



## The Erika and Abi Show. The importance of mindset with special guest Richard Blank

The episode is a detailed conversation featuring Richard, an expat entrepreneur who founded and grew a call center company in Costa Rica to over 150 employees. It covers several topics: Mindset and Soft Skills: Richard emphasizes the importance of mindset,



Explore the unseen paths to success with Erika & Abi. Our guests range from industry leaders, innovators, and artists each with a story that will inspire and inform.



Subscribe to join our community of curious and passionate listeners. Erika: NYC Affordable Housing Director turned full-time land investor and entrepreneur. Her company, Gokce Capital, buys and sells land throughout the United States. Don't miss her insightful book, "Land Investing Mistakes," now on Amazon. Abi: Wall Street tech manager with a passion for helping people use technology to earn more and work less.

How To Get People To Say Yes



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# real stories,

# real advice

Mindset and Soft Skills: Richard emphasizes the importance of mindset, likening it to "whistling while you work," enabling one to overcome challenges. He discusses how to develop and utilize soft skills effectively, such as active listening, empathetic communication, and positive reinforcement to manage and navigate difficult conversations and customer interactions.



Moving to Costa Rica: Richard shares his initial reactions upon moving to Costa Rica, highlighting the family-oriented culture, the warmth of the people, and the beauty of the environment. He talks about the importance of integrating into the community and fostering a fun and supportive atmosphere at work.

Entrepreneurship Journey: He delves into his journey of starting a call center in Costa Rica, from initially renting a station in a blended center to eventually owning a building. He shares insights on overcoming challenges, such as understanding local labor laws and maintaining ethical business practices.





Employee Management and Retention: Richard details his approach to employee management and retention, focusing on empathy, dignity, and creating a positive, engaging work environment. He emphasizes the significance of selecting the right people for the job and cultivating a culture where employees feel valued and motivated.



Sales and Communication Techniques: Throughout the conversation, Richard shares various sales and communication techniques, such as the "buffer boomerang" method, focusing on the importance of making a strong first impression, building rapport, and establishing a connection with clients and customers. He underscores the power of using one's name in conversation as a key to successful communication.





Life and Business Philosophy: Richard's narrative is imbued with his life and business philosophy of paying it forward, believing in the principle of action and reaction, and the importance of small acts of kindness. He also touches on personal goals, like writing children's books and the simple joys of everyday life.

Advice for Developing Communication Skills: He suggests watching certain TV shows from the past to improve speech and delivery, practicing dedicatedly, and being in the right frame of mind to effectively communicate and connect with others.



This conversation offers valuable insights into the power of positive thinking, effective communication, the importance of community and culture in business, and the journey of entrepreneurship in a foreign country.

### Overcoming Accent Bias in Calls

If someone from Costa Rica is making that call, who is, like, born there, they would have an accent, right? So when they call Erica, wouldn't Erica know, like, Her first reaction will be, oh, I know it's a sales call because it's not even someone from the US. So don't they have to work even harder? Your accent is in the United States as much as a Latino one or an Asian one or anyone. The United States is a melting pot. So for me today, once again, anyone could be

anywhere. And the Latino market's growing. But how about this, my good friend? You got a cool accent. Well, that's the reason why I don't make outbound phone calls.

