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EPIISODE 52:

Reverse Networking
with Sonia Hunt, Chief
Marketing Officer and
Best-Selling Author



Robert Morier: Welcome to the Dakota Live Podcast. I'm your host, Robert Morier. The goal of this podcast is to help you better know the people behind investment decisions. We introduce you to chief investment officers, manager research professionals, sales leaders, and other important players in the industry who will help you sell in between the lines and better understand the investment sales ecosystem. If you're not familiar with Dakota and their Dakota Live content, please check out their website at dakota.com and learn more about their services. This content is provided for informational purposes and should not be relied upon as recommendations or advice about investing in securities. All investments involve risk and may lose money. Dakota does not guarantee the accuracy of any of the information provided by the speaker who is not affiliated with Dakota, not a solicitation, testimonial, or an endorsement by Dakota or its affiliates. Nothing herein is intended to indicate approval, support, or recommendation of the investment advisor or its supervised persons by Dakota. Today's episode is brought to you by Dakota Marketplace. Are you tired of constantly jumping between multiple databases and channels to find the right investment opportunities? Introducing Dakota Marketplace, the comprehensive institutional and intermediary database built by fundraisers for fundraisers. With Dakota Marketplace, you'll have access to all channels and asset classes in one place, saving you time and streamlining your fundraising process. Say goodbye to the frustration of searching through multiple databases and say hello to a seamless and efficient fundraising experience. Sign up now and see the difference Dakota Marketplace can make for you. Visit dakotamarketplace.com today. Well, I am very happy to introduce you to our guest, Sonia Hunt. Sonia, welcome to the show. We're very happy you're here.

Sonia Hunt: Oh, thank you. I'm so grateful. Thanks for having me.

Robert Morier: It's really a pleasure. And we're here in your hometown, actually. This is the first time we've been on the road.

Sonia Hunt: Welcome.

Robert Morier: Thank you it's new for us. So, we've got a crew that's sitting around and has done a great job in making this look as professional as we could. And you're adding to that as well, so thank you so much. Well, you are a chief marketing officer, a health and wellness global speaker, and a bestselling author. So that is a lot to

pack into one career. I'm really looking forward to learning how you've done it.

Sonia Hunt: Well, I'll tell you one thing. I have Indian parents.

Robert Morier: That is one way to do it. So being held to a certain standard is a way to get it. I appreciate you sharing that. Well, I'm going to share your background with our audience before we get started. And then we really do look forward to asking you some questions. Sonia, as I mentioned before, is a chief marketing officer, health and wellness global speaker, and best-selling author. Her mission is building a world in which everyone thrives by empowering people to create harmony in work, health, and life. Sonia is an advisor to global organizations and executive leaders focused on solutions for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. She's the creator of Three to Be, the holistic health and wellbeing program that guides people to be healthy, be safe, and be well to thrive. You overcame a lifetime of over 32 severe food allergies and chronicled your journey in her number one best-selling book, Nutjob she is also a TEDx talker with over a million views. Over her 20-year marketing career, Sonia has transformed the stories and products of global wellness brands, such as Apple, TiVo, LVMH, and Sephora with whom she won the 2015 Women's Wear Daily Digital Innovator of the Year Award. Sonia holds a bachelor of science degree in civil and environmental engineering from Drexel University in Philadelphia. She is a LinkedIn top leadership voice and a top 100 keynote speaker by Databird Business Journal. Congratulations on all your success. What an exciting career you've had.

Sonia Hunt: Thank you. I'm ready to retire.

Robert Morier: Yeah. It sounds like you should. It's really interesting. So where does this all begin for you? If you think about the start of this career, we'd love to hear how it all came to be.

