

Bobby Morgan (00:01)

White House actually came to me and said, hey, we need you to become a government contractor or else your program that you're managing and have been managing for eight years is going to go away. So I went to a coworker of mine. said, what do you think about starting a company? And he was kind of at that pinnacle of his career too. And we said, let's do it.

Ryan Newman (00:25)

This is Dare to Disrupt, a podcast about Penn State alumni who are innovators, entrepreneurs, and leaders, and the stories behind their success.

I'm your host, Ryan Newman. And on the show today is Bobby Morgan. Bobby is the founder and CEO of Prosperitas Enterprises. Its flagship system, Live Prosperous, trains and inspires individuals, teams, and organizations to build the resilience and emotional strength to thrive through life's inevitable storms, improving performance and building more resilient people, teams, and communities from the inside out. He's also the founder and CEO of Talaria Media.

a premium film, television, and digital media company operating out of Los Angeles and Nashville. Bobby graduated from Penn State with a degree in electrical engineering. Bobby, welcome to Dare to Disrupt. You're actually a first on the show. You're the first guest we've had in the film industry, and I'm looking forward to diving into that with you and a whole lot more. So thank you so much for joining us today.

Bobby Morgan (01:24)

Howell, thank you for having me, Ryan. It's good to see you again.

Ryan Newman (01:27)

seeing you. And we'd like to start as we normally do, which is at the beginning. Would you give our listeners a little bit of insight into the very early formative years of Bobby Morgan in terms of where you grew up and what that experience was like?

Bobby Morgan (01:40)

That's a good question, Ryan, because I always get go, how did you go from milking cows to making films? I grew up in a rural Pennsylvania, a farming community, totally blessed to have a grandfather who ran his own highly successful, efficient dairy business. My dad also was an entrepreneur and he had his own business for a number of years supporting the dairy industry. was a 330 acre dairy farm nestled in a valley.

My grandparents ~ affectionately referred to it as heaven on earth. And just to fast forward a little bit, my wife and I and my family now own the farm, kept it in the family. I grew up in a community where neighbors help neighbors. Everybody's shorthanded to some degree, so neighbors stepping in to help one another. I started out my dairy farming career, occasionally milking cows at four o'clock in the morning. But then at some point, I really got fascinated with the whole business of farming.

I was the one person in my, of my siblings that actually worked full time on the dairy farm. So great introduction to real world. When you start out your career, you get the lowest level job you have on a farm. And for that, that was cleaning out the barns.

Ryan Newman (02:50)

Wow, not even milking the cows, huh? That's a couple levels up.

Bobby Morgan (02:53)

No, no, my grandfather taught me the right ways. Like you're to go clean out the manure in the farms. They'll have at it. That entrepreneurial gene was with me from the moment I think I came out of the womb. I got really curious about understanding the electronics, the hydraulics, the machinery, agriculture, pesticides, all those kinds of things. It was, it it was like an MBA in farming just by going through it.

Ryan Newman (03:18)

think

about cows being milked today, it looks like a lot of it's done electronically. When you were back on the farm growing up, was it done electronically or was it manually milking of the cows? And if so, what is the secret to effectively milking a cow?

Bobby Morgan (03:33)

Yeah,

I lived through the progression, kind of a transition in the dairy industry where, you you started out just kind of hand, not hand milking, but milking with a milking system. And then, you know, you could see innovation creeping into the farming industry. And that's what my dad did. He helped farmers innovate by integrating new electronic systems, new milking parlors, more efficient ways almost of herding the cows through the milking process. So I lived through that transition.

And I'm glad you asked this question because this is one of my fondest memories. And when people ask me, like, who is one of your most inspirational business leaders? I go back to my grandfather. He was early 70s. The whole notion of computerized milking feeding systems was just coming out. And he was an earlier adopter of technology. He was always looking for an efficient way to improve the process.

And I remember him at 72 years old, pecking away on a keyboard with the old floppy disk, entering all the data for every single cow in his herd so that he could optimize the feeding and maximize the milk output. So I lived through most of those transitions. Now today, the farming industry has continued to vertically integrate. It's kind of a rarity now where you have a farm that does everything self-contained, which was my grandfather's business. It's now more of a people milk, people grow crops.

They work with each other. So it's a fascinating industry. When you look at business stresses that most of us don't see, weather is a huge impact for farmers. And it caused a lot of stress on my grandfather and how to run the business. For me, I was like a rainy day. I didn't have to work hard.

Ryan Newman (05:16)

~ Right,

Day off. The fact that you have the farm and the family still, is this, is it operational today or is it more of just a nostalgic keepsake at this point?

Bobby Morgan (05:25)

It's a mixture of both. So we have about 150 farmable acres. And because of the industry, we lease it to Jones Harvesting, which is one of those big agriculture companies that, that I think farms and produces crops on over 250,000 acres. So we use them to grow crops, but for the family, it's more of a family retreat. For me in the journey that I'm now on, it's an opportunity to go back, reconnect with nature.

you know, walk through the mountains. It's got a beautiful creek that runs through it. So it's just for me, a place to get centered, get better emotionally and spiritually heal. Constantly urging people to get more out into nature because it's just an incredible feeling when you get out there and some of the insanity that we have going on in the world right now, it seems to dissipate.