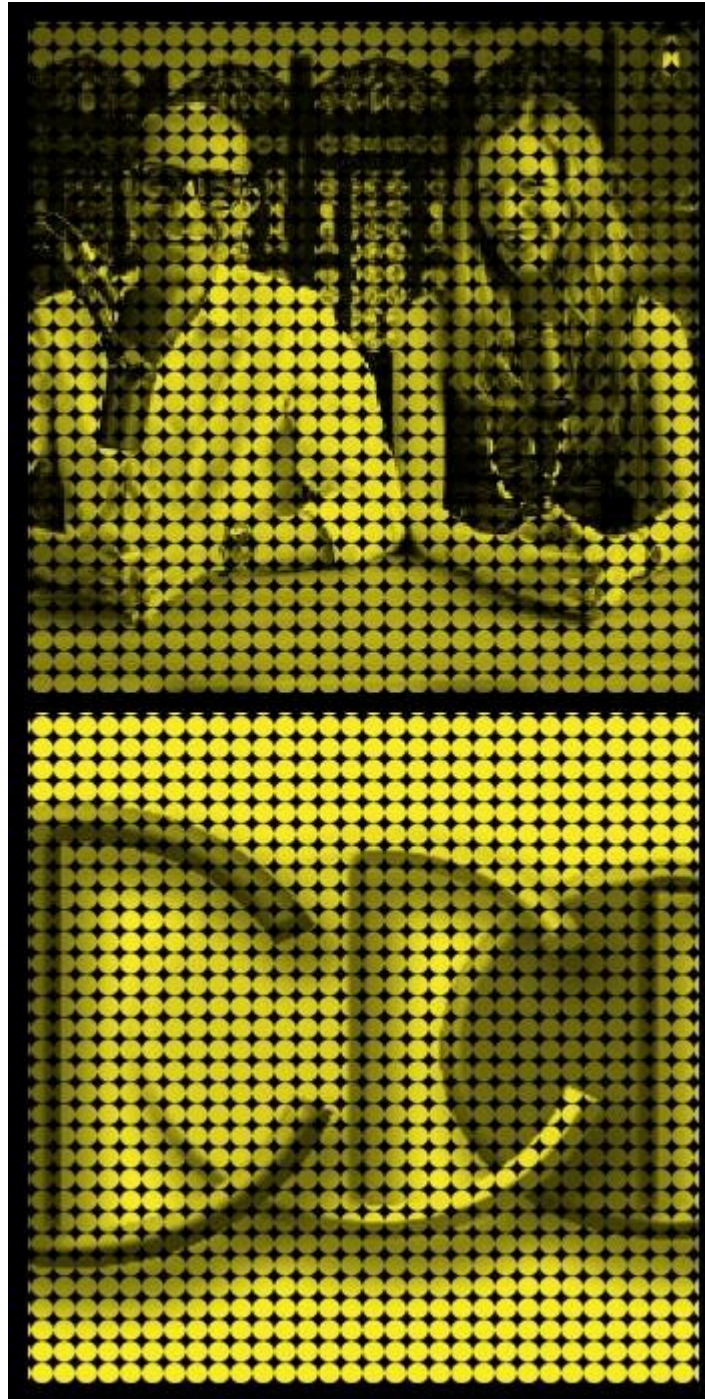


### Soft Skills: More Than Just for Call Centers

And how do you, how do you develop this skillset? If you're not, say you're not someone who's going to make their career working at a call center or starting a call center, but you are someone that needs to, as you mentioned earlier, there are a lot of frontline workers who really need to be able to communicate with people who are often not in a good state of mind, doctors, anyone in the medical field. How do you learn these skills if you're not going to get the



practice of 100 calls a day working with people? Oh, you watch this podcast. Well, maybe these are the sort of soft skills that can save a marriage or a Thanksgiving dinner.



### The Power of Active Listening and Emotional Intelligence

EQ. Yeah. Like meditation, you need to be in the right frame of mind and you can't play happy if you're sad. You can try. But no, if you do this after three weeks, it becomes habit. And you know what's the beautiful part about this? And a lot of it is just active listening. You can still do your job. You can still type and convert your calls and ask questions. But it's almost like that guy that juggles that can bite the apple as well. There's still room in the cart to do something, or you can upgrade it a little bit. You know, you just don't ask a question. You say the person's name, or as I did in the beginning, the company name spike. And it's so nice to hear you two react when I say the name of your podcast. I know that makes you smile.



### Spotting and Addressing Burnout in the Workplace

And so that's my main thing is I have to put some water on their face, give them some coffee, or just a timeout to play some Pac-Man and pinball just to readjust themselves. But how do you even know that they're in a bad state today? We have a quality control department. So immediately you can see talk time. I mean, once again, if someone is rushing a call, they're hanging up, or if they're going too long, they're just not listening. And you have people that are either around them or the monitors that will let you know that something is off. If it's a brand new agent, I don't know them. But if it's someone that's been with me and I have a luxury of a track record, I can easily compare it to other times and other metrics. But we have preventative measures. We do touch base with everybody in the mornings and just see how they're doing that day and what's happening.





