

Mara Glazer Interview

Archive Interview Transcript

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Mara Glazer Interview — Full Transcript

Editor:

Hello and welcome. Joining us this time is someone who I'm really excited to be talking with. She's already been called the world's best female copywriter by her industry peers, and is the founder of the highly influential business Direct Response Copy Girl.

Editor:

During this interview you'll find out why she's had to fight claims of nepotism and how she managed to take a set of drunk party pictures and turn those into a seven figure business. Not only that, but our guest has also been featured on ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox, The Huffington Post, and well now here, and if you've been a regular listener, you may already know who I'm talking about because her father, the legendary Bill Glazer was a guest recently.

Editor:

So let me welcome Mara Glazer to the show.

Mara Glazer:

Thank you. I'm glad to be here.

Editor:

That's lovely to talk to you now. I suppose we should go right the way back to the very beginning, and ask how you got your start in marketing?

Mara Glazer:

Yeah. Thank you for asking me that question. You know, I used to be a miserable employee to a corporate job in the New York city fashion industry. And I say miserable because making $35,000 a year in the Big Apple should honestly be illegal. I had no money.

Mara Glazer:

I lived in a strange city with no friends. And to top it off my boss, well if you've ever seen the movie, The Devil Wears Prada, that was my life. So then

in 2003, I had had a surgery, a major surgery. I had my spine fused with two titanium rods. And then while I was living in New York, working in this miserable fashion industry job, I actually ended up tearing my spine from the stress and the pressure from my job.

Mara Glazer:

And so I couldn't walk for about three months. I couldn't drive, I certainly couldn't work. There was really not that much that I could do. And it was in that moment I knew that I couldn't have a nine to five job anymore and I couldn't work for somebody else anymore because I needed the freedom to take care of myself when I needed to.

Mara Glazer:

So fast forward to 2009, I approached my dad, you mentioned him at the beginning of this interview, his name's Bill Glazer. And I asked him if I could move back to Baltimore and join the family business, Glazer Kennedy Insider Circle.

Mara Glazer:

And when I asked him, he said no. So I asked him again and he said no again. And so in that moment I remembered a saying that my father used to share with me when I was growing up, which was, "Glazer's never give up." So I asked him a third time and he said, "Okay Mara, if you really want this, if we really want to move back to Baltimore and join the family business, you need to earn it."

Mara Glazer:

So for the next six months, I literally did everything that my dad asked me to do, like writing marketing plans, copy, all sorts of stuff like that. Whatever he asked me to do, I would do for free because that's how bad I wanted it. And I was also doing this while I was working in my job as well.

Mara Glazer:

So I was working in my full job and basically learning from my dad and working for free for my dad at the same time. So about six months of that

goes by and he says, "Okay Mara, if you really want to do this, move back to Baltimore, join the family business. You need to understand two things. So one, you'll be working harder than you've ever worked in your whole entire life," which is true. My dad definitely worked me like a dog and I now work with my dad again and he still works with me like a dog, but the good thing is now that I'm older I get to work him like a dog, too.

Mara Glazer:

And also my dad told me, "You'll be heading up the social and alternative media marketing department," and I didn't want to tell him at the time, but I had no idea what social media really even was. In fact, I remember showing up with my very first day of work and one of our employees coming up to me, looking down on me, big guy, tall guy. Looking down on me, putting his hand on his head. He copped a sassy ass little attitude and he said, "So Mara, what do you know about social media anyway?"

Mara Glazer:

So I told him the truth. I had butterflies in my belly and I had a tight feeling in my throat but I told him the truth, which was at the time I really only knew two things about social media, which was how to invite my friends to my parties and how to post the drunk party pictures the next day. And that's all I knew how to do.

Mara Glazer:

So I spent the next months inhaling everything I could get my hands on about making money with social media, implementing it, testing it, tracking it and tweaking it. And the result was an additional seven figures in sales that we were able to track back to social media alone.

Mara Glazer:

And then while I was working at the company, my dad came into the office one day and said, "Mara, we need help writing copy around here. We don't have anybody else." Because he was already really busy with writing copy and our full time copywriter was also. He says, "You're up."