Sonia Hunt: So, age three, I was diagnosed with severe food allergies, environmental allergies, and asthma. It's the trifecta that I say that nobody wants. I have parents that came from India in the '60s. And they did all their education here, and they decided to have kids here. So, my siblings and I were born and raised in Philly. And of the three, somehow, one was a very sick child. And that was a very traumatic incident that happened when we found out my parents had a dinner party... and they were very famous for having four or five dinner parties a week, if you can imagine. And they had... the kids were in

the backyard playing. Adults were inside having appetizers, loud music. And a plate of snacks, which came out for the kids, had happened to have peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. My parents think it might have been the first time I would have had peanut butter. They kind of can't remember at this point. It was so long ago. But I instantly went into anaphylaxis. And the saving grace was that pretty much, all of my parents were friends who were physicians, and so they knew exactly what happened. And truly, we were off to the ER. And because of that action, that swift action, my life was saved that day.

Robert Morier: Were there others? Did you know anyone else in your family who had allergies or had suffered similar issues with foods?

Sonia Hunt: It's interesting. Immediate family didn't have anyone, not to say that there wasn't any, but when you grew up in India it wasn't as prevalent as it is today in the United States that people actually get tested if something is not feeling right when they... or if they have a reaction when they have food. So, there was nobody that my parents knew of, immediate or friends or anyone who had food allergies, so one of the biggest questions for the doctors was, people can be allergic to food? And so that was not only shocking to learn that, but the two other pieces of information that came with it. There's no cure today. And that was back when... in the '70s. And in 2023, that still holds true. And the second part is, so just don't eat the foods that you're allergic to, Sonia, which if you've ever picked up a package and tried to even read a label, it's equally as difficult today than it was back then. So, it was a real rude awakening of, how do we take care of this child and lives being turned upside down when the one thing that's supposed to nourish you is trying to kill you?

Robert Morier: Yeah. Unbelievable. Well, we're going to focus more on the book that you had written about this... dealing with all of this over the course of your life because it sounds like it wasn't just one incident from your biography as well as what you're inferring here. But if you can take us back to Drexel University, take us back to Philadelphia... which is wonderful that you're from there. Everyone in this room is from the Philadelphia area, so we're all very happy to be interviewing you. But why did you come to choose Drexel, and what was the... was the purpose of your degree that you were looking to accomplish?

Sonia Hunt: Yeah, so my father's an engineer. In our family, Asian, South Asian culture, it's kind of like you're an engineer or you're a

physician. My sister went the medicine route, my older sister. And I guess, I've always been kind of a daddy's girl. And yeah, I chose the engineering route. And that, Drexel, is still one of the greatest schools to go for engineering. And at that time, wanting to stay closer to my parents in case there were health emergencies or anything, I felt like it was really lucky just to have that caliber of university in my backyard, so that way, my parents could come and visit, or they could drop off safe foods if I needed them and I couldn't find them at the university. So yeah, I was incredibly, incredibly happy and joyous at Drexel and really happy that I chose that university. And still, I'm so tied into the university as an alumni.

Robert Morier: Did you end up coming right out to California after school or—

Sonia Hunt: Soon thereafter, I was recruited by a startup, a tech startup, during the dotcom days. And they... I still remember they interviewed me. And then they said we're going to fly you out. And I told my mother, but I didn't tell my father. And I got the job. And I came home, and I said, well, I guess, I'm moving to California. So, both parents are pretty shocked and very worried. Even though I was now post-college, they really took care of everything when it came to my health and well-being for pretty much all my life until this point when I was now no longer going to be 20 minutes away downtown Philly. And all of a sudden, they were realizing, what if something happens when she's on the West Coast? We're so far away. Does she know what she's doing?

Robert Morier: How did you both reconcile that?

Sonia Hunt: I'm not sure we did.

Robert Morier: They're still waiting for you to come back to Philly?

Sonia Hunt: Yeah. So, because of business, I've always traveled to Philly often, so at least I got to see them often. And just culturally, our family is like our own Facebook. We're our own social network. We talk 10 times a day, so that continues on. I'm not sure we ever really reconciled any of that. But on both sides, we really had to let me grow up and let me start to own my health and own the situation, knowing there was going to be ups and downs and hope for the best, considering that we always knew that anaphylaxis was something in my world.

