and said, 'If this is the end, I'm thankful that we've shared a good, adventurous life with few regrets.'" Beth admits, "Looking back, I'm a bit surprised I could stay positive, under such extraordinary circumstances, but I definitely don't want to test it *that way again!*"

Beth's overall philosophy aligns with the song. She shares, "Every moment, we're creating

the words that ultimately write the story of our lives. My advice is: Write your story. Get real and put yourself out there. Stretch. Don't be afraid and don't give up. Make your mark... now. The only real limit in life is time, and the rest is still unwritten."

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About Gordon J. Bernhardt

President and founder of Bernhardt Wealth Management and author of Profiles in Success: Inspiration from Executive Leaders in the Washington D.C. Area, Gordon provides financial planning and wealth management services to affluent individuals, families and business-owners throughout the Washington, DC area. Since establishing his firm in 1994, he and his team have been focused on providing high-quality service and independent financial advice to help clients make informed decisions about their money. For more information, visit www.BernhardtWealth.com and [Gordon's Blog](#).



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