Ryan Newman (06:13)

Well, when you think about, you know, the idea of when whenever anyone's driving to Penn State, you see all these rolling hills and all these farms. And, you know, it was interesting to hear you talk about the idea that it was the community was very close knit and you helped each other. What do you think is the key to people and reliance and communities being connected when you're physically so separated on farms that are separated by acres and miles of seeing one another?

Bobby Morgan (06:39)

it was more of a culture and an attitude where you knew your neighbors were going to call on you for help at some point and vice versa. If we were in a pinch and we needed extra people to help milk cows or bail hay or do things like that, we knew we had a group of

neighbors that were willing to come help. And then on the flip side, my grandfather was probably one of the most generous and philanthropic and community giving people. So they knew they could call Harold Dishong or bub.

when they called, he would find some way to help them. We're living in a world where we want to be independent and try to disconnect, but then try to reconnect. The farming community has always had this sense of connectivity and neighbor help your neighbor. It's great place to grow up.

Ryan Newman (07:25)

So as you think about going to school, what type of student were you? You talked about an interest in electronics and technology.

Bobby Morgan (07:30)

I was not a good student. I got good grades. My whole life has been driven by curiosity and I didn't find the learning experience in school all that curious. It was almost something I had to do. But my interest in electronics, it really came because my dad was on that evolution of the transition in the agriculture industry into more electronic systems. So when I wasn't working on the farm, I was helping my dad integrate and install electronic

systems for dairy farmers. But weirdly, what got me into really into electronics was music. Music has always been part of my soul. I wish I could play music better, but music was still on vinyl records. We were transitioning to CDs and I was just curious, like how in the world could you play a guitar, record that, put it on a record, an album, drop a needle, go through this black box, connect to these speakers and this beautiful sound came out.

That's what actually drove me into electrical engineering. was, this is just amazing. This music just moves your soul, but how do you make it? It's just fascinating to me. that was between the experience working with my dad and my grandfather on the farms in the dairy industry and that love of music. That's kind of what propelled me into the wanting to explore and be curious. I had no idea what an engineer did at the time. Everything I jump

into is because I'm curious and I want to learn and I want to grow and I want to develop something new.

Ryan Newman (08:58)

Well, as Albert Einstein famously said, I'm not smarter than everyone else. It's just that I'm more passionately curious. And so it sounds like that's a big driver for you as well. Bobby, you get to Penn State. Sounds like electrical engineering is where you honed in. So you're on campus. How are you spending your time and how did you work through your Penn State experience?

Bobby Morgan (09:16)

My Penn State experience was radically different than most. Leaving a farming community and jumping into the vastness of Penn State is intimidating. Also somebody who educationally, things came very easy to me. And now all of a sudden I'm studying electrical engineering and the first year it took its toll on me. Grade wise I did great, but it just taught me I needed to shift my attitude, my behaviors and become more focused, more intentional. You kind of have to work through those lessons to figure out.

How am I going to survive electrical engineering at Penn State University? Things got radically different. My sophomore year over the summer, I was diagnosed with testicular cancer. So as I'm preparing to go off to college for my second year, I had two emergency surgeries to remove a tumor and what's called a lymph node dissection, where they take all your lymph nodes and test them to see if the cancer spread. So I rolled back into my sophomore year.

Ryan Newman (09:56)

Wow.

Bobby Morgan (10:14)

after intense major surgery and being diagnosed with cancer. Now, fortunately, the doctors at the time felt that the cancer was gone when they removed the tumors. So it was just a

system of periodic checks to make sure that it hadn't come back. So now I'm continuing on with my education. They told me if I lasted two years, I was going to be cured. Two years later on my 24th checkup, came back.

~ You know, now it's a whole different ballgame because now I have to go through chemotherapy and a whole different treatment because it had spread. Wow. So instead of being at Penn State, I'm now at the University of Maryland Cancer Center getting very intense chemotherapy that just absolutely wiped me out physically, mentally, emotionally. Came through that, got back into Penn State and I was committed. I'm like, I am not letting this derail my education. Same diagnosis. Everything looks good. Chemotherapy should have

you know, wiped out the cancer four months later, came back again. This is the third time. Yes. Wow. Now being a businessman, it was a fascinating lesson because now I'm sitting with at the time the number three doctor in the country and he's looking at my case, seeing that it came back a third time, which at that moment in history, I was only the 10th person to had this kind of reoccurrence. So as in rare, rare company. Wow. But that gentleman had the

Ryan Newman (11:10)

This is the third time now.

Bobby Morgan (11:35)

courage to call off the top two doctors in the country, the one who created the chemotherapy regimen for testicular cancer and the head doctor at Sloan Kettering. So I had the top three doctors in the country working on my case. We went through chemo again, settled on a treatment and thank God it's been gone since then. But I did have to take a semester off. So I ended up taking one semester off at Penn State, ended up finishing up in four and a half years, got married to Tammy. Then it was off to the next phase, but it was

It wasn't the typical college experience. I love Penn State to death and have a huge fondness of it. Penn State, the Penn State community, my friends, my family, they helped me all get through it. I look back and people are like, that's really devastating and horrific. And I'm like, but it's, curious and jump into things. gave me an attitude when I left Penn State and I ultimately walked through door after door after door. My attitude was what is the worst that could happen? It's not cancer.

