

Adri Varga: 00:00

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Joldie Fielden: 00:27

This was what you decided was going to be the solution. What's happening now? Like, why aren't we doing it? You know, like it's that um ownership. I think that's important. That's what leadership is. You're leading them to an answer. You're not a boss. Bosses tell you what to do and demand action. A leader guides people and motivates them and encourages them to succeed.

Adri Varga: 00:54

Get to the understanding that you are not alone in your business and you should not come up with all the ideas by yourself. And you can actually, you know, ask your team to work through things for your salon and clinic, it's going to work much, much better for everyone, and it's going to take a lot of stress off from your shoulder.

Joldie Fielden: 01:23

Hello and welcome everyone. It's great to be back. I'm Jody Fieldon, and I'm here with my work wife and bestie and business partner, Audrey Vaga. During these podcasts, we share how you can leverage your passion into profit. Whether you're a budding entrepreneur, a seasoned salon or clinic owner, or someone who's just thinking about starting out, you're in the right place because we've just about done it all. And we're here to share with you that you can too, because it's time to believe your salon can be everything you ever wanted.

Adri Varga: 01:50

Absolutely. Welcome back, everyone. And uh today we're going to have a really interesting subject because lately everyone is started to worry about what's going to happen after the busy time. So we are in December right now, everyone is in the rush, and it's a very busy period. But then salon owners and clinic owners are really worrying about what is going to happen in January and February when everything is basically goes quiet, especially here in Australia during summertime, people are going on holiday and they really don't uh worry about hair or skin or anything, they just want to have fun. So let's talk about this.

Joldie Fielden: 02:36

It's um, I think if we start looking at this little quiet period after the big rush as a time to refresh and reset, have a look at what we can do going forward. And I also think we need to appreciate where how far we've come this year as well. I think it's a good time to sort of give yourself a pat on the back, to be honest.

Adri Varga: 03:01

You are still there. You are still about you're still keeping your head above water. So, what we can say, you know, like um let's reframe uh this uh period of time, the January and February. It's actually not a death time, it's a prep time. And it's very

important for us to understand that to keep a healthy business or uh to create a thriving business, we do actually need to have prep time. We cannot just be always busy and running, running, running and working with clients because then we don't have time to build a business. Exactly.

Joldie Fielden: 03:40

And especially for our American clients. This is a time of year that's those couple of months before the end of financial year tax time. So something that um we really want to point out that this is the time for you to be looking at what kind of spending you can do for taxation purposes. This is a kind of time where you can really have a look at your numbers. And I think universally, um January, February, people are expecting pricing changes and things like that for a business.

Adri Varga: 04:14

I think uh now we sort of have like we don't have that kind of uh expectations that everyone is changing pricing in May or everyone is changing pricing in in July. I think clients started to understand that everything is ever changing. So businesses must follow uh all the changes and and yeah, some some businesses are already doing like two or three price increases a year because of that.

Joldie Fielden: 04:40

And I think it's better to have like two or three small price increases rather than one really big jump every year or people that leave it a couple of years. I think that's more detrimental leaving it than keeping on top of it.

Adri Varga: 04:57

Yes, absolutely. That's only one part uh what we can do uh in the quieter time, but let's just get back to what would actually uh help you to put your focus and take your uh mindset out of fear of what will happen to the focus of what you can do right now in the quiet time to help your business, to set your business up in 2026 for success. And really, the most uh important thing that you can do in January and February is focus on a team meeting, a beginning of the year team meeting, which can move the needle, and that beginning of the year of team meeting is actually a planning ahead and problem solving. And this is the best time because now everyone has time to sit down and work through our process.

Joldie Fielden: 05:57

And so, what we might go into the elements of what you cover in that team meeting. Can you give some examples of what's the structure of how that meeting should look so that people get a bit of an idea of what is um proactive for a team meeting and and what is actually necessarily and what you should be talking about, and other things that maybe shouldn't be in the annual team meeting, that maybe it should be in a different time.