Mara Glazer:

And so I literally had to dive head first into learning how to write direct response copy. He taught me, he sat down with me and worked with me hand in hand for three years. And the way that he taught me is after I would write a piece, he would take out his big red pen and mark up my copy. Put crosses through things, circle things, tell me what I did wrong, what I did right, every day for almost three years until one day he finally told me I was good to be on my own. So, that's how I got started in marketing.

Editor:

Wow. I love the fact that you went from drunk party pictures to seven figures. So quickly. That's a great story. So how hard or easy would you say you found that transition from being employed by the boss that was like Devil Wears Prada to working in a business with your family?

Mara Glazer:

Yeah. So there was hard parts and there were easy parts. The hardest part is probably what most people would not expect, which is when I integrated into the business, there was a lot of employees that were working at the business already.

Mara Glazer:

And I felt a lot of heat from them because I think they felt like, "Who is this girl coming into this business? Like I know this is my boss's daughter, like is he just kind of like giving her a job?"

Mara Glazer:

And so that was really hard for me and I didn't want anyone to think that I was just getting a handout. So I worked my butt off to prove that I deserved a spot there. So that was the part that was hard for me.

Mara Glazer:

The part that was easy for me was actually learning the marketing. I almost feel like, to be honest with you, it's in my blood and I just pick it up really quickly and I am also really interested in it and fascinated by it. And that might be why I do pick it up so quickly.

Mara Glazer:

So the parts that I thought were going to be hard were not hard, and I had this whole new dynamic of having to figure out how to coexist in an existing team that had some sort of like preconditioned thoughts about me and I had to prove them wrong. And thankfully I did.

Mara Glazer:

When we started being able to track revenue and sales, it started to change and now a lot of them are, I mean honestly, our whole team is like a family to me. Definitely to my parents. We still get together once a year for Christmas dinner.

Editor:

Wow. So I mean it looks like you worked super hard to try and disprove those claims of nepotism, I guess. So I guess my next question would be how hard do you push yourself for this? I mean, obviously you really wanted it. So was that in the back of your mind all the way through?

Mara Glazer:

Yeah. I am a hard worker by nature. My father is, his father was, and you know that we joke in our family and we say "Glazer's are the hardest workers in the world."

Mara Glazer:

And so some might call it pushing myself, but to me it's just how I am, to be honest with you. So like I wake up every morning with a drive and with ambition and wanting to take the steps and do what I need to do to hit my goals. So, do I push myself hard? Yes. But to me, like I don't really know any other way to be honest with you.

Mara Glazer:

I think I watched my father push himself so much as I was growing up. And I think that I really just learned that that's how you do it. Like I very clearly remember my father used to own men's clothing stores. I really clearly remember him waking up very early in the morning every day leaving to go to

the stores, coming back super late at night, having dinner with us, and then going to sit at the card table in our living room to continue to work on his other business, which was his consulting business, teaching retailers how to grow their businesses.

Mara Glazer:

Sitting at that card, table way past the hours of when I went to sleep and doing that every single night. And so for me, it's just kind of what I know. It's just what I know.

Editor:

It's almost in the Glazer blood, I guess, is the only way you could describe it. When I spoke with your dad, he told me that one of his key principles is always to stay focused. So how do you stay focused, Mara?

Mara Glazer:

Oh gosh. Oh well. Like my father, I create long lists of things that I have to do and then I just keep working at it until I cross these things off my list. I learned that from him. He will always have a big legal pad with him with lists and lists and lists of things that he needs to do. And mine might be electronic. It's not a legal pad like his, but I'm the same exact way. And I know if something gets on that list, it has to be important and that I have to complete it for it to come off.

Editor:

That's a real key takeaway as well, isn't it? That you use checklists to ensure that you get the stuff done that you know needs to get done. That's good advice I think for anybody and Mara, apart from being involved in the business with Bill, who are your heroes? Who do you look up to? Maybe that's not a family member.

Mara Glazer:

Well that was going to be my answer was my father. Because the truth is, is that he has been my greatest business mentor, to be honest with you. But I have another hero and I would actually call her kind of like the unsung hero,

the underdog maybe. I think that's the correct word for it. And this person is also in my family, but it's actually my mother.

