

## Agency For Change Podcast : Boyd Ober, President & CEO of Leadership Resources

### **Announcer**

Welcome to Agency For Change, the podcast that brings you the stories of people creating positive change in the world. We explore what inspires these changemakers, the work they're doing, and how they share their message. Each of us can play a part in change, and these are the people who show us how.

### **Lyn Wineman:**

Hi there. This is Lyn Wineman from KidGlov and welcome to the Agency for Change podcast. Our guest today, Boyd Ober, is a leader, a coach, an author of a great book called *Magnitude*, and a serial entrepreneur. Today, we're going to talk about his work through Leadership Resources, a company that develops high performing leaders and creates cultures of accountability through strategic planning, EOS implementation, leadership development, and a proprietary technology called Accelerate that helps clients achieve their larger vision. Over the years, Boyd has served as my personal coach and mentor, and I'm proud to call him a friend. Boyd, how are you today?

### **Boyd Ober:**

I'm fantastic, Lyn. Thanks for having me today and thanks for calling me a friend. It means a ton.

### **Lyn Wineman:**

Oh, absolutely, Boyd. We go back a long ways. I'd love to get started here by having you tell me more about the work you're doing with Leadership Resources.

### **Boyd Ober:**

Okay. Awesome, Lyn. Thank you. And congratulations on all your success at KidGlov. I just love what you're doing and the impact you're making around the country. I love to follow you on social media and see what you're doing, and obviously you are an agency of change. So congratulations on that.

### **Boyd Ober:**

Leadership Resources, we've been around 18 years, Lyn, and that's just the journey, it's just fun. You think about what we started out doing 18 years ago and fundamentally what we're doing today, at the core, it's still the same thing. But how it's done has changed so much over the course of the last 18 years. What we really do is, we help leaders in companies achieve their vision. And that sounds simple, but it's not. And the other factor is that everybody's vision is different and what they mean by that is different. Companies can have a vision about where they want to go, but the leaders within a company can have those visions, as well as for what they want for their career.

### **Boyd Ober:**

What we really are working on, Lyn, is helping companies create that vision of where they're going, execute upon it, and then help the leaders align with that in growing themselves as leaders to accomplish more in their roles.

### **Lyn Wineman:**

Boyd, hey, first of all, thank you for that shout-out in the beginning. I should tell people you were with

me and on the ground floor when I created KidGlov. And I'm not sure we would've gotten off to such a great start without you, so thank you so much for that.

**Boyd Ober:**

You're welcome.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Now I know you are a very talented person and you could have gone a lot of different directions with your career and your life. What inspired you to care about developing leaders and creating cultures of accountability?

**Boyd Ober:**

Wow. That's a deep question and I don't know that there is that epiphany out there, Lyn, that says I woke up one day and said, "This is what I'm going to do." I think there's a lot of things that are at the core of your fabric, and I look back in terms of when I was growing up and when I had the opportunity to do different things, before I even knew that this was a business. I grew up and I had an opportunity to coach young kids when I was in high school. I would coach athletics, and I enjoyed that a lot and that's what I thought coaching was. And I thought about other times when I was around children and teaching kids how to tie their shoes and things like that. And some of those stories, some of the things that I look back at now and say, "I'm in this business because all that helped form who I am."

**Boyd Ober:**

But a few years ago, and I would guess it maybe was around 1999 or 2000, a gentleman by the name of Bob Bowerly pulled me aside at church and said, "Boyd, I've got this idea and I really want you to be involved with it." And without even listening, I said, "Bob, I don't want to sell Amway." And we laughed about it. And nothing against Amway sales and the network marketing, it's great stuff, but I just wasn't interested and I just didn't want to do it. And he goes, "No, Boyd, it's not Amway. It's something else." And I said, "Well, Bob, I'm really happy. I'm really enjoying what I'm doing. No thanks."

**Boyd Ober:**

And I give Bob a lot of credit because he was persistent. And over the next two, two and a half years, he kept asking me. And finally I said, "Okay, I'll look." And I looked at it and I said, "Well, I'm not really interested. I'm not a human resources guy. I don't really know what I'm doing there. It's not my background. I'm an economics guy." He says, "No, I think you'd be really good at this."

