

Hi, welcome back to Rich English episode two.

“Well I think the basic thing is to get surrounded by English you know to read in English to set your fault in English to set your computer interface in English and to really like have English everywhere.”

On Rich English today I'm joined by Peter Fodor from a company called App Agent I'll leave Peter to better explain what his company do but they're working in the mobile marketing field

So what's been going on in my business life? well obviously I am busy hard at work trying to promote this podcast this is episode two that you're listening to now I've already got two more interviews lined up for my next couple of podcasts as well as a few ideas for doing some solo shows where I will be helping you with techniques and ideas for how to remember your vocabulary how to form good habits with your English learning as well as some more specific things to do with entrepreneurial business English I've been busy uploading to different platforms to spread this podcast as wide as possible please do remember to give the show a good rating if you enjoy it and leave me a review if that's possible on whichever platform you're listening to me from you can also go to my website as I said richardhill.cz and you can leave me any comments on there any ideas you've got for future shows anybody you would like to hear me interview anything you'd like me to describe or discuss in one of the shows and I'm all ears as we say before we get into the chat I will give you a few of the phrases that peter and I use throughout the conversation to again better help you understand what the conversation is about.

Peter talks about user acquisition and acquiring clients. These are from the verb to acquire meaning to get basically user acquisition is how you go about finding new users for your application.

He talks about getting into the flow and he also talks about workflow and getting into the flow is about becoming used to a particular situation and maybe getting your head in a particular space where you're feeling comfortable and concentrating and ...

...workflow is the sequence of events or stages that a project might pass through to go from its initial start initiation to completion.

To have many hats really means that you have different roles you might have a role as the owner of a business but at the same time you also might take on a more menial task such as sending out invoices for example so you could say I have an administrative role or an administrative hat as well as my owner hat.

Worker bee is mentioned I think by myself and that's again it's the person who is doing the detailed work so it might be somebody in administration or might be somebody in design but worker bees are the people who are carrying out the larger ideas peter talks about a pool of talent the pool of talent is the number of people who are available in any given sector of business who might be your target to take on as an employee.

Collaborative tools are mentioned and by this is meant platforms such as Slack, Trello, Asana or even your Google calendar which is open to other people to view basically any kind of platform where you can work closely with other people in order to further your project when talking about receiving CVs from people CV curriculum vitae from potential employees.

Peter mentions that if he sees any spelling mistakes that this is a red flag to him a red flag is a warning.

If you hear anything else in the conversation that you don't fully understand and maybe you haven't been able to google it somewhere send me a message at richardhill.cz/richenglish and you can ask me a question on there and I'll do my best to answer it peter has some great advice about learning English as well as growing a business and stick around because towards the end he really does go into some great detail about how you can work to improve your English so without further ado one of my favourite phrases I think we should get into the interview so I'll say over to you Peter, how are you doing?