### Willing to Die for a Passion

Remember we spoke about dying, you know, falling on swords and dying on hills. Listen, this is the one with my wife that she knows I'm willing to die on. Of course. I love my pinball machines, especially the older ones, the marquees and the play fields, the bells and the lights. It's just incredible for me, the restoration.

### Stress Reduction Techniques and Industry Expectations

And so really reducing some of that stress with cognitive skills is what I like. But it's practice. You know, we have scripts with rebuttals. Send me information. Why should I do business with you? As you say, I'm busy going into a meeting, things like that. And so we'll have things written down. And when they practice it, what they can do is, as I was trying to do, is anchor by using names. I mean, I could say, I know you're busy, I'll send you information, but I'm going to say Erica, just for a second, just to calm everyone down and then make my point. As I say, there can be stability when there's unstable ground. You just got to find how to readjust yourself. Because things are moving so fast. But I tell you what, I mean, if this is the sort of thing that beats you up so bad, you shouldn't be in this industry. It's not for the faint of heart.





### The Lasting Impact of Mentorship

And if I can get that out of somebody and be that proper mentor to them, they're good for the rest of their life. And so that's what I try to do to keep the art of speech and to make it fresh. If not, you're just going to see this as a grind, a forced march, and you just can't wait to bounce this job and go to the next one that might pay an extra five bucks. And it's an interesting industry, my friends.

### Pursue Your Passion

And if great-grandpa didn't come, we wouldn't be here today. So everyone needs to calm down a little bit. The worst thing you could ever do, because my intentions are honorable, is

take the spark out of somebody. You see that I have invested my life in Spanish. I do the dedicated practice. I do above and beyond what school asked me to do. And you have to give me a shot at it. You got to see what I can do. Little did I know... that I was not a business major. So what's the second challenge? Being a CEO of a company.

The Erika and Abi Show, Richard Blank, Costa Rica's Call Center, Outsourcing, Telemarketing Call Centre, BPO, Nearshore Contact Center, Sales, Entrepreneur, B2B, Business, Podcast, Gamification, Leadership, Marketing, CX, Guest, Money, B2C education, BPO trainer, call centre, contact centre, contact center



Richard's journey in the call center space is filled with twists and turns. When he was 27 years old, he relocated to Costa Rica to train employees for one of the larger call centers in San



Jose. With a mix of motivational public speaking style backed by tactful and appropriate rhetoric, Richard shared his knowledge and trained over 10 000 bilingual telemarketers.



Mr. Richard Blank holds a bachelors degree in Communication and Spanish from the University of Arizona and a certificate of language proficiency from the University of Sevilla, Spain. A Keynote speaker for Philadelphia's Abington High School 68th National Honors Society induction ceremony. In addition, inducted into the 2023 Hall of Fame for Business. Giving back to Abington Senior High School is very important to Mr. Blank. As such, he endows a scholarship each year for students that plan on majoring in a world language at the university level.

Costa Rica's Call Center (CCC) is a state of the art BPO telemarketing outsource company located in the capital city of San Jose, Costa Rica. Our main focus has been, and will always be to personally train each and every Central America call center agent so that we may offer the highest quality of outbound and inbound telemarketing solutions and bilingual customer service to small and medium sized international companies, entrepreneurs as well as fortune 500 companies.



We encourage you to visit one of our call centers on your next personal vacation or business trip to Central America's paradise, Costa Rica. While you are here, we would recommend taking an extra day of your trip to visit breathtaking virgin beaches, play golf next to the ocean, try your luck at deep sea fishing, explore tropical jungles, climb volcanos or just relax in natural hot springs. Come and see for yourself why call center outsourcing in Costa Rica is a perfect solution for your growing company and a powerhouse in the BPO industry.

<https://costaricascallcenter.com/en/outbound-bpo-campaigns/>



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