

Communications, Branding & Leadership in Finance – With Jen Prosek, Founder & CEO of Prosek Partners

Simon Brewer

The famous French diplomat and advisor to Napoleon, Talleyrand, remarked, 'A diplomat who says "yes" means "maybe", a diplomat who says "maybe" means "no", and a diplomat who says "no" is no diplomat.' Illustrating that in 1800 is today, how you communicate defines how your message is received. So it seemed an opportune time to talk to the Founder and CEO of one of the world's leading financial marketing and communications firms, Prosek Partners, especially since this year, the Wall Street Journal named you as one of the world's most influential decision makers. On a flying visit to London, I'm delighted to have Jen Prosek with me for today's conversation. Jen, a very warm wintry welcome to you today.

Jen Prosek

So happy to be here.

Simon Brewer

Well, Prosek Partners have been very helpful to us at the Money Maze Podcast, and we're very grateful with your colleagues in London and the US in introducing us to some amazing guests. So thank you. Under your guidance, Prosek, created over 25 years ago, has developed into this world-class communications firm. And I'm hoping today that we'll learn some valuable lessons about improving the way we communicate, given it's your speciality and because you're always in conversations with leading figures in finance and other industries. But before we talk about the inspiration and perspiration behind the firm, let's go back to Jen and the early years. What stays with you most about your upbringing?

Jen Prosek

I am first generation American, which means my parents were immigrants. So in many ways, I am a product of the American dream. My parents reminded me how lucky I was to be in the United States and have infinite opportunity in front of me. So I think that certainly shaped my entrepreneurial outlook. I would also say, if you talk to most entrepreneurs, they are driven by something. And I was certainly driven by two parents who were teachers who struggled to pay the bills. So certainly, that was part of my ambition.

Simon Brewer

When I looked at your education, I see that and I was very sympathetic, because that's what I wish I'd done rather than what I did. But you did an English literary major, you got an MBA from Columbia. First of all, why did you think you needed that?

Jen Prosek

The idea of business school came from my roommate, my post-college roommate. I was living with two roommates. She was going to Columbia Business School, her employer was funding it and she said, 'You should go to business school, and everyone will think you're really deep in finance.' And I said, 'There's no way I could hack that.' She said, 'Yes, you can.' So she was my catalyst to deciding to go to a top tier business school. So I graduate business school, now I have cred in the finance world. And I will say, there was magic to the business school degree. There's very few MBAs in finance that run communications firms or are in communication, so I definitely had something that distinguished me. And still, when I graduated in 1999, the financial services firms were not exactly buying the vision, which was get on the front foot, care about your reputation, be proactive, care about your brand. But the financial crisis hit, and everything changed. Most people remember that in the financial crisis for the first time, hedge funds, banks, etc., were on the radar screen and not in a good way. And they had to really rethink, does this back foot stuff work? And if you remember, Goldman Sachs famously decided, let's get off the back foot, get on the front foot. They hired communicators from the White House and other places, and the strategy changed, and they decided to engage. They decided to care about their digital footprint and their communications and their content and all this stuff. And the world kind of watched that and said, 'Hey, wait a minute. Maybe this back foot thing doesn't work anymore. Maybe we should care about our brand, maybe we should engage with our public and our stakeholders.' And that catalyst was huge for our firm, because those firms went to the communications market and said, 'Who builds brands? Who engages? Who is proactive?' And there was nobody but us. And we had grown up with that mission to represent those companies. So that was really when the business started to explode.

Simon Brewer

So numbers today. How many people and how many offices?

Jen Prosek

Three hundred and sixty people, probably six offices, as global as you need to be for serving financial companies.

Simon Brewer

So let's start with this question of branding and asset manager PE firm hedge fund. How do you approach it?