Adri Varga: 06:25

Yes, absolutely. So the first thing is but the people are always asking me, you know, like for how long this uh beginning of the year team meeting should be, or how much time they should mark out from the calendar. And it's really depends because if you just have a small team, probably you will be good with like a three or four hours meeting. But if you have a team of 15, 16 and up, normally those salons they go away

for two days. And they go away and they have fun and also work on the business together with the team. So your team involvement is extremely important because you cannot build a successful business by yourself when you have a team, because everyone wants to, everyone needs to be on the same page. And this is your responsibility as a salon owner or clinic owner to actually keep everything together. And when you uh get to the understanding that you are not alone in your business and you should not come up with all the ideas by yourself, and you can actually, you know, ask your team to work through things for your salon and clinic, it's going to work much, much better for everyone. And it's going to take a lot of stress off from your shoulder. Can you give us some topics or examples of how that would look? So we always uh, and I think what we're going to do for you guys, I have actually a one-page uh sort of like a guideline what we provide for our salon owners and clinic owners. And uh, we're going to make this available for you. You can uh reach out or probably we're going to just put it into the description and you can have a uh download if you want uh that document. But uh basically, Heights looks like we start to plan for our beginning of the year meeting in November and December. If you are starting to plan in January, it's not going to be that uh strategic. So you want to plan ahead, and there are a couple of things that we suggest uh to in order to prepare. Uh we have a couple of surveys, and those surveys is um are going to help us to understand our team better. Some of the surveys are all about what they think, uh, what kind of training they need. The other surveys are we want to figure out their financial goals for the year or where they are at. And uh maybe we're going to have a survey when they can uh suggest, they can say what is really working well, and then they always can suggest, you know, like we might can think about how to do uh or improve certain things in the salon. So once you collect these data, then it's so much more easier to work through everything. But once uh you get to the date, get to the day of the meeting, you definitely want to start with a light refreshment or just a nice coffee. And then everyone should have an itinerary so everyone will understand what is the plan for the day, and it's really good. And I would give this uh out a couple of days before uh the meeting so they actually can uh prepare. So we always say start with the wins. So when you're going to start the meeting, you actually want to start on a high level, you want to celebrate, and this celebration should be a Solonor Clinic total celebration, like where you ended up, and also maybe individually, just one really positive word for each of your team members, what you really appreciated last year. And it's maybe not that uh you know they got excellent with KPI, but maybe they were working really hard towards to achieve certain goals. So we're always going to be able to find a positive in anyone. So just focus on the positive. The next one is uh you want to review uh last year KPIs, how is it going to work? You know, like it's actually depending on if you measure your KPIs. So measuring KPI is extremely important because you need to understand where you started, where you end up uh in. And we always say, you know, like if you measure uh things in the salon, that KPI tracker is going to become your Bible because it's going to tell you exactly where you are at, where you started, what is the weakness of the business? And just based on that data, you can map out a whole year worth of plan for every single team member and for the salon altogether.

Joldie Fielden: 11:10

So some salon owners might be worried when we're talking about that. Do they want their staff to know how much the business made? Do they want them like how do they get

over that fear of like sharing their business statistics? Is it the good thing? Is it a bad thing?

Adri Varga: 11:25

Yeah, look, it's very individual. I always encourage people to be very transparent because if you hide things away, then your uh team members, they're just going to create stories in their mind and they're only going to see the end of the day, you know, like how much money is actually uh in the uh in the cash register or in the F-Post machine, but they won't understand what's going on behind. So what I like to share it was always two things. This is how much is costing us to open our door, and this is how much we are making. And normally what happens, the team is actually very surprised how much is costing you to run a business. And it's a big eye-opener that sometimes the solo knower is actually taking home less money than each individual team member. So, in my opinion, it's extremely important because you cannot build a business and you cannot run a business and you cannot set up goals if you if no one knows the end game or if they don't know where you are starting.

Joldie Fielden: 12:38

And I think that's a big thing that creates a lot of um tension and resentment in a business, is because the staff have a fairy tale idea of the actual running costs of the business and how much the salon owner is actually making. Because all they think of is like, well, I made you \$5,000 this week and I got paid \$1,700. The rest is just all your profit. They don't think about everything else that goes into it. So I think it's really, really important to be transparent. Like you said, they don't need to know what's debt and what's actual expenses and all the rest of it. They don't need to know that. You don't go that far into it. But I think letting them know the final number of what has to what we have to make each week to cover wages and the sustainability of the business, I think that's really important.