**Boyd Ober:**

The long and short of it, I tested it one day and I was testing this concept called personal productivity. And I did it for a while. We'd meet every couple of weeks. And all of a sudden, I started seeing how it was impacting my life. And I was becoming a better leader. I was communicating better with my team, but more importantly, I was putting better priorities in place for my family. And that started tugging at my heart. And when it starts to impact you, it's kind of like the guy that was the president of the Hair Club for Men, that's the reality of it. When it gets to your heart, it becomes part of you. And I think that's what's happened, Lyn, it's just the passion has grown through how I've seen it impact not only myself, but the people we've been fortunate enough to be engaged with over the years.

**Lyn Wineman:**

It's really neat how these skills are learned maybe in a work setting and with work goals in mind, but they

certainly do transfer over into other areas of life which may be even more important. Boyd, that's one of the reasons I really wanted to talk to you because I want to talk about how your work is making a positive impact on the world. Can you share some examples or some stories about how that's happening?

**Boyd Ober:**

Oh, we have been blessed again and again over the last several years of working with people. And I think you're right, Lyn, we all think about it from the work standpoint, that we really want to grow what we're doing in work. And that is important, that's a big factor in all our lives, but when you start impacting how people are parenting, unintentionally, or how they're relating from a spouse standpoint or a community involvement standpoint, that's when behavioral change really starts to happen.

**Boyd Ober:**

At the core of what we do, we help people create processes to be in a world of continuous development. So when they think about what they want to do in life, and it's different for everybody, it's about how you change your attitudes and behaviors to be more successful. But most importantly, how to create a mindset of continuous development. And that's a growth mindset versus fixed.

**Boyd Ober:**

I think about a couple or three people when you asked that question. I think one of the first ones that I ever had involvement with, the first client, is still a client today. His wife came up to me probably three or four months into the process and she introduced herself and said, "Whatever you're doing with him, please keep doing it." And this is a great individual. And I said, "Well, tell me more." I'm curious at that point. And she says, "He's becoming a better husband, a better dad and I know a better business leader," and that's what really tugged at me at that point, and this was a great person anyways. So I mean, just the fact that you're getting better.

**Boyd Ober:**

And then the other one, ironically, was somebody who was just in our office this morning and has completed a two year process with us, came back in today and was talking about other things. They were going through what we call the success chain, and their eyes just light up. And they've become a community leader, for change, within the great community of Lincoln. But they said they're using this at all their talks and they're using this in how they develop their people and how they communicate with their spouse. And this individual's wife was in the room with him and she got really excited and she goes, "Now I see it. You've been doing this with me and now I see it and I see how it's impacting you."

**Boyd Ober:**

And that's the greatest gift we can give, when we really start seeing change in people, not overnight, but over the course of time because then it really becomes a habit.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's fantastic. I love that story and would have to say I've had similar experiences. So Boyd, you've been in this for 18 years. I remember celebrating your 10th anniversary at Leadership Resources with you.

**Boyd Ober:**

You were there.

**Lyn Wineman:**

It was great. It was a great party, a great day. What's next for you and the company?

**Boyd Ober:**

Oh my goodness. You know what? First of all, you think, Lyn, in terms of all the things that are happening right now in the world that we're in. And I kind of digress a little bit from your question, but the challenge that we have in this world is we're one of instant gratification. And so you think about what we do for a living, we're not in the instant gratification world. When you really start to change behaviors of individuals and change cultures of companies, that's not an instant thing. It takes time to do that. And when you're in a world of instant gratification, things can be kind of frustrating because you go up a little bit and you maybe fall back down, and you go up a little bit and you fall back down, but maybe you don't fall as far.

**Boyd Ober:**

We've really got to work with people to have that mindset, from a standpoint of looking at the bigger picture rather than the instant. Now you combine that with what's going on with the COVID issues and the tensions socially, and say, "How are we helping organizations and individuals overcome all those challenges at the same time when they're trying to create better companies, bigger companies, get through this, and create better leaders?"

**Boyd Ober:**

What we've had to do, Lyn, is really make sure that we were meeting people where they are. And we had to step back a little bit and make sure we were connecting with people virtually. So we've expanded our virtual delivery, and that's, quite frankly, a great opportunity as well, and I think every challenge gives us an opportunity.