Robert Morier: Over the course of your time in California, at least in those early years, what was that journey like from a tech perspective? I mean, it was an interesting time, obviously, everything going on in the markets and ultimately what came out of it. But what was your tech journey like here in San Francisco and the Bay Area?

Sonia Hunt: I mean, there was nothing like the dotcom days. I mean, it was this beautiful place of young vibrancy, a lot of kids out of college coming here for startups. We were working hard. We were playing hard. You're going out, and dinners, and parties, and events. There was just a real energy about the city. And I happened to work for an organization that IPO-ed, so first real big job out of college now going through a Silicon Valley IPO, which is amazing. I didn't even know what the letters IPO meant, actually. I didn't even know that I had stock options. It was just such an incredible learning curve better than I would say any MBA that I could have gone through because we just learned right on the spot. So, I was really able to take my very structured engineering analytical background, strategic background and mindset, and apply it really quickly into tech because we were building the very first dotcom sites for global corporations.

Robert Morier: Is that how you ended up pivoting into working directly with corporations from a consulting perspective, or was there something in between?

Sonia Hunt: Yeah, no. I mean, I knew immediately from that first position that I took. And I was originally coding as an engineer, came here with an agency. And I was coding these systems. And then I really, I would say, designed my career. I knew early on that I wanted to reach an executive level at some point, so I maneuvered my career from engineering to product management to marketing over time. And that was also a great journey of learning as well. So, the fit was really well when I came here. And then because I've been out here now for 25 years, I have a really big network. And so, when it came time for me to kind of break off and do my own thing, selling back into the places that I had worked or the people who were clients was just a natural transition.

Robert Morier: That's interesting. A lot of our audience is made up of marketing and sales professionals. So, what's the advice you usually give people who are in that field today based on your experience that you had over the years?

Sonia Hunt: Of marketing in general? Yeah, so I think we all see it just rapidly, rapidly changing, even before COVID. I honestly think the CMO job is probably the toughest job out there because you have to be a builder of brands, a growth hacker, well poised with digital marketing strategies every time Facebook and LinkedIn and everyone's changing their algorithms. You're managing teams. There's just so much to know. And everyone's view of marketing is very different. So, I would say to have the main lens that you need to have, is that your internal employees are your true first customer. And I think everybody forgets that because they're so focused on the external customer, that they forget that when you start to really build that kind of beautiful culture internally, that those are your first natural customers who are going to spread the word of your company and your brand.

Robert Morier: It sounds like it could and should have the opportunity as well to eliminate things like turnover and a lack of continuity. That's something that we hear often from the asset managers who tune in to the show, which is by developing their team, it gives them potentially an ability to be able to retain talent. Do you find that that's a byproduct of the work that you're doing with your organizational partners? Is it also to retain people in addition to the marketing side of the brand?

Sonia Hunt: I saw almost every day as a CMO that teams are just struggling. This world of work-life balance is... just that notion is, I think, just dead. And during COVID, we saw all of that right? But even before that for years, we're spending 10, 12, 14, 16 hours a day in the office. And the one thing we're not doing is taking care of ourselves. So, we're asking for so much from our people. And even I, as their boss, was asking for a lot as well, but I kept seeing them struggle in that one place where they were just not taking care of themselves. And if they're not taking care of themselves, there's no performance, there's no productivity. Their mental health is not well. They're not joyous. And then what happens is they're going to move on anyway if we don't help them in some way. So, I saw that. And during the last... during COVID, actually, I did get certified as a coach, such that I can actually use that skill set to not necessarily be bossed, but to be a coach to my people to make sure that, first and foremost, they're taking care of themselves before... then they can actually start taking care of the work that they have to do.