Jen Prosek

As you know, we made this big bet on financial services firms, but we made also an early bet on the private markets, which was really not understood. If you looked at the financial landscape and you said who's spending money in marketing communications, the private markets firms, meaning private equity, private credit, hedge fund and private asset management firms, they were the laggards of the laggards. They did not believe that marketing was something that you did proactively. And if you recall, 10 years ago, if you went to a website, if there really even was one in the hedge fund space or the PE space, it had a little box and said enter the code or go away. They were trying to turn down anyone who was interested versus attract attention. But we said, again, we think that's going to change. And we saw firms like Blackstone be very, very early adopters to our belief system, which was a proactive one. We just thought that whole world would change too, and it really has. I can't even tell you the acceleration in the private markets in terms of caring about brand and digital and content and thought leadership, and of course, reputation management and crisis communications, of course, deal communications, of course, but really sophisticated marketing.

Simon Brewer

So there's an optics component, but there's a very real commercial component. So let's just talk about how that brand and digital marketing helps to fundraise.

Jen Prosek

Yeah. Again, one of the ways we tried to distinguish ourselves as a firm was to get very, very close to the money. That's what money maze is all about, right? Being very close to the money. And in the private market world, being close to the money means understanding the fundraising process down to the nub, understanding where those allocators go, how they behave, what they read, which conferences they go to, how they tick, and how to show up in front of them in a way that builds preference for a private market brand. So that is a journey we've been on for a very, very long time. It is the most competitive fundraising market that we've ever seen. Firms are very open to trying new things and being creative and being on the front foot with their marketing now in front of these LPs because it's so hard.

Simon Brewer

So you talked a few years back about this being the emerging market of marketing. On that growth curve, where are we?

Jen Prosek

We always say we predicted the emerging market of marketing, which was private market firms. I would say we're 50% of the way through that emerging market and it's emerging so fast. Realize that COVID was a massive accelerator, because when everyone's business shut down, dealmakers and fundraisers were sitting behind a screen going, 'OMG, how am I going to raise money or do a deal behind a screen?' Like everyone running a business, that was a pretty scary moment. All of these firms smartly got very serious about digital, audio, video, all the ways to communicate in a virtual world. And a lot of spend went into what I would call sophisticated marketing. And that really accelerated that emerging market of marketing much faster than I would have even predicted.

Simon Brewer

So it'd be really helpful. I'm sure lots of our listeners are taking notes as they absorb your pearls of wisdom here. But if you can give us an example of one of the firms you've worked with and how you really were able to facilitate their push forward.

Jen Prosek

They probably don't like us speaking to you publicly, like all of our clients. But the case study that we have our name associated with that is most known, and again, the work we do is very public so we're on press releases, etc. People know who represents who. It's probably Bridgewater Associates. We've been on a 13-year journey with them to build their brand. Again, it was very important to them when we were hired that their culture of radical truth and transparency be properly understood in the market. So we've been on that journey. I don't want to talk too deeply about their strategy, because that would be inappropriate. But that would just be one example of a firm we've worked with for a very long time who I give a lot of credit to, was an early adopter to the idea of managing their story, managing their reputation very much on the front foot, taking what is unique and distinctive about the firm and amplifying that to key audiences. If you talk to people, they also have one of the best IR departments in the world, which means they are great communicators directly to their investors as well. So I give them a lot of credit. People often ask me why they've been very successful in their brand building

mission, and I say two things. They are incredibly experimental and creative and their founder took this extremely seriously. And those things obviously helped.

Simon Brewer

Well, we had Karen Tambour earlier in the year on an episode. She was terrific and the episode continues to get a lot of attraction. So that was great. Let's take it a step down, which is, we're in a world which some of us of a certain age just about understand in terms of social media. We've obviously added a podcast business, it's doing a lot of things. We've added skills through people who understand this social media world. You just conducted a survey of 105 top finance firms, and I'm quite interested in what the overriding conclusion was.

