

## Transcription details:

Host: Bill Coppel, First Clearing Chief Client Growth Officer

Guest: Jason Hewlett, Speaker, Entertainer and Author of *The Promise to The One*

## Transcription results:

Intro Welcome to The Next Frontier where we examine what the role of the financial advisor will be in a world that's being disrupted by artificial intelligence and algorithms. Our mission is to spark new conversations that create stronger connections and build greater client confidence. Join us as we look at our industry and others through a new lens and explore the opportunities emerging at the intersection of high-tech and high-touch. It's time for a new conversation. Are you ready?

BILL COPPEL Hi. This is Bill Coppel, and welcome to The Next Frontier. We're in the midst of a very unusual and uncertain time. It puts a lot of things into perspective and gives us pause to think about how we go about our day. How we interact with friends and family. And how we are managing our business and communicating with clients. It's all very different. I don't know about you, but I welcome a little bit of distraction from the intensity going on around me. I met our guest, Jason Hewlett, last year after hearing him give an entertaining keynote. As I reflected on his story, how he's able to connect with an audience, and the importance of empathy and leadership in everything we do, I thought it might resonate with you. We reached out to Jason about a month ago, and I felt like this was a good time to share that conversation with you.

BILL COPPEL First, let me tell you a little bit about Jason. Having delivered thousands of presentations over two decades, Jason Hewlett is teaching the principles of authentic leadership in a unique and memorable style. Performing uncanny musical and comedy impressions drawn from the legends of the entertainment world. Jason is the author of the Facebook post entitled, I Saw my Wife at Target Today, which has been seen by more than 100 million people. He is also the author of a new book entitled, The Promise to The One. A recent and one of the youngest inductees in the prestigious Speakers Hall of Fame, his talks inspire leadership from the perspective of a promise while giving attendees an engaging, entertaining, educational experience all-in-one. So with that, let's jump into the conversation. Jason, welcome to The Next Frontier.

JASON HEWLETT Thank you, Bill, for having me. I love doing this with you. Thank you for the invite.

BILL COPPEL We're really thrilled to have you with us today. In fact, when we first met, I was really taken by your personal story. Your journey. And I want to just kick it off by having you share that with our listeners because the way I had interpreted it, you actually reinvented yourself at a critical point in your life. Would you share that story with us today?

JASON HEWLETT Well, sure. Thank you. I began my career in Las Vegas as an impersonator, which is probably—I may be the first impersonator on The Next Frontier podcast. I don't know. Is that true?

BILL COPPEL That is a first for us here at The Next Frontier, and we're very proud of that.

JASON HEWLETT So, I'm this impersonator in Las Vegas doing an act of Ricky Martin and an act of Elton John. I was with the Legends in Concert in Las Vegas doing very well impersonating

those great musical artists where I would sing, and I would play the piano. I would dance. I would wear their clothes. I would do all these things. Eventually, was able to parlay that career into a one-man show of over 100 musical impressions. So anywhere from the Elton John, Ricky Martin pieces to other popular things or artists such as Journey, Guns N' Roses, Led Zeppelin, Louis Armstrong. Just kind of the classics that people enjoyed.

JASON HEWLETT

And a couple of years into my career as a one-man show that was doing a family-friendly G-rated experience, but a very Las Vegas quality experience, I was offered a Las Vegas opportunity in the sense of having a casino interested in having me headline. And so, that's kind of where my whole career begins and where my story is in the sense of, I was working on a one-man show career. We can maybe talk a little later, if you wanted to go there, about how I turned away the casino offer and why, to be the headliner.

JASON HEWLETT

But to answer your question, I made a living for 15 years as a one-man show doing music, comedy, and entertainment for corporate gigs and corporate events all over the world. And it was only in the last few years that I've made a huge transition over to now being a leadership speaker for those same type of corporate events. But instead of being the after-dinner entertainer, I'm now the early morning keynote speaker on leadership. And I have not hung out to be musical impressions and all of those things that are my signature moves that makes me different from other speakers, I utilize that in the speech to teach the importance of discovering your voice, what I call your signature moves, and to keep your promise to your audience.