Robert Morier: That's interesting. We speak with a lot of investors who focus on venture capital. And one of the goals of venture

capitalists is that they are investing in private companies. And their developing talent in a variety of different ways. One of the ways that they're doing it is they're implementing coaching. So, thinking about your own playbook... you don't have to give us the secret sauce, but if you could give us a sense of how you're looking at applying those best practices from a coach's perspective.

Sonia Hunt: In my career, we always had a marketing playbook, strategy, execution, how do we get from current state to an optimal outcome. And for anyone coming on the team, they were very bought into how we do things. So that notion was very interesting to me as it also tied into my personal health transformation journey. So, this... I took that and turned it into this notion of a wellbeing playbook. And what if we could now really strategize and dream about the current state of where an individual to a team is with their health and wellbeing, first and foremost, for themselves and then within the organization? And what are those dream outcomes that we're trying to reach? And then think about all those little steps that have to get accomplished to get from one side to the other. That is something that I began developing for my own teams. And it started to unlock a lot of things. In my book, I talk about this Three to Be program, so these three concepts that actually came from my parents. They believed that... I had asked them, what are the dreams that you always had for your children when I was writing the book. And they said, we just... we wanted our kids to be healthy. We wanted them to be safe. And we wanted them to prosper. And I think for them, it meant physical health, physical safety. But now in today's world, you're thinking about whole body. So, you're thinking about physical, mental, spiritual, emotional. So that really applied well as a foundation of a wellbeing playbook for me to say to teams or for leaders to say to teams, you know what? I'm invested in you being physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally healthy, safe, and well. So, this is kind of how it all really got tied together. And so, when I am working with a corporation, whether I'm speaking, or doing a workshop, or a fireside chat, we're discussing, again, the current state of where we are, what's that dream set of outcomes, and how do we get there. And to do that work, you really have to sit down, and you have to know your people. And that is a very big point of friction.

Robert Morier: How do you hold them accountable? Because I would assume a big part of coaching is you're setting goals for people. But it's hard to get people to adhere to them. People get busy. A lot of health and wellness is losing track of things in your life that maybe

should be better for you. So, from a coach's perspective, how are you holding your clients accountable?

Sonia Hunt: Yeah, so you can't really make somebody do work that they're not ready to do. So, in my own practice, if I'm working with someone one on one, there's a lot of pre-vetting to really know, are you invested in doing the work? You're talking about wanting to achieve x, y, z outcomes. Are you actually ready to do the hard work that it's going to take to get there? Because if you're not, then you're just kind of wasting your money as well. And I went through this myself. For many years, I just wasn't ready to put in that hard work. But if you are, then each person, you can hold them accountable in the way that they want to be held accountable. For some people, it's literally a series of nudges on a daily basis that say this was some action in health and wellbeing, action you need to take today. Did you take it? Did you take it? Five minutes left. Did you take it? Some people actually need that. Other people are different. For me, I live and die by my calendar. And I have slotted time slots, you know, time where I am taking those mental health breaks, go to the gym and move, take those walks.

Robert Morier: So, could you elaborate on the connection between employee wellbeing and organizational success? So how can companies measure the return on investment of their wellness initiatives?

Sonia Hunt: Yeah, great question. So let me share a little bit of data first. So, 22 million people in the United States have autoimmune disease. That's one in 10 people. Over 32 million have food allergies, including six million children. And that's approximately two in every classroom. 133-plus million people have chronic health conditions in the United States. That's over 40% of Americans. There's a recent study that 50% of people feel that their mental health has an additional detriment in just the last few years, which is costing us in the United States about \$1 trillion. My comment, you know, statement to executives and leaders is those aren't some other people. They are your employees. And that really has to hit hard because the ROI at some point just doesn't matter. There's return on your investment, and there is return on impact, right? I believe that we need to stop looking at the people in your organizations as transactions. We have to start seeing them as human beings that have problems, wants, needs, and desires. And we have to help them in whatever way. And we already have a lot of data that shows that when people are healthy, and they're joyous, and they're happy, they perform better.