Jen Prosek

The overriding conclusion, which made me very happy, of course, is it just validated exactly what I've been talking about, that private market firms are taking this extremely seriously. It's very gratifying. I used to have to convince people that what we do made an impact. There is a very high level of belief that what we do impacts three things that are most important especially to the private markets: talent, deals and capital. If you want to accelerate your ability to hire the best and the brightest, if you want to increase your sourcing and do great deals and have people come to you, if you want to raise money in the most successful manner, you need to show up professionally and have your brand be strong. Those things are universally now believed in, which is extremely gratifying to me.

Simon Brewer

Actually, we had also earlier on in the year, General Nick Carter, who is former head of the British Army, who then recommended this book called 'War in 140 Characters' if you haven't read it, and we put it on the list. It talks about how communication is the other part of the battlefield. And he gives this Palestinian Israeli set of illustrations which is remarkable for those of us who are less familiar with the potency of the medium. But I'd like to talk about audio and video. We're here recording audio, but we'll have this on YouTube as well, which is a growing part of what we're doing. How are you advising your clients on those mediums?

Jen Prosek

Well, clearly, video, we all know the numbers. Video is what most people, institutional or consumer, want to consume. If you're not using video to your advantage, you should be thinking about it. Audio has also struck me personally. The power of audio, I don't need to tell you. We're dealing with very busy people, and the ability to

listen while you're commuting or while you're doing something else. I've been stunned at the podcast, for instance, I do, like this one, that people will listen to the 45th minute. And the reason I know that is because they'll say, 'I love what you said about XYZ.' And I'm like, 'Wow, that was in the 45th minute.' So there's a relationship and an intimacy in podcasting that I think is extremely special and powerful. But I would say, you can look at the data, it's very clear that these are very successful mediums of communication. But I would say, you also got to feel it. And you have to experiment with different things to be successful in communications, because the thing you think is going to cut through isn't always the thing that does.

Simon Brewer

I'm just going to say to all of our listeners, the 46th minute Jen is going to have some fantastic advice for all of us. I am struck as I go on my travels, that the PowerPoint presentation lands on the desk relentlessly. And I'm thinking, gosh, I'm of a certain vintage, but even I'm wondering if that might be a bit dated. Can we talk about the pitch? Because people do love their own voices. What advice have you got about that ecosystem?

Jen Prosek

Our world is still pretty addicted to the deck. I've never been to a meeting where I didn't bring one because that's what is understood. Having said that, everything about marketing is being distinctive. I always say, the most important thing you do is nailing the narrative. What is it about you that is distinctive, exciting, moves someone emotionally to buy something for you, or builds preference in your brand? So the first exercise is nailing the narrative. And then it's how do I deliver that? What medium is the most effective? I don't think the deck is dead by any standpoint, but I do think breaking through with the deck is impossible. So you want to think about other things. Audio is a great example. We've been experimenting with something we call the first meeting, which is a podcast kind of format between a PM and a host that talks about the investment strategy in a different way, not in a way that you present it in a deck with a bunch of charts, but in a human, authentic, connecting relationship-oriented conversation. We have been experimenting with advancing those things to LPs and say, are they more willing to listen to a chat with a PM about the strategy and the firm and the culture, etc., or does that break through? I wouldn't say I have all the evidence, but I would say anything that's distinctive can be very powerful. So experiment, experiment, experiment. Video and audio are two wonderful ways to do that.

Simon Brewer

What we've found as we've been lucky enough to have lots of requests to be on the show, a lot of which we can't accommodate, we've launched a second channel, the curated podcasts, where we're doing exactly that for

organisations. And the CEOs and fundraisers have said that they found it very powerful, both because they can pre-screen. They don't have to necessarily get on a plane to some of the destinations. And when they have that next conversation, people are in a better state of understanding so the quality of the questions can change. And so that's significant. But just one more thing before we leave that, and that is, I've heard you say that you would actively discourage a leader to talk for more than 15 minutes.