Adri Varga: 13:37

And it's actually when you share, it brings everything and everyone together for a better goal. And uh it's a little bit more understanding of the part of like, yeah, uh, your team members going to understand a little bit more that uh what's going on. So I think it's very important uh to be transparent uh because if you want your team to be motivated and to be involved and to work towards to growing or uh you know helping you to grow a business, then it's not fair that you just uh going to tell them you must do this, you must do this. People need to have uh you know a certain understanding. And if you don't give them the why, many of them they are just going to be not motivated, disinterested, come in the morning, go home in the evening, and they don't care.

Joldie Fielden: 14:34

Yeah, I think that's a big one. And I think it builds trust then between the salon owner, the business owner, and the employees, because the employees go, wow, they trust us enough to let us know their personal information. You know, like that's that's a that's a big and a lot of respect is built there, then. So yeah.

Adri Varga: 14:57

All right. So the next thing that I like to uh move on after then we celebrated and we looked uh into the KPI and everything, then we can go into a little bit deeper and a

little bit uh more um almost like uh a more difficult task, which is we need to figure out what is not working right now and how we can uh fix them. Because this team meeting, beginning of the year, is really good to look back last year and all the Michelin and everything, what happened, and we didn't have time to fix it because we were busy being busy. It's really nice to sit down with our team and figure out all right, this is what is coming back, time after time, it's time to fix. So, how are we going to fix them, fix these problems together? So, as a business owner, you don't have to come up, you actually don't want to come up by yourself because if you just tell them they won't care, yeah. But if you involve them and if you do a brainstorming and everyone has their saying, you will be very surprised how good your team is actually to come up with ideas. And once you come up with ideas, then you say, all right, so here is what I like about your idea, here is what I like about your idea, let's put this uh, you know, a system or a policy together and we can run with it. Just think about yourself, you know, like if someone just comes to your place and telling you, you must do this, this, this, this, this, or if someone is saying, Well, I think we are having a problem in this part of the business, I would like to pick your brain, or I would like us to sit down and figure out a better way to do it. Which one would resonate with you at the end when you come up with a solution? Even if the solution is what you already knew the solution going to be as a business owner, because you can drive the conversation to what you want to have the outcome, but it's so much better if your team arrives together that that would be the best outcome.

Joldie Fielden: 17:17

I think that's really important with anything, is that if it's someone's idea, they're more likely to action it and be committed to it. And you can also, I guess the benefit of it as well is that if it's not, if they're not working towards it and it's not happening, you can bring it back like, hey guys, this was what you decided was going to be the solution. What's happening now? Like, why aren't we doing it? You know, like it's that um ownership that you know, instead of I think that's important. Um, but it's and it's a nice way, that's what leadership is. You're leading them to an answer. You're not a boss, bosses tell you what to do and demand action. A leader guides people and motivates them and encourages them to succeed.

Adri Varga: 18:11

That's gold. This is exactly what is it? Yeah. So then the next thing we can move on to the next thing, which uh I think it's very important, uh, is to paint the big picture about individual and business goal alignment. But what I would not do in this meeting, I would not go into the individual goal setting or individual targets, what's going to be. I would take that to individual meetings. But when it comes to business goal alignment, individual alignment, like just big picture, I would start there and then I would organize the meeting individually with all of our team members because every team member has a place in order to reach the big goal. Yeah.

Joldie Fielden: 19:03

And so what's can you give me an example of a collective goal for a business, just so that business owners know what's tangible, what's the right kind of thing to be aiming for?

Adri Varga: 19:15

So I think multiple levels, yeah. So you can have that based on the KPI, maybe your rebooking and your retail collectively is not right. It's it's it's very low, and everyone is uh everyone needs to work on it. So you need to focus on training, or you need to focus on uh sort of like role-playing or or or helping them to understand how to become better, or why it is important for them and for the business to improve those numbers. So again, it comes back to why. So it can be, you know, like all right, so these are our weak points. You can have like maybe, you know, like your uh Client average at the moment is 150, and you're collectively going to decide what how about if we just try to go 10%. So instead of the 150 is going to be 166. And when it comes to the salon goal, uh, normally what we are looking at uh we compare year to year, uh, and a minimum what we look for is a 10% growth. So, how are we going to achieve that 10% growth? So the big picture can be really uh everything or multi-layered, and it just goes back again to your KPI, and that KPI is going to tell you exactly what you should focus on.

