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ACCELERATING ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS PODCAST

EPISODE  
**32**

**Tim Larkin**

Show Notes at: <http://www.aesnation.com/32>

John Bowen and Tim Larkin

**AESNATION.COM**

Episode #32



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Best of success,



John Bowen  
Co-founder, AES Nation

**John Bowen:** I have a special treat for you today, an amazing treat. This is a two-four. So today what we're going to do like always is we're going to bring a super successful entrepreneur who's built an unbelievable business and one of the key things of building a great business is you have to do things right, you have the authority, he expertise to deliver great, great client experiences.

The second thing you got to do is you got to raise your profile. You have to become a celebrity. And Tim Larkin has done both. He is world renowned as one of the top experts in self-defense. And not only are you going to learn a little about self defense and get a ton of resources for that, but you're going to see how a professional can accelerate their success dramatically. I'm John Bowen. We're at [AESNation.com](http://www.aesnation.com), all about accelerating your success. Stay tuned. You're going to be glad you did.

Tim, I am so excited to be with you here. We've had a chance. We've hung out together a number of times at Mastermind Groups and other things and your workshop... I mean I've been blown away with what you're doing not only in the services you provide but also in the business you're building. So thank you for joining us today.

**Tim Larkin:** Hey, thanks so much for having me, John. It's great to have the opportunity to share information with your people.

**John:** Tim, one of the things when you and I first met and because of the camera angles, I look a little bigger than you right now. I got to tell you, I'm not. Tim's in perfect shape and I'm working on it Tim but I'm not quite there yet. And one of the things I was blown away with because I've hired trainers before and have been to martial arts studio and all that... most of the guys, they're great people. They're passionate about what they're doing. But hey just have a studio and don't make a difference. And you've really embrace the entrepreneurship and quite honestly led the charge. I want to get an understanding before we go into some of the things that we're going to talk about is how did you get where you are today?

**Tim:** I think probably by never forgetting what a person... what their initial needs are when it comes to self-protection or self-defense. It's an incredibly intimidating subject and oftentimes, the cookie cutter industry is well you just got to go through this program and we'll eventually get to your question. And I think by always being open to answering the person's first question, "Hey, I'm worried about x, y, or z." And keeping it client-focused rather than program-focused is probably with Target Focus Training myself kind of a unique commodity in the self-protection world.

**John:** This is so important for all of us. Tim, I want to have you share how you've worked with executives and so on. I got to tell you. I do not have kids. If I had kids, I would definitely want

them to go through this. My partner, Jonathan Paul, I think he already took his daughter through your program. The great thing is statistics aren't that bad of any of us having an episode. I'm part in going through all my life without ever having it. On the other hand, if it happens, I want to be prepared.

**Tim:** Yeah, and that's just did it. I mean the "I did" behind this is regardless of whether or not events happen around you, this is kind of... if you don't deal with this particular subject, this is the 800-pound girl that's always in the corner of the room that we deal about and when it happens to us is when we get to those uncomfortable situations. For women oftentimes, it's when an unfamiliar male all of a sudden say enters an elevator, and they realize, "Oh my God, I'm alone with this person and I'm in close proximity and I really don't know what I'd do." Sometimes we feel when all of a sudden, you just get that sign that one individual that you just get that hair standing on the back of your neck, and just that realization that, "My God, I do live in the physical world and I might actually have to take action here and I wouldn't know what to do."

That's why looking at the subject is worthwhile. It's a very base human need of ours and it's a requirement and it's something that used to be very natural especially for entrepreneurs. Successful people, they had to be self-reliant on their self-protection initially and protect their own assets, protect their families. We've kind of outsourced it in the last 50 years. It hasn't had the best results for us. It was well meaning on why we defer to say police. But when you have most of the police departments telling you, "Hey, we are no longer first responders. We can't get there." You want to have at least base knowledge of how to one, avoid how all the avoidable. But then the other side of the equation is what we're talking about John, the training that you went through. That is that last ditch effort that you have when you can't avoid violence and you have to deal with it.

**John:** Tim, one of the things that make you so unique and that's why I wanted to bring you on, not only because you're the number one guy that certainly I know in self-defense in the world, not just in the U.S. but in the world, is you're a great entrepreneur. You're out there, really understanding what it takes to raise awareness, make a difference, and then deliver a great experience. I always think as entrepreneurs, we got to do two things right. We got to deliver a great experience. You do. For everyone, whether they're buying a book or they're doing a workshop, doing one of your online training programs, or the other thing... so deliver a great client experience.