They're at their best. They're productive. We don't need any more. We're going to continue to collect all of that. But what's happening that will continue to happen is that the person now has power to say, you, Mr. Employer, you just don't care about me. You really never have. And you've given me this blanketed set of benefits that don't help me at all because I'm dealing with mental duress, so therefore, I'm just going to leave, and I'm just going to either find it somewhere else, or we're going to start something on my own because this is the most amazing, amazing time of a creator economy that we're seeing.

Robert Morier: What are the most successful programs that you're seeing companies put in place that are addressing those issues where you're seeing, to your point, not a return on investment, but a return on impact? Where are the outcomes really coming across?

Sonia Hunt: Yeah, so I think Lyra Health is doing really well as a platform for mental health and working with big, big top names, Lululemon, Cigna, et cetera. And mental health is just such a big problem, and so they are attacking it from a coaching perspective. You really do need one-on-one help. And they're giving you the ability to have that online whenever you want, or there's... of course, is to meet an actual therapist. Coaching programs, training programs, these are the kinds of things we didn't have before. We had a lot of I will give you a \$50 gym membership every month. And those kinds of things are still wonderful. I think the dinners and the happy hours are wonderful, but we really need solutions like... like, Deloitte actually has an innovation center, which is just about employee wellbeing, where they're doing a ton of research and metrics. And then they're taking all that in house as well to basically test because we're just in the infancy of employee wellbeing. Having speakers, like myself, come and talk... and when I come into a corporation and talk, it's motivational. It's inspirational. But as the engineer, I'm like, I'm going to tell you how to do it. Here's a list of 10 hacks. And try them all because when you find something that you like to do, you're going to take more action. So, the more an organization understands their people and then those problems, wants, needs, desires, we're also going to start seeing personalized benefits. That's something that we are just starting to talk about a little bit today.

Robert Morier: We had touched on the sustainable development goals. And health and wellness is one of them, but so is gender equality and diversity practices and inclusion. So how do you see those two worlds aligned based on your experience working with organizations?

Sonia Hunt: As a child who was sick all her life, I did not have the resources that I felt like I needed. I didn't see people like myself. I didn't have a medical community that understood how to help a young Brown girl with food allergies, severe food allergies, and asthma, and environmental allergies. And that hasn't changed much today. We don't have a lot of data on BIPOC communities and health issues. But the data that we have in terms of mental health, obesity, heart disease is skyrocketing even more than what I was just telling you about the general stats in the United States. So, there is a very big issue of, how do we provide culturally competent health care for these communities that are underserved and underrepresented. One of the things that I do is very personalized programming in corporations for those communities, whether it's specifically for BIPOC women or for the BIPOC community in general. So much of what holds us back from being healthy is tied into our culture, our culture at home and also culturally as Americans and understanding which of things like narratives and limiting beliefs that hold you back from going to the doctor once a year. It sounds kind of crazy, but this is what people in those communities are dealing with. Workplace wellbeing, employee wellbeing, it's just in its infancy. And it really starts by understanding the people within your organization and those needs that they have to understand how you can start to bring in the right resources for them.

Robert Morier: That's interesting. Well, thank you for sharing that. Well, as I said before, most of our audience are financial services professionals, so I know they're hearing more about this at their employers from the largest to the smallest. So, as you think about the people in your life who have impacted your career, who are the mentors that you look back on and think that it really wouldn't have been the same without them?