Mara Glazer:

So my mother has played a completely different role in my life, both from a business standpoint and from a personal standpoint. From a business standpoint, and my dad would joke about this, he would say, "We would never have had as big of a business if it wasn't for your mom. She, she runs the show around here."

Mara Glazer:

And while he may have been the face of the business and he may have been the front-end strategists of the business and the person that everyone knows, my mom was in the back doing the books, keeping the team organised and really running the whole thing.

Mara Glazer:

In fact, she's the one who postured and positioned the business for sale back when my dad sold it in 2011, and she always says, "Mara, I don't know anything about business."

Mara Glazer:

And I'm like, "Actually mom, you're a total bad ass. You know everything about business and this business was sold because of a lot of what you did." But also on the same part, like from a personal standpoint, my mom has taught me patience. My mom has taught me compassion. My mom has taught me so many other skills.

Mara Glazer:

I say I have the best mom in the whole entire world. And truly she's my hero. I hope that one day when I'm lucky enough to have kids that I can even be a percentage of how amazing she is. So, and if I am, I will be amazing because she's that amazing. So my parents are my heroes. That might sound like such a corny response, but it's true.

Editor:

No, no, no. It's a lovely response. And now Direct Response Copy Girl is your own business. Now, maybe you could just tell us perhaps a little bit about that and how that came about.

Mara Glazer:

Yeah, thank you. So Direct Response Copy Girl is I have a team of female direct response copywriters and we write direct response sales copy for businesses and the coaching consulting speaker expert type businesses, as well as eCommerce, eCommerce products.

Mara Glazer:

And then every once in a while we find ourselves working in a very unusual and unique niche. Right now, for example, we're doing a whole bunch of projects about epoxy flooring, right? And so I've put this team together of amazing copywriters because I kept hearing all of my friends, all my industry friends saying that they couldn't find great writers.

Mara Glazer:

And I totally get it, because to be honest with you, my biggest challenge in my business is finding great writers. For about every 100 applications and sample work that comes my way. Maybe there's one that I find that I want to give a shot and give them a try.

Mara Glazer:

So I started to put together this group of female writers and I find writers that are really amazing already. And then I continue to train them so that they become even more amazing. And so that's what we do at Direct Response Copy Girl, about 80% of what we write is email, about 15% of what we write are sales pages, mostly long form sales pages, and then this extra 5% is all sorts of other random type things like email scripts, Facebook ads.

Mara Glazer:

I'm sorry, not email scripts, video scripts, Facebook ads and things like that.

Editor:

Wow. It sounds like it's already quite a major operation. What's your ultimate goal for that business, Mara?

Mara Glazer:

Well, my ultimate goal for that business is really my ultimate goal for everything I do in business, is to enjoy what I do and to have a business that allows for me to do what I want, buy what I want and be where I want, whenever I want.

Mara Glazer:

And so Direct Response Copy Girl is just one of the businesses that I'm involved in. And what I love about it is, first of all I can do it from anywhere. I was just in Portugal, in Greece, for two weeks and I was able to check in with my team and make sure everything was getting done. I can do it from my laptop, I can do it from anywhere. That's one thing I love about it.

Mara Glazer:

Another thing I love about it is the team of women that I have are so fun and I want to spend time with them and I want to chat with them. In fact, I'd love if we all went on a vacation together. I was just saying that to one of my girls. And so that's my goal of all of my work in terms of business and then Direct Response Copy Girl really fulfils that for me.

Editor:

One of the things that you just mentioned about going on holiday with your team, I mean this sounds like the complete antithesis of the experience that you had when you worked in your old business, where The Devil Wears Prada type of boss. You know, it sounds to me that you're the complete opposite. You know, you want to spend more time with your people as opposed to less, which is great to hear. How important is copywriting, Mara?

Mara Glazer:

Well, copywriting is every single word. Literally every single word that you use to communicate what it is that you do, what it is that you sell, what it is that you offer, and even how you deliver it.

Mara Glazer:

And so I think that a lot of people really overlook the importance of copy and having really great copy. But in fact, it's one of the most important or really the most important job in your whole entire company. If you think about it, it really has a lot of weight to bear.