Second is, getting more people to raise their hand to explore working. Well, some of the people here sell beautiful cars or boats or jets, they do all these great stuff. I get to tell people how to make smart decisions about their money. You've got a harder mission. You got to get people excited about self-defense. And how have you made this worldwide movement creating the awareness and then attracting people to you as an entrepreneur.

**Tim:** The initial spark came from when I literally walked into this dingy little studio in San Diego. I was part of the team. I was in the military and I was part of the team that was looking at preparing the next generation of officers and military personnel for self-defense, for self-protection. Putting hands on people. I actually have been doing hand-to-hand combat. I walked into this place and I just see immediately... now, I have three black belts at that time and I thought I knew myself as I could take care of myself. I walked into what I thought was a slow motion prison riot. And what I recognized immediately was this training... there's people that need this. Everybody who's concerned with their own real self-protection, this is the methodology that gets you that access to that information immediately and I became... it immersed me at first.

I didn't know how to get that message out. The instructor that I worked with was great and everything. But I first knew I had to have... yes, I want to have all the technical knowledge. But I was also more passionate about letting people know that this existed. And so you have to have that drive to get the message out and then I realized I have no shyness in getting my message out to people and telling them what we have and why they should come training with us. I will tell people what will motivate them to come so I can give them what they need. Oftentimes, I understand what's got initially get people in the door are concerns that probably are the right concerns. They probably aren't asking the right questions. But I have to ignore that and answer those questions and start with them from where they're at so then I can passionately give them what I know they need.

So I think this is where a lot of people go wrong. They get very in love with the training or the product or whatever they do. But they get really uncomfortable about letting people know. "Hey this is damn good. And you know what, come here." And they think marketing is something that's kind of evil or self-a-aggrandizing or something. And to me, I absolutely knew, if this person only has a little bit of money that they can spend on self-protection, I want to make damn sure that they come spend it with me because I'm going to give them what they need especially if their life is on the line. And with that passion, I'm able to put the message out and it just drove me into, what are the more effective ways to get my message out? How can I do that?

**John:** Let me stop you for a second Tim because I want to go how you got the message out. That's so good but as fellow entrepreneurs, because I want to bring this in. Tim is an expert at one area. You are an expert at another. Some of the lessons from Tim, and I see this from all the entrepreneurs I've had the privilege of working with and interviewing as well, is that for a start, they want to be a hero to a group. And Tim is very much that. He's passionate. You can hear it.

Second, as a marketer and think about whatever you're selling, it's not any harder than what Tim's doing. And what Tim has done and this is a big distinction that a lot of us as entrepreneurs don't get. We get so frustrated that we have something that we're passionate about. We want to be heroes too. But our marketplace isn't embracing it. And it's because we're oftentimes selling them something they need versus what they want. And it's often those little tweaks of finding the market that you place that you want to be a hero to and really giving them what they want. But having them walk out with what they need. I want to go to the Big Breakthrough.

One of the things that you did to me is revolutionary. I always want to lose weight. That's one of my struggles. I always want to get in better shape. People on the financial side want to be richer. You were able to use the celebrity part to go ahead and break through all the noise of all the people out there that are teaching self defense and to do it a whole new level. What was that big breakthrough?

**Tim:** Probably it was the idea that everybody out there was teaching it wrong and when you get some results especially with high level people very quickly. When you can give them something that in two days, guys with twenty plus years' experience, say "It's never been explained that clearly to me. I have a much better knowledge now of the information." When you have other individuals look at your methods and say, I can use this decision-making that you just gave me for self defense is going to be useful and all other aspects of my business." That was kind of the breakthrough.

I realized it wasn't just self defense that I was selling. I was actually selling the idea of personal protection extends beyond just the physical... that educating people first and foremost on how to avoid the avoidable was really my breakthrough. It was the idea of getting people the full package whereas usually if people come to self defense, they fit everybody in that square peg and all those round holes because you're going to do it this way.

And they don't really answer the question the person has. Nobody comes to me and says they want to do self-defense. When you realize when you ask yourself what are they really asking, the breakthrough was really made when I realized people aren't asking me how to protect themselves, how to actually physically protect themselves. What they're saying to me is, "How can I live a life where I can absolutely minimize the possibility for me to have to ever have to physically protect myself? How can I live my life better?"