JASON HEWLETT

So, in making this transition, Bill, a lot of people might say, "Well, it's kind of like showbiz, just a different hat." The truth is, this would be like a really good guy coming to your house and fixing your plumbing and then saying, "Hey, by the way, I also am a lawyer." And so, it has been a huge difficult transition. I have essentially had to start my business from scratch again to convince people to have me come in and speak about The Promise and to utilize these musical impressions as a speaker to teach leadership and identify our differentiation, our personal brand. I talk about the profitability of integrity, these types of things that seems so foreign to anybody that's seen me entertain. And they say, "Well, he's just the funny guy." But to the people that have seen me speak, they go, "He's the funny guy, but he's also the profound guy." And so, that's where it's gone. It's been an amazing shift in my career. And it's something that I always wanted to become. I always wanted to be a speaker. Motivational, inspirational, hilarious as much as possible. As a speaker that teaches through my talents and gifts.

BILL COPPEL

Let's just take a step back for a moment. So, you take this very successful career in Las Vegas as an entertainer. And for some reason—And this is what I want to kind of get at. You were able to sort of change directions. What were some of the conditions that sent you in that direction? Obviously, being a headliner at a major casino. And setting aside Las Vegas and casinos for a moment because people could have a mixed reaction to that. But for you personally, you're very successful. You're at a great point in your career. And then boom, you stop. Was it the competition? What was it like? What were the things that drove you to thinking about how you might transition what you do?

JASON HEWLETT

Yeah. So, I was averaging anywhere from 150 to 200 dates a year between doing conventions in Las Vegas to performing whenever and wherever that I could. A couple of the factors came into it. First of all, we had children, my wife and I. We had four kids in five years. And when you're doing around 200 dates a year, that means you're not around. And so, I was missing the childhoods of these children and realizing, we needed to make a change. However, when you're an entertainer and you're not

famous. I mean, your audience wouldn't know my name unless they'd seen me at a corporate event. When you're not famous, you're not making a ton of money. So, you do have to do quantity amounts of events. And so, the first big shift was, we had children, and I wanted to be home more.

JASON HEWLETT

The next thing that happened was, two of my heroes from my entertaining days passed away back-to-back. There was a fellow in Las Vegas, who was a headliner, that I patterned my whole career after. His name was Danny Gans. And he was the greatest impressionist that ever lived and entertainer. And it was a wonderful show. He passed away and this was over a decade ago. And when he passed away, it was such a shock because he looked like Superman. And his life seemed so set. And then he just died one day. And then, a month later, Michael Jackson passed away, who I also used to do a really good impression of.

JASON HEWLETT

And so, these two people that had influenced me so much, when they passed away, I started doing research about what happened to them and started to realize that physically, it was so demanding, what they had done as entertainers, to get on the stage every single night, they had to do certain things to their bodies to make it so that they could. And as I would come off stage, Bill, after a lot of my events, I started actually physically feeling sick. My throat actually was hurting my voice so much. I went to the doctor and they said, "Hey, you're wearing out your gift, which is your voice. You'd better either adjust your show or stop doing it." And I said, "Well, how would I survive?" And they were pretty much, "Well, maybe you could sing a little, but you have to mostly just speak if you're going to do anything." And I had always wanted to be the speaker anyway. So, there were a couple of factors that came into play that made it so that I needed to make that change.

BILL COPPEL

So, Jason, one of the things you mentioned was this notion of signature moves. And those are the things, I think the way you described it was that's what made you different than other folks. And I think part of what you're doing today in your leadership work is actually beginning to share with audiences how they can distinguish themselves using your technique of signature moves. How do you establish yourself, differentiate yourself from the crowd, to develop a relationship, as an example, leveraging that signature move strategy?