**Boyd Ober:**

We've expanded our virtual delivery. We've also expanded our leadership content. We wanted to take this time during this pandemic to reallocate some resources and create new and fresh content information that could help leaders think differently, act differently, but still use our model of behavioral change. And I think that's been really critical. So that's exciting, Lyn, to have the opportunity to do that.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's great. I agree with you, every challenge can be flipped to an opportunity, right? You just have to do embrace it.

**Boyd Ober:**

Yes, some of the greatest companies and some of the greatest opportunities. You look back at the last recession, some of the greatest companies have come out of those challenges. And I think when I sat down with some of my entrepreneurial friends early on, I said, "What are you thinking?" They said, "Wow. We think this is a great opportunity." Now, it's gone on longer than anybody really hoped it would, right? We never hoped this when we got in it. In the same sense, those companies that are looking at what's next and planning forward, are not saying, "I'll wait to see what happens," but actively engaging in their strategy, their operational execution, and their development of people. They are coming out stronger than those that are sitting back and saying, "I'm going to wait to see what happens before I do

anything." Because once you do that, it's going to actually set you back six, twelve, nine months. It's that echo effect.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I hear what you're saying. Boyd, you have gone through some of the challenges your clients are having, some of the kind of overarching challenges we're seeing in the world right now. What are some other challenges that you face in your work, but also as someone who leads change?

**Boyd Ober:**

It's an interesting question, Lyn. I mean, part of my mindset, unfortunately, is I wake up and say, "What's next?" and I don't always dwell on challenges. I think one of the core things that we always have in the world, if you want to go back to that, instant gratification, and then I'll combine that with the belief that people can really change. And I think sometimes when people get to that level of success, and I'm not saying everybody's there, but where I'm going is, sometimes people get to the place they are and don't realize how many challenges there are, how many things they had to overcome during that time to get there. And so they go, "Well, these people need to figure it out on their own."

**Boyd Ober:**

The belief that people can intentionally change behaviors, I think, is a challenge in this world. Some say, "Well, they just need to be able to do it themselves." Then I looked back and said, when I hired a coach, and now we do coaching, but when I hired a coach, that challenged me to get out of my own way in ways I hadn't thought about. And when I looked at a different operational system, it challenged me to think differently. Rather than chasing shiny objects, to focus on what I could do and go after it and make it happen.

**Boyd Ober:**

Overcoming a fixed mindset and overcoming instant gratification are two really critical things that we need to do. And I suffer from it as well. Nobody really wants to go through that pain of change, but yet that journey of going through it and what you learn from it makes you that much better. I think some of the challenges that we've had to go through to try to figure out a way to create a scalable company versus a project company have made us better today than we could've ever imagined 18 years ago.

**Boyd Ober:**

So those are the things that I always challenge people on. Let's think about the future, but realize there's going to be highs and lows to get there, and we have to have faith that we're doing the right things along the way.

**Lyn Wineman:**

So Boyd, you don't jump out of bed every morning and say, "How much pain can I endure today?"

**Boyd Ober:**

I don't know if I look for pain, but at 56, Lyn, at 56, when I jump out of bed, there are pains. I just don't think about them.

**Lyn Wineman:**

In your knees, in your back. I get that. I get that.

**Boyd Ober:**

I don't think a lot about aches and pains, Lyn, but I am blessed and I give a lot of credit to my parents and my family. I'm blessed and I don't dwell on the bad things, but hey, I'm blessed with the fact that I get to wake up with a smile on my face and say, "Let's go." And my dad at 81 still gets out of bed every day at five o'clock and says, "I get to do what I love to do." So it's a mindset.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I think you guys are still golfing with your dad too, right? Did I see some golf pictures?

**Boyd Ober:**

Yes. I just had the pleasure, for the first time since my kids were adults, that my two boys and my dad and I all played a round of golf together.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love that you do that.

**Boyd Ober:**

Oh my goodness, Lyn, what a joy. It was so much fun. And then yesterday, I actually got a chance to go up and see my mom. I hopped in a private plane, a little small Cessna plane, a four-seater.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Oh wow.

**Boyd Ober:**

A friend of mine put me up on the plane. He wanted to do a podcast interview. So we did that, and we went up and got my mom in the plane with us.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Oh my goodness.