And when I started answering those questions for them first, it was much easier for them to then seek out the actual training that you went through John because I said, "Great! I can kick my head off the railroad track here." But I realized in the small unthinkable event, I would need the tools of actual training; whereas most people try to do the other way around. They try to jam with the physical right away and tell you that they don't set the stage correctly for

you. they don't sit there and say, "By the way, what are you doing in your life right now that can potentially get you in trouble that all you have to do is just recognize it and stop doing it?" That's very unique in my industry. That's not the approach people take. They don't want to talk about the avoidable. They want to talk about actually getting in there physically and showing that you're tough and all these irrelevant things when it comes to the real problem.

And that's probably what's unique in the industry. I think that's why I resonated with so many different people where I gave them a very good foundation on when you would ever have to use physical violence to protect yourself and inoculated them from all the things that may have been participating in before that could have led to that.

**John:** I can still remember where you got banned from coming into U.K. Most people would have taken it and just tail between their legs and so on. I don't know. I don't want to say it was a badge of honor. But there was a misunderstanding in the message you're bringing. Our industry, our world loves to knock down celebrities. But they'll love you even more when you rise back up which you did. And I don't even know if you fell down very far it was kind of straight up from that moment.

**Tim:** What's great about doing a piece like this John is you give me time...time to explain where it's very easy. Take one or two sentences that I say and it's very easy to couch me as a maniac like the "kill Coco" guy. And I think what's important is you're consistent with your message all the way through your passion about helping people. In my case, that's the big thing I really want to make sure that people get this information.

And it's amazing. Its other people end up doing the word of mouth for you. Any celebrity or VIP that I've had come into my life has been through a random client who came into my class. I had no idea who they were. I had no idea who their people were but I delivered the message in such a powerful way that they had to share it with this celebrity who just all of a sudden who shows up in my life.

And obviously yes, then all of a sudden, you have access to all their clients and their pushing you it comes out. But I think it's because the idea is I treat everybody the same because my subject matter... violence affects all demographics, all political aspects, everybody. And it's really interesting. I've had the privilege of having somebody like yourself in the class and you were there with probably a soccer mom. You're probably there with maybe a sergeant in the service. People that would never interact with each other are all coming together for this particular subject because it's a very base need in a human being.

And it gives me a tremendous opportunity when I share this and I'm not limited to a particular type of demographic. It allows me to get people who are influential and they just resonate with the message and they really want to help. Actively seeking it though is not really in my

experience where I got to hang out with great groups like the groups that you and I are a part of. That to me was just vital. It was vital to get myself around those types of people. People would think it's strange. Nobody in my industry does that. They don't go to...

**John:** You're the first one Tim that I've seen in self defense, period... in any of the groups. I'm a big believer. We're talking about mastermind groups. AESNation is kind of a virtual one but Tim's pretty humble and I don't want to name names but the celebrities he's worked with, any of you would be impressed. And they came not because Tim's marketing directly to them but they came because of the value. But then the word of mouth of having the celebrities do that and for all of us as entrepreneurs, we need to think about that. That is just a big part of it.

Tell me, what are you passionate about now? I get your newsletter. I get your mailings. I saw your new book. You're on TV. You're doing this. You're doing that. What are you passionate about now? As an entrepreneur, doing what you're doing, where's the passion directed?

**Tim:** The thing that has just got me so excited is after five years of putting this together, beta testing and development; we're launching our virtual training center... the ability to share the information with no degradation of instruction, no degradation of quality of instruction. It is so important to me because the biggest challenge I had was I only have an instructor calibrated of about 50 professionals that do this with me. But we can only reach so many people and the demand is huge. And there's a temptation that other people done in my industry who do quick instructor certifications and just put out people that can put out a lesser quality product. And we just would never do that.

And so finally, technology is at this stage where I can share this information on a level that was unthinkable before. And literally I can hit all the continents that I have clients on, which is just amazing.

**John:** Technology is just amazing. You and I are talking over Skype for free. I have my whole podcast studio, technology switching stuff is maybe \$3,000 at most. In the past, you and I would have to walk into some TV studio to do this and it would cost thousands of dollars just for that episode. And we'd have two minutes to explain [distorted]. So it's an amazing time and I'm glad you're doing it because it is such a need here. I know you travel like crazy. You and I haven't talked to in just about a year. We haven't run into each other lately but I know you were traveling. Are you still traveling?

**Tim:** Yeah. As long as they allow me in their country, I'll go but I'm leaving for Toronto tomorrow. I'll go to Toronto, mutual friend of ours, I'm going to my Strategic Coach program...