Sonia Hunt: Yeah, definitely, that first company moved me out here, there were many there. Incredible group of people, probably the best cultural environment I ever worked in. It was very loving, very caring about the employee and the employee's needs. And that, to me, was true healthy leadership in action. So, there are definitely some bosses earlier on to my road as well to CMO. I have to say even in my own family, they're very strong, opinionated women and are just brilliant and bright and encompass like a Wonder Woman, can do it all, can work, can take care of the kids, can take care of the household. And we're not afraid to show the world just who they are. This is me. This is how I live my life. If you don't like it, oh well. And for a little kid who

was sick who never shared that I was sick because I just didn't want anybody to know because I wanted everyone to just like me... and behind the scenes, I was crumbling. To see all that in action was very empowering. But it took me many years to actually then put mine into action. And that's why my book cover looks the way it does, because it's a representation of me showing the world that I had it all together. Here's this CMO in tech speaking here, doing this, leading big teams. She has it all together. And inside, everything was just crumbling.

Robert Morier: So, if you took yourself back to Drexel University and you were in the classroom listening to someone, what kind of advice would you want to hear, would you have wanted to hear then?

Sonia Hunt: I would say a few things. So, for sure, the one thing we've always heard, you only get this one life. I mean, it truly, truly is just so on the money. This is the one vessel you get. And to treat it with the utmost love and care and respect for the long run is definitely one thing I wanted to have somebody really make me understand. I think the second thing is really going inward to understand your needs and finding the courage not to be afraid to advocate outward for those needs. That's so important. We don't teach that at all. I say we get one health class in school and then the end. We never have it again. We don't know anything about our body systems. We know nothing, unless you take a lot of YouTube or go to medical school or—

Robert Morier: Or get sick.

Sonia Hunt: Or get sick. Exactly. So, they say that people with food allergies are like MDs because you do so much research. I did so much research, and talked to doctors, and talked to other people, and talked to other people in the medical community. So going inward to really understand your needs and not being afraid to share them with not just your employer, with everyone because you need the help of community throughout your life. You need that love. And you need that support to get through the hard times when they come.

Robert Morier: Something we address often also on our show is we speak with a lot of emerging managers, early-stage companies. And a lot of times, they're trying to develop a culture. They're trying to build a culture from scratch. And they'll get asked, how would you describe your culture? So, from your perspective, how do you create

a culture? How do you create a good culture that incorporates many of the attributes that you've talked about today?

Sonia Hunt: Yeah, so I'll go back to removing this notion of power, transactional relationships, and changing it to human-to-human partnership. We're here toward a common goal, to work toward common goals of building this product, of growing this business, et cetera. And when you start off at that foundational level while also each person, including the leader, really going inward and thinking about, what works for me? Like, yeah, it would be great if I had time to get in a workout every day. Or it would be great if I had a quick mental health break or go to this appointment or a flexible schedule. What are your needs? And coming together and really talking about them openly as much as you're comfortable, I would say... because not everybody is comfortable with that. But the more you begin to really dig deep and understand people's problems, wants, needs, and desires, now we're starting to build a culture where people can see each other as, oh, yeah, this is Rob. And Rob's got this and this going on. And so, if he can't be here today, maybe I'm going to pitch in and help out on a project or something. Or maybe tomorrow, I have to head out of the office early because I have some kind of family emergency. But instead, back in the late 1800s, when we came up with this eight, eight, eight hours of work, play, and sleep, that all just cracked open. I think it was always going toward blowing up. And then over COVID, it did because nobody has these conversations. We kind of weren't taught to. There has been this big power play going on in the workplace, and it just... it's canceled. It doesn't work anymore.

Robert Morier: A lot of our audience are sales professionals, so we've talked a lot about health and wellness and balancing it all. But many of our audience members are traveling, so when they're listening to this, they're going to be on the road. They're going to be in a flight. They're going to be in the car. So, what's the type of advice you give folks who are trying to balance not just work and home, but also the external demands of the job?