Jen Prosek

Well, I think that brevity and nailing the narrative, again, is super important. You need to be able to make your points relatively quickly. I do want to touch about another thing that survey told us though. The transformation in some of these communications channels, I'll just pick on one like LinkedIn. LinkedIn used to be viewed by our clients as a place where people are trying to get jobs, or whatever perception they have. The reality is, LinkedIn has become a way to communicate to target audiences, including institutional investors, they are on LinkedIn, on a regular basis and build a relationship and show the momentum of your firm. You will see, I think one of the most interesting things is that there are founders like Orlando Bravo, I would encourage you to look at his social media presence and his LinkedIn, that are spending a lot of time on LinkedIn and building direct relationships with investors or potential talent, etc., using LinkedIn. And they're not spending that much time and possibly money doing that because it's unsuccessful. I would say, in our world, we talk about three types of media: earned media, owned media, and paid media. Earned Media is sort of what people think traditionally as dealing with the press. I tell my story through that third party. Owned media are the channels you own, your website, your LinkedIn feed, anything that goes direct to the audience. Those owned channels can be so powerful. Even in the private markets, folks are understanding now, wow, building a relationship directly with my audience is so powerful. And then paid media is advertising. So I experimented, for instance, with launching a LinkedIn newsletter called 'Leading in Volatile Times'. I started it in the pandemic. I didn't want to just speak about communications, I wanted to speak about leading people. And I thought I'd do a six-part series just to sort of experiment. I also thought volatile times won't last that long. Boy, was I wrong! I'm still writing it. But that newsletter has taught even me how powerful it is to have a direct channel to your audience. I just met with someone for breakfast who I would love to work with, and she said, 'I've loved reading your LinkedIn newsletter.' So you already have a relationship with someone. They already know you. They're following your content. They like what you read, they like your thoughts. So those things are very, very powerful. And the shift in private markets toward embracing those channels has been mesmerizing.

Simon Brewer

So we know COVID changed habits and we know the hybrid and the multi-platform approach exists. But in a world that has jumped onto video for conversations, to Zoom or not to Zoom? That is the question.

Jen Prosek

I think Zoom has created a really awesome option. Not every meeting must be in person. I think the trick now is like everything, you need to have a hell of a lot of judgment to know, is it a Zoom or is it an in-person? I do think if it's a relationship you're trying to have for the long term, showing up in person means I care. And showing up in person means you're probably going to have a more intimate personal conversation with a human being. Zoom is very transactional. Having said that, I think that Zoom has created a very efficient way to get a lot done. The issue is, and I'm surprised you don't see me carting around my computer, if you have in-person and Zoom, how do you do that? It's become very difficult to do. And now we have to rely on the fact that all the people that work for us can actually decide, is this in-person or is this Zoom? I think we're in a very unprecedented time in the world where we still haven't figured out exactly how to behave, but I think there is room for both.

Simon Brewer

So you use the term volatile to characterise today. I would perhaps, because of my more bearish view, would say we're in for a potentially prolonged period of a difficult environment, which will be reflected in returns, in which case, asset managers won't necessarily have the prop of good performance. Communication becomes even more important, as does leadership. Tell me, having this constant dialogue with so many leaders, what do you characterise as the qualities in the very good leaders?

Jen Prosek

I think what is expected out of your employee base as a good leader has changed dramatically. If you ask me, what are the largest challenges for my clients, my leadership clients, my CEOs, and founders? A lot of it is around leadership and a lot of it is around employee relations and a lot of it is about how do I inspire and motivate people. It's very different than it was a few years ago. You hear a lot about the buzzwords authentic leadership, for instance. People do want to build a different kind of relationship with their leaders and those who can be a little more human, show a little more vulnerability, be a little more honest, be a little more transparent, over communicate, those are the people who will do better in terms of the talent situation. Even when you think about investors or shareholders, the burden of more transparency and more communication is definitely there. One of the reasons what I would call the PR economy or the communications economy is so vibrant is so many leaders are adjusting to the requirements of being a leader. And I would say, for instance, I think you could get

away with not being a good communicator years ago, you could get away with not having to ever get on stage, you could get away with all that, but this is now a requirement of the job.