Right? So my perspective of fear and failure was completely different. I jumped into opportunities that I probably would have never jumped into, but for that diagnosis and treatment of cancer and teaching me that life is tough. You're going to get hit with things that are completely out of the blue. You don't have any control over it. All you have to do is fight your way through it. And if you fight your way through it, you'll end up be stronger on the, on the backside.

Interestingly enough, and this ties into my current venture right now, we all have these challenges that you go through in life. We try to handle them by ourselves. We put on the armor, you know, we go into battle. The reality is we always need somebody. That's where family community connectivity really is important. The nurses that I had taken care of me were some of the best human beings that you will ever meet on the planet.

Ryan Newman (13:30)

So talking about putting on the armor, after graduation, you did pursue a career in the military in some form. Can you talk about the inspiration for that and what your initial path was after graduation?

Bobby Morgan (13:40)

I graduated Penn State and I had a number of different job opportunities. This is where I hadn't really thought about it, but the seeds of entrepreneurship had been planted, like I said, by my dad and my grandfather. The opportunity to join an engineering activity in rural Southern Maryland to start modernizing the communication systems for the Navy SEALs and the Army Special Forces. Now you're a kid growing up on a farm in South Central PA and now all of a sudden you're working with Navy SEALs.

Bobby Morgan (14:11)

Sign me up, I'm all in, right? So for me, again, it was curiosity. The science and engineering was compelling because we were building systems and solving problems that had never been addressed before. But from a human standpoint, the ability to work with elite warriors, how they lead, how they assess problems, how they attack missions, I learned so much just about intentionality and focus and grit and resilience from the people I worked with and the leadership skill.

So that was a huge opportunity for me to just jump into that world. As I was working for the Navy SEALs, I'm working with Dev Group, which is affectionately known as SEAL Team Six, but the Navy Special Warfare Developmental Group. And I get on a trip to Fort Bragg. I'm just a newbie. I walk into this warehouse off base and these six gentlemen come out of the back and they're in khakis and

polo shirts and they've got beards and some long hair and I'm working on a Navy base with his butt and up, you know, and I'm like, who are these dudes? Right. Yeah.

Ryan Newman (15:17)

Maybe a little bit of muscle mass too, Bobby, right?

Bobby Morgan (15:20)

Yeah, I'm like, you know, five foot nine hundred sixty pounds. And so so the communication officer walks up and everybody's doing introductions and he refuses to look at me. And he looks at my project lead and he goes, who's this guy? Sir, this is Bobby Morgan. He's a new engineer. He's going to be working on this program. He says, what does he know?

Now mind you, I'm standing right next to him. And he's, what does he know? He says, Oh, well he's got a TS clearance. He's all read in. He's good. And finally he looks at me and he does not shake my hand. He just looks at me and says, just so you know, if you fail, we die.

Bobby Morgan (16:05)

And I was like, I'm not on the farm anymore. It was just an incredible lesson in life that told you like things are important. Mistakes are, you know, overcomeable, but failure is life threatening, which is the environment that I grew up with. Every organization I grow, you come out with a perspective of if we fail in what we do, people are going to be impacted. Now, obviously not at that level, but it shouldn't matter. It shouldn't matter what level you're working at.

failure impacts people's lives. Shortly thereafter, the White House came down and said, hey, we need to modernize the presidential communication systems. It's the highest priority, the highest fat in the entire military. We need somebody to run this program. Weirdly enough, because of the pressure, a lot of people didn't volunteer. For some reason, my hand shot up like a rocket. said, I'll do it.

Ryan Newman (16:55)

Wow. No fear.

Bobby Morgan (17:01)

no fear. And that was one of those pivotal decisions in life that just opened so many doors for me professionally. Now I'm not at an environment where I'm working at the 18 acres at the White House campus. I'm modernizing communication systems at Camp David. I'm interfacing with Air Force One. It's just a whole different world for me. And again, the pressure and the chaos was equal or if not greater than working with the Navy SEALs and the Army Special Forces. So my government military career was out of this world crazy.

did a lot of things that I'm not allowed to talk about, had a lot of opportunity to work with some of the best technology companies in the world and build systems that had never been built before. But it was ridiculously creative and curious, just a rare opportunity. So I'm extremely blessed to be able to have that experience.

Ryan Newman (17:49)

they say, Bobby, pressure is a privilege and you certainly got to live that privilege. So at a certain point you decide it's time to take another entrepreneurial venture as much as what you're describing sounds pretty groundbreaking. You actually did go and found a company, which you then grew and scaled. Can you talk about the decision to do that and the formation of that business?