JASON HEWLETT

When it comes to your signature moves, there are things and techniques, skills, and talents you've used your whole life to get you to where you are. And so, if you're utilizing them, that's what you're known for. And if we were to think about what someone might say about you at say, your funeral or say, when you leave the room, what are people saying about you? That really, essentially, becomes your signature moves that people know you for. And so, I have been teaching people how to discover that thing within themselves that they naturally can't even see that they have most often.

JASON HEWLETT

And so, I do this in a hilarious way with the impressions. And whether it's Elvis Presley, identifying that he had certain skill sets and then he clarified it with his audience and then magnified it as a performer, to the financial planner, let's say, and meeting professional or these types of people that are in business making a difference in this world, they're utilizing a certain skill set to get to the point where they have a great relationship with their audience, with their client.

JASON HEWLETT

For example, my financial planner, the reason I chose this person is because he was referred to me by a trusted advisor who was the person that was coaching me at the time on my business. I just said, "Who do you use?" And he said, "I use this guy." And I said, "Why?" And he said, "Because he listens. He has great ideas. He helps me to figure out what I want to do in my future. And he doesn't berate me when I make a mistake." And I said, "Okay." So, I went and met with him. And it's nice to have

someone close by that you can meet with face-to-face. And I got to know my now financial planner a few years back.

JASON HEWLETT

And it just opened up my eyes to what could be done if somebody utilized their great skills in the sense that this man's ability—empathy, of relatability, of not being on a high-horse, but rather, walking alongside me. And he tells me some of his challenges and struggles and it helps me to realize, "Oh, I think we can do this together," rather than him ever looking down upon me. And it has been a wonderful relationship. Those are some of his signature moves.

BILL COPPEL

So, this signature move is an important idea that you've brought to us today. And I also want to emphasize that those moves are those things that you do, or an individual does that leaves an impression, a positive impression, on whomever you're with. And in fact, the way you describe it is after you leave the room, these are things people remember, will identify. And I think it's important for our audience to hear from you about, how do you go about identifying those signature moves and what your potential is?

JASON HEWLETT

Wonderful. Yeah. That's a great question. As a performer, I would connect with my audience in this way where I would stand up there in complete confidence and at the same time, a certain relatability. I had a former manager who called it a certain boyish charm, which I seem to have ever since I started being on stage. And so, there was a relatability there, almost an empathy that the audience had with me. As if we were just having a conversation. And that's why the performance was so simple for me, as a performer, to stand up and say, "This is a conversation. It's a dialogue. It's not a monologue."

JASON HEWLETT

And I think when it comes to your industry and the people that are most likely listening, if they can't think of themselves as a performer in that sense, they do need to start. Because we're all performers. We're based upon performance. We seize the opportunities due to our performance. But as you're trying to figure out what you identify could be your signature moves, think about the way that you do things just on a normal basis, when it comes to connecting with people. If somebody texts you a question, do you text them back or do you call? Or if they call and leave a message, do you text them back or do you jump right on the phone? I mean, just something that simple can become known as your signature moves to your client.

JASON HEWLETT

And so, when I teach people to understand and figure theirs out, a lot of the times people think, "Well, this is what I need to improve. This is what I need to get better at." And I say, "Stop. Let's not say we need to improve anything for a second. Let's just think that we're great already. We have all of the gifts and talents naturally that we need. And let's just highlight those and create them into skills and powerful tools that you can utilize every single day." For example, if I'm receiving an inbound request from a client, I have a certain process for doing that, but at the same time, I'm going to infuse my signature moves into it. So, if they request something from me on the phone, I'm going to be funny on the phone. Or I'm going to ask many, many questions so that they realize that I'm listening. Or I'm going to be empathetic and engaging with them about their challenges and repeat back to them what I think I just understood and then how it's happened to me before or how I've gone through that as well. And that really seems to help people see that they have it.