Simon Brewer

So you lead a large and growing organization and you have a number of, I'm going to say, catchphrases. And one of them I want you to explain is you talk to your team about being a finder, minder, binder, grinder. Now, just explain that.

Jen Prosek

Finder, minder, binder, grinder. In my world, which is the world of consultancy, I always say if you want to get to partner at the firm, you have to be a finder, minder, binder, grinder. What is that? We're all grinders. That's getting the work done. There's a hell of a lot of work to get done. And the more senior you get, at least at my firm, it doesn't mean you're not a grinder. You still are. A binder is someone who's a great relationship person. We are a relationship field and you need to be able to bind as a human being with clients. Minders are great managers of people and also of work. In our firm, you have to be a great manager to get ahead because grooming the next generation of talent is vital for us. And finding is business development. Finders obviously get to the top quicker than others. And if you have all four of those things working at the same level, you're a unicorn. Most people have a different percentage in this bucket. But it's been an easy way for me to describe what's important in a firm like ours.

Simon Brewer

When you look at your firm and its growth, and then you look ahead, where would you like to see Prosek in the next few years?

Jen Prosek

We have been growing relatively quickly, again, because what we were selling, we were very unpopular at the dance and all of a sudden, we got popular. I think the trick is, I don't really have a growth number or size. Being bigger isn't always better. I always say we want enough growth to fuel the careers of our people. I remember one of my favourite lines, and I think it was Sheryl Sandberg. I think Larry Summers told her about Google when she joined there. 'If you're offered a seat on a rocket ship, just take it because that growth company's careers take care of themselves.' And I do believe growth fuels opportunity, it fuels careers, it fuels excitement. One of my primary jobs is to keep the grit, hustle and humanity we had when we were small into every day we come to

work when we get bigger. So I think I'm more focused on maintaining the culture of Prosek. And I call us the army of entrepreneurs, maintaining our entrepreneurial vibe and our special culture as we grow. The reality is, we're halfway through the emerging market of marketing. If we can remain a preferred firm in this space, we will have growth because we're mining growth companies. We have two types of clients. Either a well-established global publicly traded financial institution or the private market space. The global corporate side of our world is not an emerging market, it's a mature one. So we just have to be better than everyone else to keep getting those clients. In the emerging market of marketing, that is a true emerging market so the growth opportunity is really big. So the challenge is just to grow with excellence and keep our culture.

Simon Brewer

So you've talked about this motivation and culture and I've known that you've done some work around entrepreneurialism, generally. And I want to just start with the higher level. You made an observation about, I'm not sure I understood it, but Millennials grew up on Harry Potter and the Generations Z grew up on the Hunger Games. I'm not quite sure how I unpick that.

Jen Prosek

That was actually probably in relation to the outlook of the generations. Growing up on Harry Potter is very sort of whimsical, and fun and fanciful and growing up on the Hunger Games is actually quite dark. I think I was talking about the outlooks of some of the different generations in that comment.

Simon Brewer

Now, amongst some of your, I would say, key beliefs, when we met in New York, you talked about it, is that if there were two words that you would emblazon on any of your employees and other's heads, it would be 'just ask'.

Jen Prosek

I believe the two most powerful words in business are 'just ask'. As a woman in her 20s who was building a firm, who was always way over my skis, I learned very quickly that asking for what you want is really important. And I was stunned that over 50% of the time I asked for something, I got it. Now there is an art to the ask. There's a timing and appropriateness. You have to have high EQ to get your 'ask' right. And you can't be grabby. But knowing how to ask and when to ask and asking is incredibly important. I tell my daughter, in school, advocate

for yourself. It's sort of a version of that. But if you can figure out how to ask for what you want appropriately, I think you'll be surprised how much you get in return.