Sonia Hunt: Small daily steps for the big transformation. Be intentional about your whole-body health. When you're traveling... and I travel so much as well. And I know you do as well. So, it's so hard when we put all this pressure on ourselves, like, oh, I didn't get to the gym. Oh, I didn't do this many steps or whatever. But if you're intentional, if you set an intention with yourself to say just every day, I'm going to take some small step to improve my overall health and

wellbeing, my whole-body health... it could be a walk after you get off a flight. It could actually be that you get to the gym. It could be the choice of eating a much healthier meal on the road than you normally would. So, these are these small steps, and they all count. Sometimes, again, I think we put so much pressure on we have to take that schedule, that rigorous schedule that we had at home and take it on the road. And it just doesn't work. You have to be really flexible. So small daily steps. And if you continue every single day, it's going to just become like natural habit. So, when you are traveling here and there, you're going to be like, OK, I know the first thing I do when I get off a flight is I'm going to go to my hotel and then take a 20-minute walk. And that just makes you feel good.

Robert Morier: One of the aspects of the job, particularly, from a sales perspective, is asking for the business. And that can be hard for people. It's one thing to get the meeting. It's another thing to actually sit down and say, I want the business. So, what are some of the advice that you give from a coaching perspective to encourage that assertiveness in the sales process?

Sonia Hunt: That inner work is just so important and that working on that self-awareness, that self-regulation, the resilience, the adaptability, the humanizing. And everyone deals with imposter syndrome. Literally, everybody does. So, if anybody thinks the rest of the world doesn't, know they're wrong. And it can be intimidating to really put yourself out there. And I think this is one of the trends that we're going to see more and more of is that at all levels... especially sales because it's a high stress job... to really spend the time to do the inner work to be able to go with that flow and be able to put your best self out there. And if it didn't work this time, you're going to get up and you're going to try again. And it might work the next time. But the biggest step is actually just starting to believe in yourself. And you can't believe in yourself, unless you start to do a lot of this inner work. And when I call it inner skills, it's really what we used to call soft skills, all of that development. You already know all of your sales sheets and pricing and all that kind of stuff, but it's really, how do you best provide that value to somebody such that you can make that connection to turn it into a deal? And again, if it doesn't work out, how do I quickly bounce back and bounce forward in that sales cycle? And that's all inner-skills development.

Robert Morier: Very interesting. Thank you. Last question for you. One of the challenges, also, of the sales role is making connections and making them quickly. So, we used to talk about it as networking.

But you're trying to build a rapport with someone that you may not know that well. So, what are some of the helpful hints that you give people who are trying to build connections with people as it relates to business and business development?

Sonia Hunt: We're in a world right now of what I would call reverse networking. So, if networking is going into a room and transactionally wanting something from someone that you might have your eyes on... that's the CEO of this company, and I want to sell into them, et cetera. Reverse networking is... just think about it as you're always giving away value without really wanting anything in return. And you see this a lot with content creators. You see this a lot. I do this in terms of coaching when it comes to social media. All the value that I'm working with people one on one, I'm just giving it away for free because the big thing that people don't know how to do is to actually piece together then how to do it from themselves. So, I would say think of reverse networking as let me go in. Let me build that human-to-human connection and relationship. Let me just give value, value, value, knowing that now this is the start of a process. And maybe at some point, we're going to come together in a deal. But it takes that transactional component out of it.

Robert Morier: I think you just titled our episode Reverse Networking with Sonia Hunt. Thank you for that. You've made my job a little easier and my partner, Sasha's job a little easier as well. Thank you so much for being here today. This was a wonderful conversation. We learned a great deal. Congratulations on all your success. We really do wish you nothing but the best.

Sonia Hunt: Thank you. Thank you so much.

Robert Morier: If you want to learn more about Sonia, please check out her website at www.soniahunt.com. You can also find her on [LinkedIn](#). You can find this episode and past episodes on [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), [Google](#), or your favorite podcast platform. We are also available on [YouTube](#) if you prefer to watch while you listen. If you would like to catch up on past episodes, check out our website at dakota.com. Finally, if you like what you're seeing and hearing, please be sure to like, follow, and share these episodes. We welcome your feedback as well. Sonia, thank you again for being here. And to our audience, thank you for investing your time with Dakota.