JASON HEWLETT

And then it when it comes to the entire process of discovering your signature moves, identify, clarify, magnify. Identify is what you see in yourself but clarify is the real kicker. That's when you ask others what they see in you. And that one's really interesting because they start giving you words you may have never said about yourself or thought for yourself that you've got. And so, the clarifying process is fascinating, especially if we ask a client. If we say, "Hey, I have a question for you. I'm

doing an exercise to improve my business, improve my life, what would you say are the top three to five things that make me the planner that you've decided to work with?" And you'll be getting some words that you would not have thought of but that probably intrinsically you've been doing the whole time. That could very well change your business today.

BILL COPPEL

So, when you talk about identify, clarify, and magnify, that's an iterative process I'm assuming takes time. How do you prepare? If you're going into a situation to meet or engage with a client, let's say, as a financial advisor might do, how do you begin to prepare? How do you identify, clarify, and magnify how you are going to approach that individual? Because I imagine, it could be a little different for every person, given most people are different.

JASON HEWLETT

Yeah. Of course. Well, at this point in time, we do have way more of an opportunity to create a better experience for those that we're advising just because of the fact of social media and the internet. I mean, heavens, even 15 years ago, there was kind of no way to know how to customize it to somebody before you went in and you had to almost be an improvisational artist. But at this point, you can do some research. Find out where they're from. See what kind of connections you can make. Whether it's the school they went to on—You can look up the person on LinkedIn or something to that effect. There are certain ways to connect in that realm.

JASON HEWLETT

But the best way for yourself is to just simply be prepared with your great gifts and skills that you already have coming in. And so, for example, I know you know this about me, Bill. But my father was a very successful financial and insurance guy. And I thought that's where my career was going to go. And he used to take me on his calls, sales calls, when I was a kid. And that was an over-the-top, amazing process to watch him utilize his signature moves, which were his ability to be a cheerleader. His ability to instill confidence in the listener. His way of connecting the dots from wherever the person was from and they may have gone to school to the ability to see things that the people that were at the other side of the table had questions about or concerns about, and he seemed to know everything.

JASON HEWLETT

It was an amazing experience as a child because I would go to his sales calls after thinking he was a professional golfer because I knew that's all he did was go golf with his clients. And then I'm sitting there at these meetings going, "Oh my gosh. I think my dad's a genius." And really, he is. But he's mostly a genius at connecting with people and helping them realize their own challenges and how he can help them overcome them. And that's why he was the top guy in the world in his-- He was with Sun Life of Canada back when I was a kid.

JASON HEWLETT

And so, I thought I would be taking over the family business someday and he taught me so much about how to run my business as the entertainer and now turns the leadership speaker, he taught me so much just by watching him as a financial advisor and an insurance agent. It was a beautiful thing. And he did that with every client, every interaction, he gives his signature moves with enthusiasm and charisma. But at the same time, listening, empathy, connection. He had all of these that have made him a legendary leader in the world of finance and insurance.

BILL COPPEL

Talk to us a little bit about what you observed, not so much from what you saw your father do but share with us how the clients reacted. There's got to be a lot of authenticity in what he did in order for that genuine connection to occur. How did they feel after spending time with your dad?

JASON HEWLETT

Well, yeah. They felt like he was their best friend and he was going to go to bat for them. And so, when we look at some of the conversations, I've heard on your other podcasts about how there's this concern of technology taking over in the future and

the industry, it has some challenges forthcoming. I always hearken back to what I noticed; he'd put them at ease. I mean, he had this ability to create an emotion. It was like a performance, and they were a wonderful audience. And at the same time, they were performers and he was their audience. And it just went back and forth like a beautiful dance.