Bobby Morgan (18:08)

Absolutely. I think, you know, for people who are curious and achieve success and I have definitions of success that are way beyond money because the work in the government wasn't high paying. But there was a point in time where it felt like I was just hitting that ceiling because of the work that I had done. It opened up opportunities. The white house actually came to me and said, Hey, we need you to become a government contract.

or else your program that you're managing and had been managing for eight years is going to go away. So I went to a coworker of mine. I said, what do think about starting a company? And he was kind of at that pinnacle of his career too. And we said, let's do it. I was going through my MBA program for me running a business was about relationships and you know, delivering systems and all the other.

finance, accounting, tax, all that other stuff to me was just, so I recruited my brother out of PricewaterhouseCoopers, who's a Smeal grad, Ron Morgan, and Rob Franklin and I, we just embarked on building a company. It started out to do nothing but national security work. Our first client was with the White House, but then my brother, with his entrepreneurial bug, he started consulting back to the telecom industry in the Washington DC region. And next thing you know, we have a national security division.

and a business consulting division for fortune 500 companies. We said, well, this is kind of unique for a company our size, but you know what, let's give it a go. And we were able to manage to grow and scale both of those divisions almost equally. And it was a really fascinating business case because if you have one product line that is kind of safe and secure and gets five year contracts, but doesn't generate as much profit because there's lower risk. And then you have this high risk consulting business that

you can make a lot of money, but your engagement could end tomorrow. It seemed we just managed those two very vastly different things differently. But at the end of the day, from a culture standpoint and how we delivered, it was the same. was like, why would we treat the White House any differently than British telecom? Wow.

Ryan Newman (20:15)

by the way, British Telecom is going to love the fact that you're treating them with the same level of intensity and focus as you would the White House.

Bobby Morgan (20:23)

Yeah. So, and again, there's a lot of things that can go wrong when you launch a business for us. It's a miracle. Our first two clients out of the gate were the white house and a \$6 billion joint venture between British telecom and AT &T. Now most company founders aren't blessed with that. But you know, I'm going to take it and I'm going to run with it. And it was a great experience. And then we ended up running and building that business for 20 plus years. We ultimately got to a point.

Bobby Morgan (20:52)

When you just know that your ability to grow and scale a national security business is going to be very difficult when you're now competing against General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin, British Arrow, you know, the 800 pound gorillas. So we made the very hard decision and then we packaged that division up and ultimately sold it to SRA. And you know, what is a really cool story about that is the one gentleman that I recruited, we recruited out of the White House.

He was involved in that sale to SRA and he left our company and went and became a manager of a multi-billion dollar unit at SRA. He's now an entrepreneur and the original contract that we won out of the White House, he has now won again. Full circle. It's all come back full circles.

Ryan Newman (21:40)

wow.

Bobby, the reality is we could spend a whole episode on Morgan Franklin, but for you personally, you've had some pretty intense and well-developed subsequent chapters to Morgan Franklin. We'd love to spend time there. Talk to us about that period post the sale of Morgan Franklin, when in theory you should be at the pinnacle of success, the apex of entrepreneurial achievement. And I'm sure you just continue to write off on the sunset.

from high to high, Bobby, but there's a glimmer in your eye that suggests to me that maybe that's not true. So talk us through that.

Bobby Morgan (22:16)

No, it's 100 % not true. And that's why I'm on the mission I'm on right now. I was the CEO, founder. My whole identity was about Morgan Franklin. And when I left, that team that you've built, that you've surrounded yourself with, that you trust and you love is gone. Your identity is all wrapped up in the job that you did and the role that you played. That's gone. You know, when you're leading a company, you have a mission and purpose and a vision. That was all gone. Yes.

blessed beyond belief with the sale and the outcome of those companies. But as human beings, we need purpose. We need mission. We need, we need a tribe to lean on and we need an identity that is way beyond just what we do. So I struggled a little bit. I really did. I was sitting there trying to figure out what was going to be my purpose. That armor that I put on from cancer started to really become a problem because I wasn't letting anybody in.

Right. So not only did I lose my team that I trusted, I was hesitant to identify a new tribe and a new purpose. So I was struggling quite a bit. Part of the new venture that I created as a result of that, in combination with seeing a lot of young people dealing with mental health issues. And then you had COVID and, you know, social media where people just aren't connected. That was what drove us to create Prosperitas and create this system called Live Prosperous to help people.

with emotional intelligence, emotional resilience, and the resilience piece is all about overcoming those transitions and transitioning for entrepreneurs or a business leader is extremely difficult. One of our partners is Freddie Scott from Penn State at Live Prosperous and he had the same issue. He got hurt. His career in the NFL was over. He struggled for about a year, didn't know what he was going to do, didn't know what he was good at besides football. And he had to go through that process. So

You know, he helps elite athletes transitioning into the NFL out of the NFL and other sports. We have a couple of Navy seal and a green beret on our team that talk about the struggles that the veterans go through the transition. So I started looking at the difficulties I had transitioning from Morgan Franklin is the impetus of what I'm doing now to include telling stories, uplifting stories. And I created Talaria media to

create films and TV shows that are inspiring, that are uplifting, and they kind of work coinciding with Live Prosperous, because I believe that storytelling is really how we truly learn. It inspires us and it motivates us, but it also gives us the opportunity to reflect and change our behavior and emulate something that has worked for somebody else. So I'm a big believer that as far as education and learning and growth goes, there's not a better way.

than to inspire and motivate people through other people's stories.

Ryan Newman (25:12)

Angus Fletcher, who wrote a book called Primal Intelligence talks about this idea that storytelling is the one, one of the few things that AI can't do. uh, and the power of storytelling really speaks to this idea of emotion and creativity and intuition and common sense that Angus lays out in his book. Talk about to us about what is the actual go-to-market for LiveProsperous, Entelere Media. What are the projects that you're working on? How are you thinking about interfacing with customers and ultimately helping people?