Joldie Fielden: 20:41

Would if someone like El have they come to you and said, you know, like I have a goal for the business to be salon owner of the year or something like that. Is that is this the time to like be bringing that up with your team?

Adri Varga: 20:56

Absolutely. Absolutely. I think this is a perfect time uh to bring up with the team because obviously it involves everyone in the team to get that title. So salon owner of the year is not just about the salon owner, it's actually about the whole team. You cannot become a really great salon owner without your team or without managing or leading uh that team. So, yeah, all those things can be uh part of the discussion.

Joldie Fielden: 21:25

When you're saying, you know, like planning, identifying the different areas in the business, you mentioned individual plans off sideways. So would you be making uh in this particular meeting, would you be having a look at like your suppliers and your educators and then collectively coming up with like some training that you want to do as a group or what kind of yeah?

Adri Varga: 21:50

So I would uh as I mentioned in the beginning, I would uh send out a survey for my team beforehand, and one of the surveys would be about the training, and that survey normally is uh clarifying for me as a business owner that are my is my team member or my team members are they looking for a new skill set or they just want to upscale what they have, and then based on that, yes, it's going to become a conversation between us. All right, so what we can do. So if you have a bigger team, obviously you need to say Sally, Katie, whatever, they want to perfect balayage. Can we do balayage in-house? Because maybe we have an educator, or maybe we have Susie, who is amazing with balayage, and the other girls they have good skill with balayage, but they just want to upscale. So when it's not a new technique, you actually can do lots of things in-house, but you need to plan ahead. You need to book it in the calendar in the beginning of the year, because otherwise it's going to be very, very difficult. And then, yes, you have a look at your suppliers, what they are going to offer as an

education. You can have a look at individual freelancers or individual educators, and you can map out, you know, like, okay, so how are we going to go about bringing new skills in the salon? We need to be very cautious about our budget because maybe you don't have \$20,000 a year to spend on education. But what you can do, you can actually dedicate for each education one or two team members. They go there, they learn the technique, they bring back to the salon, and they will teach others. And it just depends who is good with learning and teaching, because you need to make sure whoever you send, they are not just good with learning, they're good with teaching also. And you can have multiple team members who are good, so you can actually alternate and you don't always send the same person. So it's again, these meetings are perfect for map all those things out.

Joldie Fielden: 24:05

And what I was gonna say is I think it's really important that what you mentioned earlier is that you book it in. You have to be disciplined to for whatever plan you make in the team meeting, you can't just leave it as a plan. You actually have to execute it. And I think this time of year is really good to look back at the plan you made last year and see, did you execute it? And what have you not done that you should have done? And you can see now that you know, was it a mistake by not executing it and and just learning from that? Because I think a lot of us, especially in this industry, in the um hair, beauty, skin, we're very good at working on our clients and coming up with big ideas. We're not so great as uh to execute them and put them into a plan of how you are going to execute it. And I think that's a really important part of you need to be disciplined. You can't remember I speak to a lot of business owners and they're like, oh, I know this, I know that. Well, knowing and doing are two different things. And it doesn't matter how much you do in this team meeting and how much lip service everyone gives it, if you're not disciplined to carry it out, then it's it's a wasted exercise.

Adri Varga: 25:34

I always say to the salon owners, you as a salon owner need to need to understand that the way you show importance for these meetings, your team is going to come with you. So if these team meetings and you can have the weekly uh check-in meetings, the um monthly meetings, whatever, if you always move those meetings because a client wants to have an appointment, then your team, you train your team that this is not priority. This is actually not important. So you need to be very careful and very disciplined, as Jody said, and very consistent that we don't move all those pre-booked meetings. We don't care, whatever happens, those are there. It's and we're going to treat it us like we would treat a client. Yeah. So, yes, we don't get physical money for those meetings, but this is an investment, an investment of your time for better outcome for your business.