Mara Glazer:

If you can't sell, if you don't know how to communicate how to sell your services and your products and your programmes, and you don't know how to communicate who you're selling them to and you don't know how to communicate how to sell them to the people that you're selling them to, and you don't know how to communicate to deliver those products, programmes and services, you're not making money and you're not keeping your customers happy and you're pretty much toast.

Mara Glazer:

And so I would say that it's really important and, in fact, the most important, the most important.

Editor:

Wow. Yeah, absolutely, I agree. So I guess for anybody that's interested in just starting out with their own business, or maybe they've got a small business already and they're looking to grow, what advice would you offer to them, Mara?

Mara Glazer:

So I would say to get really focused on two things. The first thing is to ask, well, once you figure out who your audience is, ask them what they want and then figure out to get how to give it to them, which was the first piece of advice my father taught me when I started working with him.

Mara Glazer:

Find out what your audience wants, ask them what they want, and then figure out how to get it to them. That's the easiest and quickest way to make money. And then two, is get really, really good at finding leads for that

programme or product or offer. Selling that programme, product or offer and delivering and fulfilling and making your customers or your clients happy with that programme, product or offer.

Mara Glazer:

If you can get really good at those two things when you're first starting out, the rest of it will become a lot easier. You will make money a lot faster and because of that will have a lot less stress.

Mara Glazer:

I far too often see too many people who want to start a business, finding all of these bright, shiny objects through their searches on the internet. Like I want to start doing Facebook ads, I want to start a podcast, I want to do YouTube videos, and all of those things are great. They really, really are. But if you don't have those core foundational pieces in place, you're going to get sidetracked and you're not going to be able to make money in the business and then you're not going to be able to be or to stay an entrepreneur.

Mara Glazer:

So really focusing on those basics, find out what your audience wants and figure out how to give it to them and then get really good at developing and generating leads for this offer, selling this offer and delivering this offer.

Editor:

That's really good advice. And what's next for you? Is there something that you're working on right now?

Mara Glazer:

Oh my God, yes there is. I'm so excited about it. So I've been wanting to kind of dabble in something new on top of everything else that I'm currently doing, which is Direct Response Copy Girl. And then I actually have the great privilege to be able to work with my father again.

Mara Glazer:

He has relaunched his business and we've got a membership programme that we run together called the Outrageous Marketers Alliance. I run that with my father and our business partner, Rob Cuesta. But on top of that, I've been wanting to do something new for a while now, and so I've been working on building and setting up an eCommerce store, selling products to mothers to help them make momming and being a mom a lot easier.

Mara Glazer:

And in fact, as we record this podcast here, this episode here, we just launched the ads two days ago and we just made our first sale yesterday, so I'm really excited about it.

Editor:

Congratulations. And where can we find this website?

Mara Glazer:

Oh, it's called, ohheymomma.com. O-H-H-E-Y-M-O-M-M-A.com.

Editor:

I'm going to check that out because that sounds like a great hustle that you've got going there. That sounds amazing. And how quickly did that come together for you?

Mara Glazer:

Oh not quick enough. Isn't that always the way?

Mara Glazer:

[inaudible 00:20:48]. Yeah, but you know what? I've got a great team who's helping me and once I got them on board, then it started to go really quick, but-

Editor:

All the pieces came together? Right.

Mara Glazer:

Yeah. Together.

Editor:

Mara, I know we're running out of time, but how can we find out more about you and if anybody wants to find out more about Direct Response Copy Girl or the work that you do, how can we find that out?

Mara Glazer:

Yeah, thank you. So you can of course visit me online at directresponsecopygirl.com. You can find out all about my copywriting agency there. And then also if you want to learn about the work that I do with my father and with Rob, you can actually get a free copy of his second book, second out of three books called Outrageous Multi-step Marketing Campaigns That Are Outrageously Successful.

Mara Glazer:

You can get volume one if you go to billsnewbook.com/free. billsnewbook.com/free. and you can get a copy there. Just pay shipping and handling. We'll cover the cost of the book and get it right out to you.

Editor:

Sounds great. Well, Mara, listen, it's been an absolute pleasure chatting with you. Thank you for your time today and for all your insights and the background of the stories. It's been a real pleasure. Thank you.

Mara Glazer:

Thank you.

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