JASON HEWLETT

And so, I've always held the belief that yes, technology is going to assist us, but it will never overtake us as long as we understand our signature moves and our absolute promise that we bring in every single interaction and connection with every client. And that's what he did so well and man, the people that he talked to, they thought that he was their best friend. And he was. I mean, he loved his clients like they were his family. And he would not have them do anything and not take any risk that he wouldn't take himself. And they knew that they could follow him anywhere. That's a powerful leader and that's what we need to be in our business.

BILL COPPEL

I couldn't agree more. In fact, we talk about augmented reality today and I'll share a quick story you might find entertaining. In that, I can recall my son, who's 15 years old, try to convince me that we needed an augmented reality headset in the house. And I said, "Reality's hard enough. I don't need it augmented." But in any event, he was visiting a friend, I went to pick him up. And he said, "Hey, dad. Try this on." And I put on the gear and the next thing I know, I'm in the middle of a lightsaber battle with some character. And I went to swing to defend myself and managed to take everything off of the mantle in this house that I was visiting. And all this stuff went crashing to the floor. And I thought, "Wow. This augmented reality is pretty realistic. I can feel things and I can hear things."

BILL COPPEL

The point being is that nothing really replaces that human interaction. I think this is what you're talking about when you talk about the impact of technology and the social platforms today, play a part, serve a purpose, but don't replace what you saw your father—what he was able to do when he interacted with people.

JASON HEWLETT

Oh, exactly. And that's a wonderful story. Thank you for sharing. How funny. When it comes to the technology, yes, it will help. Oh, my heavens. It changes the game. But that just helps us to have to step up our game as human beings. To be able to say, "I've got these 50 things or 100 talents and gifts that I can bring to this that technology will not be able to replace." And it's the relationship. It's the emotion. It's building of confidence or feeling empathy. It's always being ready to be the shoulder to cry on, but at that the same time, to be the strong one. To help someone who has made some mistakes with their finances and say, "Hey, we got this. It's okay. Do this over here and do that and stop doing this and you'll be fine." And so, with that human connection and interaction, that's where the signature moves come into play and that's the promise of the financial advisor is to be that kind of person.

BILL COPPEL

Let me shift gears for a moment because you've got a new book coming out this summer. The Promise to The One. Is this your first book, Jason, or have you had others?

JASON HEWLETT

I've had other books, but this is my first actual published through a publisher book, which is through Sound Wisdom. They're the ones that actually—

BILL COPPEL

Congratulations.

JASON HEWLETT

Yeah. Thank you. They're the ones that have the rights to publish everything by Napoleon Hill, the great Think and Grow Rich author. The original self-help books. As well as people like Zig Ziglar, Earl Nightingale, others that are pretty much all your classics. And so, when they read my manuscript, they said, "You are the perfect person that's a speaker, that's an author, that we would want to have be a part of our publishing house here." So yeah. This is the first official published book. So very self-

help, very self-made, and self-published. So, I'm excited, man. I appreciate you even mentioning it. It's a good book.

BILL COPPEL

Well, I was reading up on it. There was a couple of passages I was able to get because I was intrigued. Obviously, I know you, and I know what drives you. And I understand this whole notion of how much potential we all have inside of us and how hard it is often to unleash that potential. But I think this book is focused on that. And I want to read to our listeners just a quick paragraph that I found that I want to get your reaction to it. And it goes like this, "The greatest joy in fulfillment are within us and within our reach. But they require an enduring promise to the one. Someone you may not expect. It's not your boss or your spouse or even your children or anyone else. No, the ultimate commitment is the promise you make to yourself to discover your purpose and gifts and share them with the world." Talk to us a little bit about the backstory here and really, what power exists that we actually control within ourselves as long as we, essentially, live up to promises we make ourselves.

JASON HEWLETT

Well, thank you, Bill. I do love that. And there are three promises that we make. And the first one I think is to our audience, which is our clients, the people that we serve. The next promise is to the family. Not just the family at home, but the family at work. And the final promise is to the one. I started with the Promise to The One as the first book because it's the easiest one to break in the sense of, if we stop serving our audience and break a promise to our clients, we'll be out of business. If we break a promise to our family at work, they just hate working with us. If we break a promise to our family at home, they might leave us.