Hello, hello Richard nice hearing you again, how are you? I'm very well thank you very well so can you tell us a little bit about your business app agent to start with yeah sure so the app agent is a agent helping companies to grow their user base and revenues in their mobile apps and games we're based here in Prague but operating across the globe we have clients across you know the whole world in 25 countries so we are operating in the U.S. Europe but also in Asia we are around 25 people nowadays and yeah working all around the clock to become the best mobile marketing agents in the world fantastic so since I first met you the company's grown quite a lot how quickly has that happened and if you can tell us how did you get to become app agent you didn't just start this from scratch to the point where we are today so I started advertising business in 2006 and spent nearly five years working for clients such as Vodafone or nestle and then my colleague approached me with a pretty crazy idea he asked me over a lunch how about if we start our own gaming studio which was you know really a crazy thing because I turned 30 my first baby was on the way and we had no previous development experience but we felt there's an opportunity on the market you know it was in 2011 shortly after the app store and google play opened to developers as we wanted to be and we felt that this is something that will grow really big and we wanted to be part of that so we started working on our own episode games we did it for four years and reached developing downloads so quite a nice number even in by today's measures but you know the market matured of course it became more competitive and my role already back then was business and marketing and I was publishing a blog that was summarizing all our ups and downs and in 2015 we were thinking like what's next with our first business flow studio and at that time by coincidence I was approached by a couple of people if I can help them with their epson games if I can be there like business partner their marketer so I started first freelancing and then after a year it became you know such a successful venture that I started to grow a team and then officially in early 2017 I founded that agent as a business entity so how is how it started how many how many of you started that initial company I think that the first month we were four in the office actually including me and out of these three first colleagues two are still at their page and nowadays which is amazing and they are super like important people in the whole team so we started in four and yeah you said that we've grown a lot I think that we have grown a bit I'm ambitious guy but I'm happy how it goes and how it progresses fantastic fantastic so and you are obviously the founder I mean what's your day-to-day involvement what where was your main focus in the company that changes a lot you know it changes over time the founder you are basically rebuilding the company every year as it grows and as the like market evolves I would say that nowadays it's mostly strategy and new business so you know acquiring clients but also at the same time like where we are going where the market is heading and how we can like get into the flow and generally company growth you know that's hiring establishing new processes helping people to become experts and also more comfortable in their roles so all of this I think that I have so many hats to wear that sometimes I am not even ever which I'm wearing at the moment yes yeah yeah yeah I heard one great bit of advice a while ago on a different podcast probably for people who are more at the starting out level of things rather than where you are but nevertheless maybe and that was if you think of yourself there's like the business guy who needs to lead the direction of the company but then there's like the worker bee who actually has to do the stuff and when you're starting out and you're just one two people a really useful idea this guy said was if you imagine yourself literally sitting in two chairs and you sit down and have a conversation with

yourself and you say okay so I'm the boss and this is the direction we need to go in you switch chairs and then go okay so that means I need to do this by this deadline and I'm going to do this and work on it and off you go because I've certainly felt this kind of frustration at times with you you spend a lot of time working on the direction of where you want to go and then you spend less time on doing the work or you get into that that frame of mind of doing all the work and then you lose sight of the overall direction

In terms of English, when did you start? What's your English journey? Did you learn at school or have you sort of developed your English more later as you've got older? Was it specifically for business? What's your story? That's a good question. I of course started at school so as a quite small kid but actually I think that I was really challenged to grow my language skills and also to use English on a daily basis when I started my own business you know if you're developing apps and games you're operating on a global market so you are working with partners that are based outside of your country you are sometimes and it's our case today hiring people that are not to check so that actually forced me to use English most of the day and communicate internal and externally in English only so is your office an English office do you speak English mainly yeah yeah of course we have over 50 percent of foreigners so already for like three years we are like English on the office and there's a simple rule if there's anyone in the room not speaking Czech we have to switch into English but very often a funny situation happens that even Czech guys are speaking in English if they are alone because they are so used to it so it's becoming more and more common and I think it's a necessity today you know if you want to grow your company and you want to really attract the best talent you can't limit the pool of talent only to check speaking people like that's basically no way to grow your business so if you look at all the start-ups not only here in Prague but also outside it's very common that the diversity is really high and very often there's a minority of locals sometimes it's even like a strange that there's only a few local people while the vast majority are foreigners so that's also our case of course it's a huge pain point to get through the visa process if you're hiring outside of EU but yeah it is what it is and I think it's a good thing to do and how difficult has it been to find people who not only have got the specific skills for your industry but are also good English speakers has that been an issue or do you find that because people are at a certain level in their professional development their English is usually passable and or if not excellent