Simon Brewer

And when you've had a bad meeting, how have you managed to deploy that?

Jen Prosek

I always say one of the greatest things about being an entrepreneur is I have gone around my whole career just being me and just doing Jen and it either works out or it doesn't work out. I read this book one time about the voice inside your head. It was called how to be 10% happier. And the guy who wrote it realised he had a very negative voice inside his head. So if he screwed up, the voice inside his head said, 'You're a screw up.' If someone else got a promotion, the voice inside of his head said, 'Why is he getting it versus me?' What I realized when I read that book is I have the most awesome voice inside my head. I think I was born with it. I can't give myself credit. It's a really nice voice. When I screw up, my voice inside my head said, 'You did your best.' If my best friend gets a promotion, the voice inside my head says, 'Oh my god, that's awesome for you.' I am generally a positive outlook person, but I do have failures. I'm dealing with one now. And I think if you've done your best and you've communicated honestly with everyone around you about how you would have done it differently, not try to sort of spin your failures, sometimes those are the most powerful moments with your friends, your family or your employees. The boss screws up too and boy, did I screw up. And I think that's actually been one of the most powerful things about my leadership is people have always connected with the fact that I'm not afraid to say when I've failed, and I fail too.

Simon Brewer

Well, I was giving a talk at Exeter University recently and it reminded me when I was being asked about interviewing and dealing with difficult situations. Back a long time ago at Morgan Stanley, I interviewed a young graduate from Columbia, and he was very enthusiastic. And for some reason, I was carrying a cup of coffee and he shook my hand when he came in so vigorously, coffee went down my white shirt. And he smiled and looked at me and said, 'You know, you never get a second chance to make a first impression.' At which point, I was endeared to him and we ended up hiring him. So there you go. The other issue which relates to what you just talked about is this expression 'solve, don't dwell'. How do you impart that with your team?

Jen Prosek

Another thing I think is so important is spending all your emotional energy on solving a problem, not on dwelling on it. So I tell my team, look, if something really bad happens, I'm not unrealistic. Go to the bar, have a drink, lick your wounds, but the reality is, it's generally completely unproductive to spend your emotional energy dwelling on something you cannot control. It is totally productive to put all your time into the solve. How's it not going to happen again? How am I going to fix it? I think that has to do with all kinds of things, even relationships. Do you walk away from a relationship and just get angry and dwell on it? Or do you actually confront the person, tell them you're sorry and make it better? That to me is one of the greatest secrets of success.

Simon Brewer

So I'm going to move to some general questions, as we know, because all our audience still listening to this podcast and they are waiting for this. If you could wake up with a skill tomorrow that you don't have, what would it be?

Jen Prosek

Skiing the bumps.

Simon Brewer

Okay. When you've had setbacks on your career, what would you say you've learnt most from it or them?

Jen Prosek

You'll find that I have so many twists of phrase and campaigns, it's almost brutal, but this one sounds negative but it has worked for me. If you're like me, you go around your life in business and personal generally trusting human beings. Again, I'm an optimist. I'm very positive. But every once in a while, you bump into a person whose goal in life is not to help you out. That's happened a few times where I realized, oh, wow, there's something in my back and it doesn't feel very good, and it looks like a knife. And I would say I developed this idea and I think it's maybe also sort of a female idea, but it's called 'make your enemy your energy'. How do you get fueled by people who tell you you can't do something? How do you get fueled by challenges? How do you get fueled by disappointments? And I think if you are able to turn bad luck moments into good luck moments, boy, you're going to be in a great place in life. And I think there's a lot of talk, certainly there always are, in women's circles around glass ceilings and disappointments and discrimination. I think if you can get past those things and put some energy toward, how do I prove to them they're wrong, how do I climb that mountain when everybody said I couldn't, that's really powerful. So I would say that's just one way I've gotten over my disappointments.