Take us inside the business model that you're really trying to build and develop here.

Bobby Morgan (25:45)

Teleria Meat is a little simpler, so I'll start with that one. It's a film and TV production company. That's a big industry in itself. Myself and my young son who went to Penn State, of course he did. ~ He's head of development. We like to be on the development side, which is not surprising because I'm an entrepreneur and I like to create. The production services side and all that other stuff, let that to other people. But we have quite a few projects, Saving the Roar, the Penn State documentary.

Ryan Newman (25:56)

Of course he did.

Bobby Morgan (26:12)

It's been in and about out there. We've done some test screenings over the years. Now we're getting, we're releasing it right now. It will be out fully this summer. It's about the resilience of the 2012 football team. It really is celebrating the love, the brotherhood, the passion, the commitment that that 2012 team had, not just for themselves, but for the Penn State community, the letterman that had preceded them. So we call it saving the roar.

because at that moment in time, there was a strong possibility that the stadium was going to be empty. The legacy and the program was going to be decimated. It's a phenomenal story of young people who get together and says, you know what, we're not going to let this happen. Michael Maude, Michael Zordich, Jordan Hill, Matt McGloin and all those Penn State greats. They could have taken the easy road. And that's what gravitated in me is like these guys could all left, take an easy road and they stayed. Penn State and the broader community is blessed for it because of

of what they did. So that's one cool project.

Ryan Newman (27:14)

And by the way, just to note on that, Bobby, credit to you for creating the platform to allow these players to tell their story and have their story amplified, you know, some years later. What other projects?

Bobby Morgan (27:23)

We jumped into some projects that aren't completely a hundred percent uplifting, inspirational, but we acquire option, the rights for a book series, James Rollins called Sigma Force, which touches my heart because I mean, if you go back to my early days of supporting special forces and those kinds of things, and it's a lot of science and technology. So we optioned that and we're pitching that to streamers right now to turn that into a TV show. The one I'm really excited about is a film called Good Egg.

It's about the first woman doctor, Elizabeth Blackwell. met up with a very passionate writer, director, producer who had written the script seven years ago. We came in to help her kind of modernize the script in today's world and today's lenses. That's super exciting. That's a story about a groundbreaking woman who refused, again, refused to quit. Back in the 1800s, women weren't allowed to go to medical school. And the medicine for women back then was barbaric.

So here you have this woman who says, you know what, I know what the world is, but I'm not going to tolerate that. She fought her way and got herself into a medical school, went through all kinds of troubles and harassment and it was just an incredible story. So that's exciting. We have another film about an army veteran, Captain Ben Harrow, who

stepped on an IED when he was over in the Middle East and lost both of his legs above the knee. This is a man who probably in most normal circumstances would have died on the battlefield, but his will to live and his love for his family, they stabilized him, got him back to Germany, but he was never going to walk again. And he refused that as an answer. And he went through a horrific experimental treatment, first of his kind treatment to grow his femur six inches.

so he could be outfitted with prosthetics so he could walk. Wow. Not only is he walking now, he played Paralympic ice hockey for the Italians, he runs. my It's just, I'm not going to

go through all of them, but those are the kind of examples of the projects that we're filming TV shows. A TV show we're under development, it's called Leap Frog. That's about a retired Navy SEAL who had struggled with transition to civilian life. But we tried to put it in their perspective of like, well, how can we lighten this up a little bit with some family humor?

So it's an action comedy and it deals with him coming home to his wife and his 22 year old daughter, who he still thinks is 12 years old because he's been deployed for so long. And unbeknownst to him, she opens up a new age center for meditation and things like that for veterans in honor of him. And he applies for a job and he shows up and he now has to interview with his daughter. I bring that up first because they run into Prosperitas and Live Prosperous.

Ryan Newman (30:05)

That's classic.

Bobby Morgan (30:11)

All the lessons from those films and TV shows are taught in our live prosperous education stuff. So you hear you have big stories, films and TV, but the end of the day, there are so many learning lessons in these stories that we weave in and teach people.

Ryan Newman (30:25)

It's interesting. You talked about, expect you to say that you're taking these stories to the movie studios, but you actually say you're taking these stories to the streamers, which really speaks about this tremendous shift that's occurring in the film industry. Can you just spend a minute talking about how that dynamic that's occurring, that's quite frankly in the midst of still transitioning impacts your ability to actually get financing and distribution rights related to some of these projects.

Bobby Morgan (30:48)

Yeah, that industry it's right smack in the middle of a transformation. So when I say streamers, those are basically studios now. Amazon's a streamer, but they own MGM

studios, Paramount, Sky Dance. They're in the process of acquiring Warner Brothers. So in kind of today's world, there really is no different, kind of all one in the same. From a development and the creation and the financing, to some degree, the model has definitely shifted.

raising capital and the ability to raise capital can impact your decision. So when, when capital's tight and the ability to finance, you know, these kinds of projects, somewhat easier to pitch it to a studio and a streamer who finances it and then basically owns it as opposed to doing an independent film and then pitching it and selling it to those folks. So it's, it's an interesting environment right now. There's still an opportunity in my opinion, for a lot of creativity.