Joldie Fielden: 26:47

And I think it highlights the differences in the businesses that are profitable and successful, because they do prioritize this time and they prioritize investing time in their team, and they don't, and the business is set up and it's doing well, though that half day or two days that you've closed down for it, the business has already made generated the income to cover the cost of that, you know, like that comes into the planning of at the beginning of the year when you're mapping out what your year's

going to look like, part of that is going into the planning of okay, well, those days we need to make up the revenue on other days. So, you know, it all comes into your budget and your numbers. So you not taking a client for that time is not detrimental anyway. So I think it goes hand in hand. And if you're always moving those appointments to take a client, then the business isn't healthy, you know. Like if you're desperate to um, oh, we can't turn that client away, then the health of your business needs some serious, and this is a really good time to look at that and go, have I been doing that? Like, have I been stuck in that figure eight that you always talk about?

Adri Varga: 28:03

The crazy eight, isn't it? When you level up and then you fall back and then you level up, but you cannot go past because you only I always say you're you only leave in your little box, yeah, is your mind and everything else, your awareness of the environment. And uh, this is when you need to find a way to get out of that loophole, yeah. And um, if you are in the position where you actually don't really have meetings or you always shuffle meetings around, then they are other elements and very important elements of the business needs to be looked at because that's just a tip of the iceberg, yeah. That's just a result of not having uh uh foundations properly laid down.

Joldie Fielden: 28:52

I was just gonna say, how do you stop it from getting stale in the meeting? How because a lot of this can be really heavy. How do you stop everyone from sort of tuning out or just how do you keep it fun?

Adri Varga: 29:05

So you need to break it down, and um I think it's very important to map out properly uh what is going to happen at what time, yeah, during the meeting. And you need to break it down, and you need to introduce really games, and because we are all creative people, games are really good, you want to have fun, so definitely if you have say a half a day or more than four hours, you need to have more than two games, and the games are not long. Uh, and also I think uh you need to introduce visual parts, like what I used to do. It was uh we liked it. Uh, I just bought the uh chokes, you know, like when you can write on the mirror, and we had our mirror, and we were mapping out with the colorful chokes, everything was on the mirror, and then we were just going through all right, so this is our idea. That was, I don't know, Troy's idea, that was Nikki's idea. And we were just writing everything down with colorful chokes and everything, that was really good, and also you can have fun games, you know. Like I really like to have games we when you know we put uh team members in pairs and uh you know, like they have to figure out things together. It's always it's almost and it's also good for building trust and relationship in your team, and you can get games which are helping them with communication, or you can uh have games when they need to build trust in each other. So these are the things that I would definitely uh put in.

Joldie Fielden: 30:47

I think one of the best games that we did when we um uh we went over and did um Sarah's uh quarterly team training with her team is the drawing games. So there's this game that Adriana brought out, and you it's a shape and you have to draw it on the person's back, and they have to draw what you're drawing. It's absolutely hilarious.

You think it's because I always used to think oh, games are just naff. I'm not gonna do that. It's actually once you do it and get up and you just crack yourself up. I was the worst. My drawing looked nothing like any what she was drawing on my back. Everyone else got pretty close, they were really good. You could tell they were a well-connected team. Me, no, I think mine looked like a chicken, and it was supposed to be a house.

Adri Varga: 31:35

Yes, absolutely. And it was so much fun, we had so much laugh, and it doesn't need to be perfect. So all these games are, you know, we we are not the aim, is not perfection, the aim is either communication, trust, having fun. Uh, so that's I think it's very important. So, again, this why we are map out. We start at eight o'clock between eight and eight: thirty, we're going to have a coffee, a juice, whatever, eight: thirty till nine. This is what we're going to do. You need to have breaks also. So, this I'm saying, you know, like if you are a smaller team, you still need three or four hours to go through certain things. And then once you grow, you can build on it. You can you can build on it. And when uh team bigger teams are going away for two days, they are not bored. There are so many things you need to work through, especially when you have a big team.

Joldie Fielden: 32:27

And so, what are some of the common mistakes that um business owners make when they try and do these annual team meetings?

Adri Varga: 32:35

Firstly, I think the the biggest common mistake is that they are not preparing and they don't prepare the team. So they just oh, okay, let's do this meeting. They organize it in the calendar and uh then they just swing it. And when you don't have direction yourself, you cannot run a business, you cannot run a meeting. So the biggest mistake is that you going you go without a plan and you expect your team to jump on and uh to do miracles or miraculous things for you. The other biggest mistake is when you just going to be talking, talking, talking, and not involving your team. So you don't want to be the person who prepares an agenda and you're just going to read, this is my plan for next year, this is what you need to do, then you are not involving your team. That's again boss mentality. It's not a leader. Exactly. So it's not an involvement, it's not building a team, it's not building a thriving business. When you just tell them they're actually not emotionally connected to an outcome, and that's what is very important.