I think that the English is over pretty good so that's usually not the problem you know in our industry it's more about the expertise about the knowledge and you know generally if you are an expert you speak English well then you can work from home for any company really like for a company in silicon valley in New York or in Beijing like there's no limits today especially have to covet you can really do whatever you want so the biggest challenge is to really give people a strong reason to come to Prague you know to be here to be in the office with the rest of the team to collaborate in one place so I would say that's the biggest challenge and for us English is a must-have you know if we see even a single typo in the application it's a red flag if we don't feel that that person is able to articulate their thoughts properly on a first screening call again no go so that's a predisposition and I think that in general it's pretty good and the young generation is very much ever that it's a must-have yeah yeah for sure you mentioned covered there I mean it's been difficult for everybody obviously different businesses how how did you cope with that and was you know some people have found strangely it's actually been quite positive for their business for whatever reason maybe not financially but maybe they found some new system or some new way of doing things what have been the pluses and minuses for you that you've discovered over the last year and a half now we are in a pretty good place in terms of what we do you know we are a digital business we work for digital products so in these terms it wasn't that bad of course you know when coveted hit last spring there was a huge panic in our business a lot of plans and you know marketing spent is driven by prediction models and if such a major change happens and people are looked down at homes everyone was scared that these prediction models wouldn't work anymore so even like the big advertisers stopped spending on Facebook google and all these networks and for let's say two

months it was you know really very frightening that's probably the description how it felt back then then with the more data coming in we realized it's actually the opposite you know people are looking for ways how to spend the free time they have how to also relax a bit get a rid of the stress and we saw search and installs in revenues and then quote after quarter mostly gaming companies but also like non-gaming apps reported the record numbers so that was going pretty well for us it meant that we've lost some clients we lost the biggest one that was in travel we have quite some issues to utilize the team until the fall but since then also because the year-over-year growth in terms of activity of users grew by 20 percent we saw pretty much the same on the business side in the second half of the year so ultimately it was quite positive in terms of operations we were ready for that you know we are working with clients across the globe as I already said so we are used to calls we are using collaborative tools that are online so I would say that that wasn't requiring any change at all which is great you know like we were operating pretty much the same in march as we were in January before covet hit so what's app agent working on at the moment and what's your particular involvement in that?

It becomes more difficult to answer this question because I'm more literate from you know the client work but generally we are designing creatives for the best companies such as supercell and their games Clash of Clans and Clash Royale we are running user acquisition these are big names out there in the gaming world I know I've heard of them these are dream games you know some poverty members are hardcore players of those and when we signed the deal we were like super excited the same goes for rovia and Angry Birds which is you know an iep that most of the people even non-gamers know thanks to their movies so that's also our client we are also running user acquisition helping with data so that's in general what we do for clients what I'm doing

In a nutshell; building a team, building a structure and processes and fixing things that are related to growth and to, you know, testing some new setups and defining new workflows because that's necessary when you are turning the size of 20 people, you are really growing from a small company to a mid-sized company and the dynamics changes the way how you manage the company also needs to evolve so this is quite a challenging time and you need to do it fairly quickly you know because if you get stuck at this size the overheads the need for management and it's like processes implementation that takes quite some time therefore resources and money and if you don't grow quickly enough beyond this point then you will face lower profits and generally like it's not the ideal size of the company you need to be either like smaller or bigger so we want to grow I don't know to 40 maybe even 50 people where these things that we are building today will really bring you know the positives and the effectivity (effectiveness) we hope for so now it's quite an intense period of company building for me but I believe for that having strong foundations with bio in the long term what is the role of English in the future of your company.

It's a communication language so we are also investing into like English learning when we have you know newcomers that are not like on the level as the rest of the team so that's like critical because it's not only about like that it sounds better it's also about the fact that you can express yourself but you can provide better feedback or you can better understand a brief so it's absolutely critical to have decent level of English for us and if you look outwards it's about like a professional communication you know like we are competing with companies that are based in the us Canada UK Germany and in these terms we have to present ourselves in the same professional manner as we are like native speakers we have to like avoid any like mistakes and grammar issues on our website in our proposals because estimates in the way how we speak to prospects on calls so I believe you know this is alpha omega from how to grow and how to like get some stable position on the market so to say and your your biggest challenge do you feel as a company going into the future.