There's micro dramas that are now starting to pop up. You know, a \$10 billion industry about these short little snippets that feel like a TV show, right? But they're only 90 seconds long and they get you hooked and you just keep binge watching these little small episodes. Film and TV space is a really wild environment right now.

Ryan Newman (32:04)

When you think about Live Prosperous and the work that you're doing, I understand you're actually doing some work with Invent Penn State. Can you talk about the work you're doing with Penn State and what some of these programs really, the ultimate outcome for students and others who participate?

Bobby Morgan (32:17)

Yeah, the work we're doing with Penn State really epitomizes what LP set up to do all across the board. So with Penn State, as a team right now, we have four master coaches. I bring kind of the corporate entrepreneurial lens. have Freddie Scott, who's worked with elite athletes. We have Beth Shehey, who's a professor here at Smeal, bedded into the Penn State community. And then we have JB Spiezo, who's a retired Green Beret instructor from West Point who teaches leadership.

and how to turn chaos into calm and those kinds of things. Right. So you have, you have these four different lenses that we bring to the Penn State community and we are supporting invent Penn State brand Academy, Omar easy over there who runs the brand Academy kind of the light bulb was we have student athletes now who have the ability because they're getting paid for their name, image and likeness. It also reduced the barriers of them actually teaching and coaching and running a business around their skillsets.

So now you have student athletes who can be entrepreneurs. So Penn State did a brilliant thing bringing the brand academy, the student athletes into invent Penn State, because now you have now have a whole group of people that would have never really thought themselves as entrepreneurs, but now that they have access to NIL funds and opportunities, they're now entrepreneurs and invent Penn State really teaches the business fundamentals and helps them get their business started where we come in from the culture leadership.

and resilience standpoint, we're teaching them skills, tools, and habits on how to effectively lead yourself, but lead others, develop healthy relationships, assess, are you built for the storm? Our core program is called built for the storm. And when you go through a survey and you start identifying the areas in your life that you're weak, again, it's about growth and development and improving performance. So the, these pillars that we have identified again, coming from the pillars that

elite athletes, elite warriors, and elite leaders use, we're trying to teach them to everybody. To be honest with you, at the college level, the high school level, we need more of those skills to be taught. Transitioning into college, we surveyed 150 of the student athletes that came in as freshmen this year. They're struggling. They're struggling with purpose. They're struggling with healthy relationships. They're struggling with the pressure of being at a major university and being an athlete at a major university. So how do we help them?

turn that chaos into calm and fully understand who you are, stressing the values and the culture and the things that you're passionate about. How can you take that and build up your identity, your purpose in life, your mission in life and surround yourself with the right people?

Ryan Newman (34:57)

really admirable work you're doing Bobby and it's going to benefit so many people. We're now going to enter a rapid fire segment of the show will happen as I'll ask you a few questions and you just tell me the first thing that comes to your mind in a sentence or less. Okay.

Ryan Newman (35:12)

What is your favorite thing about Penn State?

Bobby Morgan (35:14)

My favorite thing about Penn State is the energy that lives with the students and the people in the community.

Ryan Newman (35:23)

What is the best advice you ever received?

Bobby Morgan (35:25)

The best advice I've ever received came from my grandfather. When I was looking to drop out of Penn State and just be a farmer, he said, this is my dream. Go chase your dream. What is your leader? My superpower as a leader is empathy and self-awareness.

Ryan Newman (35:37)

There's your superpower as.

What is one myth about launching a startup that you think needs to be debunked?

Bobby Morgan (35:47)

One myth about launching a startup that needs to be debunked is when it grows and scales that it will get easier.

Ryan Newman (35:55)

Well, love that. What is your favorite way to unwind after a long day?

Bobby Morgan (36:00)

One of my favorite ways to unwind at the end of the day is to walk on the beach, walk through the mountains and be in, so being in nature and practicing my guitar.

Ryan Newman (36:13)

Thank you, Bobby, for taking the time today to share your entrepreneurial journey with me. I now would like to hand things over to our current Penn State student. Aryan Veer is an undergraduate student at Penn State studying cybersecurity analytics and operations in the college of IST. He's the founder of Krypton, a startup focused on building identity infrastructure for a password less internet using device based cryptographic authentication. This past spring,

Aryan participated in the Bardush Family Idea Makers Challenge during Penn State Startup Week. He is passionate about cybersecurity, startups, and building systems that rethink how everything works at the core, such as how trust, identity, and finance work online. Aryan, I'll now hand the interview over to you.

Aryan Vir (37:01)

Thank you, Ryan, for the introduction and including me in this conversation. I really appreciate the opportunity. And how about you once again? Hello, Arian. I'm really excited to learn, gain from your experience and understand where I could grow more. Fire away. First question would be for you is a lot of people chase ideas, they think of new things. So what would your personal filter be?

for deciding which opportunities are worth dedicating or committing years of your life.

Bobby Morgan

I revert back to things that I am very curious about and very passionate about. I'm a strong believer that you excel at what you love to do. If you love what you're doing, you're going to be more focused, more intentional. That may not be the biggest business opportunity, but if you choose a big opportunity with big potential, but you don't love to do it.