JASON HEWLETT

But usually, we're keeping those promises to all of those different elements, right, and places. When it comes to the promise to the one, to ourselves, we so easily and often forget ourselves. And whether that means self-care, whether that means forgiving ourselves of past mistakes, whether that means you have now landed in something of a rut in your life let's say, where you're just going day-to-day and wishing you had done something different with your life, what is the purpose of your life? That's what the Promise to The One is. And it's about making sure that you have certain promises that you make, and you keep regarding your character, your habits, your integrity.

JASON HEWLETT

There's all kinds of chapters in this book that offer exercises to help the reader to say, "I am living my promise." This is not a book to frustrate anyone. This is more of the way to say, "I think I am living my purpose even in the job I may not love. But how can I do the job just a little bit better?" The littlest things are what matter. And even when we talk about goals. I like to say, "Why set a goal when we can make a promise?" Not to say that a goal isn't important. But if you miss a goal, you just reset it. But if you break a promise, you have a problem.

JASON HEWLETT

And so, what are the promises to yourself for your health? For your spirit? For your mind? What are you listening to when we wake up? What is your amount of time on your phone that's taking over your day? These are the small promises that we make to ourselves and that can change the trajectory of our lives from now on if we're willing to shift one small, simple thing in each day. And that's why I wrote The Promise to The One. And I think that anyone that reads it will be inspired. It'll make you cry. It'll make you laugh. But it will make you recommit to the highest level of engagement you ever had and that's the promise. It's not a goal, it's not a commitment, it is a promise that is unbreakable. It's a sacred goal, is a promise.

BILL COPPEL

Well, we look forward to seeing the book when it comes out this summer. So, let me just wrap up our conversation today with a question I like to ask all our guests. Jason, if you could leave us with one or two thoughts that will help us kind of reset where we are today to become able to deliver against those promises, what would they be?

JASON HEWLETT

Oh, that's a great question. I would say, have a conversation with the people that matter most to you about what those promises might be. And so, if I'm trying to improve myself, I might even ask my wife and just say, "Can I ask you honestly, how do you feel that I'm doing as a dad?" And that conversation alone, not as an argument, but as a self-help, self-assessment, that's a very helpful thing to do. I've done that with my children and that helps me to become a better dad from the perspective of my child saying, "I would love to go skiing more with you, dad." Or, "I don't want you to do the raptor anymore when my friends come over, dad."

JASON HEWLETT

And then at the same time, I would offer this as a piece of advice for any listener, do you have a journal? And when I talk about a journal, I'm talking something that you open and write in. Sure, we might take notes and email ourselves some ideas for things we could do better in the future. And I would recommend having a book that you open, and you write with a pen. There's something about this tangible exercise with the brain and the connection and the spilling of our thoughts that actually opens up a new level of promise to self to be better and to be happier and feel more fulfilled. If your listeners haven't journaled before, I would say that that's a wonderful practice to begin to say, if you can do something like that, and that establishes some more of those promises that you've made and maybe broken and can start again today, those are a good place to start.

BILL COPPEL

Well, Jason, thank you very much for spending time with us today. Good luck with the new book. And for the rest of us who are beginning to figure out how to make these transitions, we say, "Thank you."

JASON HEWLETT

I'm honored to have been on here with you today.

BILL COPPEL

Thank you for your kind words. For listeners who are interested in learning more about Jason and his work, you can find links to his information in this episode's show description. We hope you enjoyed our conversation today. Please take a moment to subscribe to our podcast. And if you like what you heard, please tell others about it. It helps people find us and ensures you never miss an episode. It's also a way to challenge you to think differently about your business in the role you play. And together, we can change the conversation. Thanks for listening. And until next time, be well.

Outro

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