That's a tough question Richard... biggest challenge in general to be able to adapt quickly the

business we are in is evolving rapidly really you know things that we are facing today weren't here a year ago there are changes in you know approach to privacy by apple and that will be followed shortly by google that's having a huge impact on our work that's usually the way it works isn't it apple do it first and then google follow I think yeah of course apple is using this as they like selling point the privacy theme is really a big thing for them and I think it's part of the marketing but it's something that we have to somehow accept and adjust to it so that's like one thing in a second that also the role of the agency evolves over time I believe that we'll be much more needed for strategic questions for strategic decisions than just because of providing more bandwidth providing like hands to I don't know design ads or to run campaigns and that's because these like basic things become commodity and if you really want to be on top of things you have to move from this basic stuff that could be easily replaced by freelancer or even replaced today by machine by algorithms by Facebook and google itself you know when it comes to for example targeting of ads and relevancy so we are really like shifting also our offering to more strategic services and the number of consultations and audits and like strategic projects is growing so that's where I believe we should be heading as well I mean I presume you you talked about the English within your company of the constant improvement what are you personally doing I you always struck me as the kind of guy who is always looking to to keep improving your English as well that is something you're still doing how are you doing it and and then finally what advice can you give others who are maybe not quite in such a successful position as you are but are wanting to to build something and they know that English is is absolutely necessary

Well I think the basic thing is to get surrounded by English you know to read in English to set your fault in English to set your compute interface in English and to really like have English everywhere that's what I'm doing like the first thing second to listen and repeat something you recommended me back then to listen to podcasts and while driving home I'm trying time to time to repeat the speaker and to reach that like tone and fluency which is obviously my biggest issue and I think that's more or less the same for everyone from eastern Europe you know Russians and and people who are not that used to like connecting words together so that's obviously my biggest challenge still nowadays and what also helps my written English is one little tool called Grammarly and the huge benefit I've seen Grammarly is that it's giving you real time recommendations how to improve your email for example or written document and for me this is you know a way how to go through dozens of learning cycles every week because every week I'm making mistakes and every week I see these recommendations to at a preposition to change this to for that and I see that I'm really getting less endless recommendations by Grammarly over time so it feels that the volume of like recommendations and and like changes I have to do is really like getting under the skin now yeah so try it it's all free in some basic version then of course you can pay for more advanced some version of Grammarly which I don't think is necessary at least for beginners so that's my little hack fantastic yeah I'll just add there there's a an add-on I've found which I think works with Firefox or Chrome I can't remember it's called Read Lang and there's several different languages you can choose to convert between you start off by telling it which language is your native one what your target language is and then basically if you're reading any website you can just hover the mouse over a word and it will automatically show you that word in your own language of course it's not foolproof and you know google translates only as good as it is but it's improving but it seems to be pretty good for me when I've been trying to trying to learn a little bit of Czech which I don't do as often as I should but you know so yeah well is there anything else you want to add including if there's anybody out there who wants some kind of mobile app marketing they want to come and find you how are they gonna do that well they can find me on LinkedIn where I'm almost constantly or drop me an email peter appagent.com fantastic and the app agent web website is appagent.com yes fantastic excellent any final thoughts?

Don't be scared, don't be scared to speak with people you know when I started at flow studio I had several times a week calls with some ad networks or partners and yeah it was frightening it was

always like stressful I felt exhausted by the end of the day I still feel today when I'm speaking eight hours a day in English but that's a toll of not being a native speaker but I think unless you really force yourself to speak and to go out and use English actively you wouldn't improve yeah that's brilliant advice thank you very much peter it's been marvellously interesting for me I hope you had fun and I hope we can do this again in the future sometime as well thanks for having me and have a good one cheers so thanks again there to Peter Fodor from app agent anybody who might be interested in their services as you heard can go to appagent.com you can find out more about their services there just to give a quick recap on a few of those phrases that were used there was acquiring clients and user acquisition to get into the flow and talking about workflow to have many hats being a worker bee. Collaborative tools things like Slack for example.

And a red flag remember that means a warning so that's the end of today's show next week I'll be back with a solo show and I'll be talking about how to remember vocabulary and I'll be giving you some more specific entrepreneurial business English vocabulary to go with it and some ideas to help you to remember better okay that's all from me for today again please remember to like share rate review all of the above and that'll help us in the ratings it'll get us out to more people and the more people we get to the better I can make this podcast and the more useful the more interesting we can all work together and hopefully bring ourselves a brighter future why not okay all right so take care I look forward to seeing you next time although I don't see you because it's a podcast anyway bye for now