I don't think you're going to be as effective. I think you really, if you can gravitate to solving a problem, that's a major problem in an area that you're truly passionate about and you love, those are the ones you should invest your time in.

Aryan Vir

second question, which I have is basically for students trying to build something while in let's say Penn State high school or something, what's the one thing you would say that you would ignore completely where most people like spend up their entire effort and time and money?

Bobby Morgan

Having spent an inordinate amount of time and energy on detailed business planning, that over the years for me has become less important compared to building in flexibility and the ability to pivot. I adopted guard rail approach, which is I know where I want to go, but I know there's different routes to get there. And there's guard rails that will keep me from going off into a direction I don't want to go.

or driving over a cliff. So for me, reducing the amount of detailed planning. And here's why I say that a lot of people don't realize, particularly entrepreneurs, we don't have as much control over things as we think we do. In fact, we have very little control over mostly everything. So with that as the primary thought, why spend an inordinate amount of time, money and treasure creating detailed plans that are going to be wrong or

off by the time you print them or email them to somebody.

Aryan Vir

Right. So one follow up to that is let's say you have those card rails in place and what if those card rails or like the system you created for yourself stops you from pivoting to better ideas?

Bobby Morgan

Then I would think you'd need to go back to your original thesis, your original vision and your original concept and say, am I truly heading down the wrong path? I've been living this for the last two years with Live Prosperous, which was

had a grand vision and all these ideas and it turned out like too many components, too complicated. I reverted back to keep it simple, stupid. And you know, I think when you get to that point where you're frozen and you can't pivot, you've probably created something too complex that your buyers or you, even your team can't even comprehend. So if that's the case,

you need to step back, figure out is this mousetrap the one thing that I should be doing? And if you need to redesign, that's good to me as a pivot. There's nothing wrong with saying I went down the wrong road. I'm going to backtrack a little bit and pick a different road.

Aryan Vir

Yeah. So moving on the third question, which I have is looking back at your entire history. Can you point out a moment where you feel that things weren't working out and you were like, okay, this one pan out the way you want?

But in science side, think, okay, they were quite necessary. They built me to a place where I am right now.

Bobby Morgan

That kind of happens every day. But now I, when designing and creating live prosperous, the system itself, there were moments in time where it just felt like what we were creating was not resonating with people. And yeah, there were times when I was struggling with focus and intentionality. We preached.

this thing called the power of the pause. There's this notion that if I'm starting and building a company, I have to get there as fast as possible. I've really more adopted a whole surrender approach that, you know, things will work out as long as you do the small things to move the chains every single day. I'm using a football terminology, but you know, get a first down, right? Not the goal of today is to not get the big Hail Mary touchdown pass is get a first down, right?

working with Navy SEALs, I've learned, you they do the same thing to get through budge training. It isn't about completing budge training. It's about making it to the next meal. Right. So I think for entrepreneurs, there's this, there's this idea that speed is everything. But if you just look around the world, speed kills, right. You can go too fast. So to me, it's a matter of regulating your speed. ~ realizing that I need to slow down when you need to slow down.

And that usually implies I need to get new and different people around me because the concept and the idea that you had has now shifted. And that's where I think startups have probably a challenge, which is, these people were with me since day one. True. However, you're now at day 365 and things are different. You need to assess the people that you're with. It's all those things combined and

It's always about, do you have the right team? And if you need to pivot the business as an entrepreneur and you're the founder, there may be a strong chance that you need to pivot with the people too.

Aryan Vir

So yeah, on the basis of that, let's say, as a student at Penn State, I kind of feel very lost when I'm trying to like pivot, understand what am I supposed to do? And I'm like looking for guidance. What would you say would be the best way for a student to navigate that space?

Bobby Morgan

Big believer of having your own personal advisory board, that handful of people that aren't heavily invested in you, your life, your business, but can give you the frank advice that you need. It's one thing to get partners, right? And identify people that are going to help you grow the business, build the business, but having a group of mentors, and it could be just

one or two or three, but just people that have been where you've been. That to me is like, you're going to run into challenges. That's

That's no question. But if you have people who have going through those hurdles, those challenges before you, don't be afraid to ask them tap into that. Most entrepreneurs that I've ever met want to give back and help. if you're, if you're an entrepreneurial student on Penn state, build your network and your relationships outside your college, outside your work groups, outside your business, and try to identify people.

that align with you culturally and value-wise that are willing to give you the frank and honest feedback that you need.

Aryan Vir

Yeah, so one other thing which I wanted to know was, let's say if you had to start again with no network, no brand, nobody knows you, Bobby Morgan, and you didn't get the White House client and everything, what would you do in that situation? And what would like your 30 days look like if you had to start something? the first 30 days.