**John:** Yeah, Dan Sullivan.

**Tim:** Again, travel is just one of those things that you have to get the message out there. There are times where there's nothing is going to be sort of personal participation and face to face interaction with people. And it's just what a big part of it. I have to make sure I touch these areas and travel has to be just part of my commitment to the product and what I do.

**John:** I love in Northern California, Silicon Valley, a great place, a great family, great friends, and I hate traveling. On the other hand, every time I travel, all kinds of amazing things happen. So I have learned to have to travel.

And this next segment is the App of the Day. Tim, on your smart phone, what do you have? What do you use for the traveling part of it?

**Tim:** The one indispensable app that I've been using in travel has just literally changed the way I do transportation has been Uber. Uber operates in just about every city that I travel to. It has just made the ability for me to have to worry about getting to my training center on time, being picked up...the flexibility of it is just so key. The costs are when you really add up what it cost to either retain a car or doing anything else, the cost is just fantastic. It's just a great company. The fact that you can get feedback and you can rate the drivers and you know your drivers rating when they show up. The consistency of quality that I get out of it, it's really been key for me because I travel a lot of times, I have equipment with me and transportation is absolutely critical. And Uber has just yet to fail me.

**John:** If you haven't downloaded Uber and you travel at all, do it. They have earned the business. What's the other app that you had?

**Tim:** Airbnb. And what's funny is John, you never check your seat, I'm the same. I've been doing what I do for 25 years and I committed a little bit, probably I've had about at least 10 years ago that I was only going to stay at really nice places because I have to show up fresh, ready to train, and if there's a nicer option, I'm always doing it whether it be air travel or anything. And so I was always staying in nicer hotels. I discovered through a friend Airbnb.

And recently, I went to New York and I was there for a week. I stayed in a two-bedroom tower on the 37th floor in Hell's Kitchen, beautiful area of town, just all the great restaurants, walking distance to everything, walking distance to the seminar that I was giving. I stayed at it probably for a third of the cost of what it would have been for like the Gramercy or one of the nicer hotels I normally stay in. The internet was all set up, it was much faster than anything I get there. I had doorman service. I had everything and I found that the quality with where I stayed in Airbnb, it gives you a lot more flexibility and again the beauty John, goes back to what I'm saying about Uber is in this technology now, it's the ability for the customers to rate the landlord, everything, are the pictures actually what you see they are? Because oftentimes, I

don't know about you but there are times I've booked hotel rooms based on pictures and it looks like a great 5-star place and you'd show up and you go, "Oh my God!" I've just had amazing places that I've been able to stay around the world.

I still stay in hotels. I don't want to say that I don't stay in hotels but if it's an extended stay, I would much rather have the ability to book something in a nice neighborhood and have the flexibility of maybe just cooking my own breakfast, or just a little more privacy that you don't get, we don't get that with the hotel atmosphere.

**John:** Okay. The next is the Book of the Day. I'm not going to let you off. You've got a new book and it is great. As a matter of fact, I'm going to just mention your first book where this is where I just got to know you, *How to Survive the Most Critical 5 Seconds of Your Life* which I thought was great. But you raised the bar. And you wrote a new book and *Survive the Unthinkable: A Total Guide to Women's Self Protection* and it's done exceptionally well. Tell us about what's in there.

**Tim:** I was very blessed we hit New York Times with it. We did really, really well. It resonated with everybody. I was asked to write on the subject of women's self-protection. And it in sensed me that I had to write a book on women's self-protection with the idea of like we have to train women differently than when we train men. And that was the whole emphasis of the book was violence against women is an all-time high. And a lot of it goes unreported. You just had, recently the [distorted] issue is coming up. It just comes up all the time. And really, oftentimes, either a blame-the-victim type mentality, meaning she did something to deserve it, or there's nothing a woman can do. She's weaker. She's smaller, therefore, we got to always make sure there's a police officer by to protect her.

Where it's just ridiculous that women aren't being trained early on, on how to physically protect themselves in an effective manner. It's not because they're not capable of it. As a matter of fact, female clients learn much faster than my male clients and the reason being is because when violence happens to women, it's the real thing.

So this book goes in depth about... it really isn't gender specific. It's a very good book all around on self-protection. But in particular, it's written for women so they have the ability to go through and really understand how violence works and instead of having unnecessary fear, understand that hey there actually is an approach to this. It makes a lot of sense. And can help me avoid a lot of things. Because women often times put themselves in harm's way without really even knowing and they can learn to avoid the avoidable. But more importantly, they can be shown physically that they're very capable of protecting themselves if given the right information. And that to me, it was really passionate.