**Boyd Ober:**

She had never been in a small plane, and we're up high.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Did she love it?

**Boyd Ober:**

She loved it. She loved it. Yeah. So yeah, pretty cool.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's fantastic. Boyd, what advice do you have for someone else out there who's looking to lead positive change in the world?

**Boyd Ober:**

Well, there are a few different things. Number one, you've got to believe in yourself. You've got to believe in the impact that you can make. And you're not always going to be right, but you've got to

believe enough in yourself and believe in the opportunities to take a chance. If you want to meet somebody, pick up the phone and call them, or send them a note and say, "I'd like to learn more about you." Just believe in that opportunity, that you can be an agent of change, to go back to what you really talk about in this podcast.

**Boyd Ober:**

The other one is, I'm going to go back to a buddy of mine, and I think you had an opportunity to listen to him. His name is John O'Leary. Do you remember John? Burned on 90% of his body and should not be here. Should have passed away at nine years of age, in that tragic accident. But his latest book is called *In Awe*, A-W-E, *In Awe*. And *In Awe* is really all about living life almost to the point that you're a child again, to look at things like, "Wow, I'm fascinated by that. I get this opportunity and the world is crazy cool. Let's make it happen." And we've already won the lottery of being here.

**Boyd Ober:**

So Lyn, you were asking earlier what my license plate is, so I'm going to give you a little bit on this one. My license plate, if you see it around Lincoln or Omaha or anywhere, it's 1IN400T, and the T stands for trillion. In John's book, *In Awe*, he talks about the mathematical odds of you being born. So you take your dad and your mom and those two cells coming together, the mathematical odds is 400 trillion, 1 in 400 trillion. So we've already won the lottery, are we making the most out of our opportunity? And we all had that the same. Now, there's more challenge for some than others because of the situations they were born into, but in the same sense, how are we making the most out of our opportunity? So that's what it stands for.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Thank you for telling me that, Boyd. Because Boyd's got a license plate behind his head here, and I've been trying to guess what it says and I think I wouldn't have gotten there. So thank you for saving me that angst and frustration.

**Boyd Ober:**

One other piece of advice came from a great movie, I love the movie. It was called *Pursuit of Success* with Will Smith. And I don't know if you remember the scene, but it was when he had a bad day and he's up on the rooftop with his son. And his little boy is playing basketball. And the dad, Will, starts saying, "What do you want to be in life? What do you want to be?" And the little kid, all hopes and dreams in awe, right? He says, "I want to be an NBA player." And Will takes the ball from him and says, "You got to focus on what you can do. You're not going to be an NBA player. Nobody makes the NBA," and basically breaks the little kid's heart. And he sees him kind of emotionally go down.

**Boyd Ober:**

And at that point, the movie, it was scripted well, but they come back and Will says, "I'm wrong." And that's a great thing about a leader, when the leader could say I'm wrong. But he said to his son, "I'm wrong. Don't let anybody ever tell you you can't be something that you want to be. You go after it." And I think that's the last piece of advice I would give. If you dream it and you want to do it, don't let anybody tell you can't do it. Work with somebody that believes in you and says, "How are we going to make it happen?"

**Lyn Wineman:**

Boyd, that's a great story. And thank you for reminding me of that part in the movie. That's a great movie.

So you know I'm a marketing person and I have to ask you at least one marketing question during this podcast. If we bring this all back full circle, how do you get the word out about what you're doing at Leadership Resources or with any of your other ventures?

**Boyd Ober:**

I think that's really my venture, Lyn. You talked about different things, a serial entrepreneur, and the reality is that I was trying to find myself and trying to find that groove, and Leadership Resources is my venture. And in 18 years of going after this, it's a lot of fun. We've got a great team of 20 people and we're growing. The website is LRsuccess.com. LRsuccess.com.