Bobby Morgan

I would assess who I am getting back to what am I curious about? What am I passionate about? And since you don't know anybody, if you can't articulate why you're passionate about something, the problem you're going to solve, why you want to do it personally, it's going to be hard to get people to join your, your, your cause, your journey, right? So spend the first 30 days truly knowing who you are, what you want to do, why you want to do it. We all have options, right? On

go get a job, go work with this company, go start a company, go work with this startup, all those kinds of things. And it really ends up coming down to why should I join that company? I was a big believer in, again, if you're fortunate enough to have multiple job offers, pick the one that's going to excite you. I took less money in my first job. That was short lived because I had opportunities to grow, get promoted.

and actually rise up and do things way quicker than I would have if I'd have been a bigger organization and gotten paid more. That first 30 days should be really getting grounded and

knowing who you are, what you care about, and then take that message and go find people who care about the same thing. Right. So first introspect and then go forward and see what you can do. I picked, one of the reasons I picked my brother is I did not want to do finance and accounting and he did.

Perfect partner, right? He's doing things that I didn't wanna do and I'm doing things that he didn't wanna do. So it really is, if you're not self-aware ~ and can understand other people and how they view what you're doing or what you wanna do, they're not gonna join you.

Aryan Vir

So. It's the same thing with me, my CFO, he's my roommate. So even I didn't wanna get into the business aspect, trying to understand finances. I'm like, okay, you wanna be a part of this? Yeah.

Bobby Morgan

That's, know, organic is the best way.

Aryan Vir

So let's say the films which you're working on and you're making is basically for veterans and shared inspiring stories, right? But like the advent and shaping of algorithms and AI, how do you think that's going to impact like the psychology behind influence? I think that influence is years away. You're part of IST, you know, is the human interface with technology.

Bobby Morgan

I'm a big believer that

Technology is an abler of us as human beings and can't replace us. So AI is an interesting topic. think AI is going to be another tool that we can use as humans. It's not going to replace creativity. It's not going to replace soul. Those emotions that really compel us to do something, to change our behavior, to join a movement, all those kinds of things. think AI is there to help frame it, guide it, almost like the guard rails, right? They're the guard rails.

But at the end of the day, it's you and me, right? Choosing to do things. And if a computer is telling me something, if you're self-aware enough, you're, can go, wait a minute, this

doesn't feel right. I'm an electrical engineer. So I've been through so many advancements in technology and yes, AI is the newest one, but we've had business intelligence software and we've had all kinds of other things that help us make decisions. think right now AI is, you know, an advancement on that, but

With the film and TV industry that I'm in, it will never replace the writings of a passionate writer. It will never replace a director and his or her vision of how that story should be told.

Aryan Vir

Let's say in the future, if we still don't have the replacement for the creative side, we could see something where it's basically highly personalized to, or like targeted media, where it's just specific to a particular user. They just see that content and then they get they could possibly get influenced. What's the thing which you would say in the future? Will it be scary on that aspect or do you look forward to it?

Bobby Morgan

Again, my personal take is we already have too many algorithms telling us what we should think and believe and watch or consume. I'm a big believer in diversity of content, right? To me, diversity like anything else, diversity in any category makes you think, makes you reflect.

it bristles you, it makes you think. So to me, humans need to look at it and go, I understand what AI is doing, but I also understand I want alternative sources. I think it really comes down to us now teaching humans that diversity of thought, diversity of opinion, diversity of content, diversity of who you interact with is important. And don't just sit in that box that you know and trust.

Because you're gonna miss out on a lot of the stuff in the world So many doors open when you get outside the box you've put yourself in I call it curiosity purpose and prosperity like Either curiosity gives you purpose and the purpose become makes you become prosperous

Aryan Vir

One thing which I wanted to also ask you is you mentioned curious being curious and all so while I was young My mother told me curiosity kills the cat So what would you say like how curious should one be and where do you stop?

Bobby Morgan

Well, I learned the same thing when I was a child too. Curiosity kills the cat. To some degree that comes from parents who trying to keep their kids corralled and not running, you know, crazy, right? ~ So that's a good parental thing to say. However, it's curiosity plus risk management. You know, you can be curious to a point of putting yourself at risk financially, physically, emotionally. So it's a matter of being curious, but also not

Bobby Morgan (50:21)

doing things that are gonna be highly detrimental to your future. When it comes to being like an entrepreneur or taking a new job, right? What is the risk? The risk is the business fails. It doesn't get off the ground. However, you grew, you learned, and maybe if you decide to do it again, all those lessons will be there to help you become more successful.

Aryan Vir

Thank you again for taking your time. That was good for me to understand.

It's a similar journey with you and I can relate to the curiosity aspect. That was incredibly valuable.

Bobby Morgan

Well, I'm glad. So yeah, it's, know, I'm in a position now where I made a lot of mistakes in the business. And also it's taken its toll on me physically and emotionally. So, you know, I feel my role in life now is to share struggles that people go through, but

the rewards and the outcomes that are there are possible because you're curious, you grew, you found new mission and purpose, and that's led to a life of prosperity that you never even imagined. It's good stuff. I appreciate your time, Ariane, and good luck with everything. Good luck with the company. It's a wild ride, but man, is it fun.

Aryan Vir

I hope so.

Ryan Newman (51:36)

That was Bobby Morgan, founder and CEO of both Prosperitas Enterprises and Talaria Media. This episode was produced and edited by our executive producer, Katie DeFiori. If you're listening on Apple podcasts and enjoyed this episode, please consider leaving us a rating and review. It helps more people discover the show. We'd also love for you to share this episode with one person who might be inspired by Bobby's story.

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