I had a lot of support with it. I had a lot of celebrities' support. Tony Robbins wrote the foreword for me. He was really passionate about it. And it was very, very helpful. It's an under-reported subject. It's a much bigger problem in the US and worldwide than we like to let on. That was the motivation for it.

**John:** Well, and it's a great book. And I can tell you not only the book but also being in class and you know a 200 plus pound guy, pretty big and strong and there were some drills where you would have a woman. Basically, they'd pick a guy to go through the exercise with her. I was just blown away with how little confidence they had in the beginning but by the end of that... how there's no question that I was not going to harm some of these hundred-pound women. They were able to take care of themselves without any problem. And it should be required training.

Let's switch gears, I want to go back to the entrepreneur stuff and Tim what I want to hear, what is that one insight, that insight of the day that you would want to share with your fellow entrepreneurs that you've learned through this overnight success where we jokingly talked about before. There's a lot of work getting to this point. But what's the one thing you would share, the insight that you can help your fellow successful entrepreneurs even be more successful?

**Tim:** I think probably is I'm in a very saturated market as you said and there's a lot of group thinking in that market and I think really for entrepreneurs to really get to that next level, you have to ignore all that. you have to realize that you have a different approach that you have a product that commands a better price point and that you're not apologetic for that. If anything, you take the time to clearly put your message out on why and why it's important that people come and get their information from you or for your product versus anybody else. Oftentimes, I see people skip over that. I see them make the mistake of thinking everything has to be short and sweet and bullets and not taking the time to say, what going into? What's the background behind what you're doing? Why is yours different? What methods went into this? Tell the story. People don't tell the story.

**John:** People want the story. They want to emotionally connect and you do that well. Tim, the one thing that I want to pull together is the resources that you have. I'm going to pull up your website and you've got a whole bunch of resources there available. They can spend a little bit of money. Buy the books obviously and so on. But there's some free stuff available on the website. What could they take advantage of to learn more if they want to take it further with themselves, their family, their company, their key employees, that type of thing?

**Tim:** Yeah, we made it really easy. Just go to the website [TargetFocusTraining.com](http://TargetFocusTraining.com). There's a small box that you just put your email in and you will be getting all the free content that we put out. We don't sell your email addresses. It's one of those things that surely, it's my belief

that as much as I would love you to the training right away, spend, buy my products, I really want you to understand what are our approaches, how we look at the subject matter. Is it the right fit for you? Before you ever spend a dollar.... Because I think there's a lot of preconceived ideas about self defense, violence, how and why you would ever get training, we take you all through hat with all the free materials so please take advantage of that.

**John:** It's great training whether you come to Tim's training or not, it's stuff that you need to know. I want to go to really important...

And this is Key Takeaways that I'm walking away here for all our fellow entrepreneurs from Tim's. Very first part is, be a hero to someone. Whatever group, go ahead and be passionate about that. That's number one and that's all of us as entrepreneurs, we're going to make that difference in the world. We're going to make that small dent, as Steve Jobs talked about, in the universe. You got to decide what part of the universe you're going to do it.

Second, recognize the difference between wants and needs. We market wants but we're delivering a client experience and not only goes to those wants but really gives them the needs so they're going to get the results after that are really powerful.

Third thing is when you get it, get that client experience going well, you nail it. Then scale it. Use today's technology to do that. Also, raise the awareness. It's not only being an expert, an authority in what you're doing but that celebrity, Tim you have been a great entrepreneur, a great mentor. I've learned a lot from you and I really appreciate the time today that you could share your insights so thank you very much.

**Tim:** Thank you, John and please if anybody has any questions, if you got any please send them on to me. I'll make sure that everybody's questions are getting answered.

**John:** I've learned a lot from him and I know many of my peers have. This is just so important. Two lessons. One, everyone that's watching this or listening to this podcast, make sure that you understand how to protect yourself in today's world. Second, be a great entrepreneur. Take the lessons that Tim shared with you. Your current clients, your future clients are counting on you. Don't let them down. Wish you the best of success.

## A Second Opinion on Your Finances

*A Complimentary Service from Financial Advisor Select for the Members of AES Nation*

Dear Fellow Entrepreneur,

Like many members of AESNation, I'm a serial entrepreneur. In addition to co-founding AESNation, I'm the founder and CEO of Financial Advisor Select, a firm dedicated to helping successful people make informed financial decisions by introducing them to top financial advisors.

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Best of success,



John Bowen  
Founder and CEO  
Financial Advisor Select