**Boyd Ober:**

The way we believe to market is telling stories, so white papers and stories. And then through a little bit of word of mouth, our clients are our strongest advocates. So we get a lot of referrals. We get a lot of introductions from our clients, but we're really looking to use our website and our marketing to write white papers so people can understand it. To do stories of success with people, like the two I mentioned earlier, but really telling those stories of how people can visualize their change.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Stories are really powerful and this is probably a good time for me to mention too, that I am rereading your book, *Magnitude*, and it's a fable in the kind of Patrick Lencioni style of fable. I'm just getting to the last chapter, Boyd, and I almost peaked ahead to see what Glen said to get Jack to change his attitude. So there's a tease for anybody that wants to read that book. It's a good and quick read, but what I love about a book like that is, I think you remember more by getting involved in the story and the personalities of the people versus just a list of bullet points. Because you probably could have written in one page, "Here's a list of bullet points of what to do," but I'm probably not going to remember your bullet points, but I will remember your story.

**Boyd Ober:**

It's really well said, Lyn, because when you think about it, there's an infinite amount of knowledge. I can Google anything today. And we think that because I watched a YouTube video or I got to five points of the 10 points of success, that that's going to apply to me directly. And the reality is, it's not. My life, my conditioning, my experiences are different. So those 10 points don't really make that big a difference. It's more about how you take those points and reshape your mind to think differently and then have a process in place to successfully make those habits. And that's what we want to do for individuals, that's what we want to do for companies, help them create the culture, the habits of success that work best for them. Life's not cookie cutter. It's got to be for you and it has to be what's most important to you.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Fantastic. Boyd, one other thing that I love, I love motivational quotes. Could you give me a Boyd Ober original that I could put on my wall?

**Boyd Ober:**

Okay. That you could put on your wall? Okay, let's go with one here. I'm going to give you two, Lyn. Is that okay?

**Lyn Wineman:**

Oh, fantastic bonus. Absolutely.



**Boyd Ober:**

I just talked about this one a little bit in terms of how we structure it, but we all want success, right? This is a part of the quote, we all want success. Success is a feeling. So I say, "The path to success is driven by consistently adapting your habits to your desired results, and it's enhanced by your ability to see your progress, but supported by your authentic accountability." And what that all means is, you've got to have systems in place to hold yourself accountable because that's the only person that can. You want to be able to see how you're doing along the way. And once you get there, you've got great success.

**Boyd Ober:**

And the other one I'll share with you, Lyn, is one that is kind of a play on words, "Most people don't set goals for their fear of failure, while great leaders set goals for their fear of failure."

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's deep. That's deep.

**Boyd Ober:**

That's deep. Most people don't tell me I'm deep, Lyn, so thanks for saying that.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I like that one. The fear of standing still to me is a greater fear than falling down. At least if you fall down, you can fall forward.

**Boyd Ober:**

That's why you're a great leader. I think you know that when I got into this business, I thought everybody set goals, but then I found out 85% of people don't set goals. And I'm like why not? Well, they don't want to fail. They don't want to not accomplish something. And then there's a guy like Elon Musk who says, "Whatever your 10 year vision is, your 10 year goal, try to get it done in six months." Now, you'll probably fail doing it, but you'll be so much further ahead by doing it that way. He has no fear of failure, he has a fear of not setting that goal and going. So pretty cool.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love that. I love that. Boyd, you mentioned your website earlier, but if you want to share that again, I know you've got a lot of good information out there, white papers, information about the company, your people. What's the best way for people to find out more about you and Leadership Resources?

**Boyd Ober:**

Thank you, Lyn. I appreciate that. And thank you again for having me on the show today. It's always fun to talk to you. I love your laugh. It's contagious. Your energy is contagious.

**Boyd Ober:**

Our website is LRsuccess, the letters LRsuccess.com. And on the website, they can schedule a discovery meeting. And I encourage leaders to do that. Somebody said, "Well, what's a discovery meeting?" It's for a leader to come in and answer just a few questions to understand where their mind's at right now. It's kind of like going to the doctor and saying, "I know I've got this pain, but I don't know what it is," and getting a discovery session to help you find out what it is and see what the possible treatment is. That's the discovery session. I encourage people to schedule that. There's a ton of white papers out there for people

to think about. We just put one out on coaching, because a lot of times people really want to say, "How do I better coach?" So there's a white paper out there on coaching that was just released.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Great. Boyd, it has been so fun catching up with you. Thank you for sharing with everyone and keep on changing the world.

**Boyd Ober:**

Thanks, Lyn. Ditto. Let's do this again.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Let's do it again. All right. Thanks.

**Announcer**

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