Simon Brewer

And again, we have this important youthful cohort listening. They will be struck by your entrepreneurialism and success and persistence. But you know financial services, you know communications, because you also advise on pharmaceutical, healthcare, other businesses as well, young people are thinking about careers and going, what's the high-level advice you'd offer?

Jen Prosek

Find something that gets you out of bed and you're partially excited about. Find something that when you're working at it, it doesn't feel like work. Because if you can do that, you will naturally work harder than other people around you because you like it. And if you are working harder than other people around you because you like it and you're passionate about it, you're generally going to get farther. So one of the things I am most proud of in my career is after business school, 99.9% of my colleagues were going into investment banking or consulting. I felt like the herd, I should do that too. I was already running my small PR firm. It wasn't very sexy. I got myself an offer at two major investment banks to join their analyst program and I had accepted one of them. And I woke up the next day after accepting and I called and I said I can't do it. And it's the to thine own self be true, I just decided I could be a very mediocre banker or I could be a killer financial communications person, and I should stick with what I'm good at and what fuels me. Sometimes, there's a lot of pressure to feel like I should be a banker because everyone else is or I should do this because everyone said I should. You should find that thing even if it's unpopular, even if it's not sexy, that gets you excited. That is if you want a career, not a job. And I always wanted a career, not a job.

Simon Brewer

So my final question is you meet all sorts of extraordinarily interesting people on your travels, who's the person you're yet to meet that you would want to sit down and have dinner with?

Jen Prosek

Boy, I will say that one of the great pleasures of my job is I always say I get to travel the halls of the most incredible institutions and meet the most amazing people. I think my clients are the most successful, innovative, amazing people on the planet and it fuels me. I love my job because of it. But who would I love to meet? There's a bunch of people, I guess, but I always still thought I'd like to meet Barack Obama. I actually did meet him quickly. I was at a hotel. It's a great story. So at a hotel, I got up at 5:00 in the morning to go for a run. There were

secret service around the hotel, but it wasn't overwhelming. I went into the gym, there was no one in there. I get on the treadmill, then a guy gets next to me. He's running and I look over and it's President Obama on the treadmill right next to me. We had a little chit chat afterward. But I read Michelle Obama's book and I just felt like I wouldn't mind meeting the Obamas.

Simon Brewer

Isn't that funny? I was in Berlin And he happened to be there. I went to the gym in the morning and there was two of the most enormous blokes I'd ever seen almost blocking the way but I was let in. I was in the gym. And he had this minder and I thought I'm going to shake his hand, I'm going to shake his hand. And every time I moved towards him, the minder would sort of make sure. He eventually went to the water cooler, and so did I, and I got to shake his hand. So you see, there we go.

Jen Prosek

I was stunned by how little security there was and how friendly he was. And this was right before he ran, I think, for his second term. And he sort of looked at me on the treadmill and he said, 'You know, you've got to stay in shape.' And I said to him, 'You've got to win.'

Simon Brewer

My memory was he was in great shape. Well, Jen, we're going close this conversation, and I know that people because it's been a different conversation on the Money Maze Podcast and yet you're absolutely woven into the thread of these financial firms and you see things that others don't axiomatically because of where you sit. So lots of great advice. I've just written down the two that I want to re-quote, which is nail the narrative, because there is a lot of fluff and excess in the business and in the language that's used that sounds very clever. But that's number one. And make your energy your enemy.

Jen Prosek

Your enemy, your energy.

Simon Brewer

That's right. Jen, it has been terrific seeing you here today. Thank you for your help. On behalf of the Money Maze Podcast, you are building, running a great business and it's been a pleasure to spend time with you.

Jen Prosek

Thank you and I must say the Money Maze Podcast is a must-listen for all my clients and for me. So I'm thrilled to be here and super honoured. Thank you.

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