Joldie Fielden: 33:57

And I think that's the difference you're saying between a boss and a leader, like a boss mentality and a leader mentality is that if you're a leader, that they connect emotionally and they're emotionally invested in what they're doing with you. If you're a boss, that's it. Every negative connotation that goes with a boss is that they're just there to boss you around.

Adri Varga: 34:19

And also what I noticed working for almost nine, ten years now with uh our clients, that uh boss mentality attracts certain type of team members, and leadership mentality

attracts certain types of team members. And the boss mentality uh salon owners, they always complain about, you know, like how not nice their team members are, and they just dare for the money and they are just whatever it is, and then it's very difficult for them to understand it actually comes from you, from us, when we are don't when we don't know how to be a leader and how to properly put together a business and don't have the understanding that your business is nothing without your team. Nothing without your team. Even if you work for yourself, I can understand, you know, like okay, you don't want to have the responsibility or responsibilities of the team. But if you just work for yourself, like I used to, and I was very happy uh in my little bubble world, yeah, but you don't understand that you actually are going to hit your limitations pretty quickly if you are good, and then you're just going to work, work, work, work, work, and even if you want to create money, but you don't have the work-life harmony, and you cannot create that unless you have people who are supporting you.

Joldie Fielden: 35:54

Yeah. I mean, it's good. I think when you're a solo um operator, you need to take into consideration, you know, am I here to make money or am I here as a solo because I don't want to work for someone else? You know, like be very clear and honest with yourself about it. If people that do have a team and they do have that resentment, oh, they're just coming here for a paycheck, yeah, you're in business for a paycheck. It's all about the paycheck, but it's about the environment that you create for that paycheck.

Adri Varga: 36:27

I totally agree, absolutely agree about it. And um, I think it's very important uh for you to understand that uh even if you are a solo operator, you can actually have an assistant or someone taking care for you for your phone calls and making appointments and everything else, which is going to free up a lot of time uh for yourself. I always uh think I've been in every end of the industry, I've been uh uh employee, I worked for myself, I was employing people. And honestly, what I can see like probably uh what I would say I was most delusional when I worked my worked for myself because I had the freedom and everything, I created really good money, but then I didn't have the freedom in a way that if I wanted to go for a holiday or if I wanted to drop my hours, no one would pick up anything. So uh then I would see on my income. But when I uh took over the salon from you, and then finally I figured out to actually run a successful business, how to run a successful business, this is when my real freedom came because from 60 hours, then I went to 40 hours, then I went to just a couple of days a week, and then I went to basically just work one uh Saturday a month just for fun to spend time with my team, and I still uh love hairdressing and I'm still doing it. But when you have a team, you can do so much more because this is when I opened uh my second business, and you know, like I could focus on other things that were uh interested me in life. I could start my day later because my team was there, so I actually could do my exercise in the morning, meditate in the morning, go for a walk, have a coffee meeting with my friends, and then start at 10 or 11. I could not do that when I work for myself without losing income.

Joldie Fielden: 38:45

Exactly. And I think, and that's why I mean it's different if you've got a partner that can supplement it, and your solo business is just a joint venture in the

household that you know tops things up. Um, just being really clear, I think, as a business owner of what your actual goal is. And most people I speak to, like most of those um the clients that come and talk to me about their growth, they're actually wanting to one day not be the main person in the business or they want to sell it. And then if that's your end goal, then you need to think about well, if it's just me, and and we get very emotional and tied to, I've spent the last 20 years looking, building this business and looking after my clients, and I'm making this amount of money each week, it's worth money to sell. I'm sorry, it's not because you can't sell yourself. It's there's a certain amount of goodwill within it that you'll be able to on sell, but goodwill is just goodwill, and then you've got your fittings and fixtures. Uh someone buying your business doesn't care how long you've um put into it. Yeah. So if that's your goal, like Or you're working towards a retirement type of goal, then you have to make sure that you're very clear about it's okay, I know that I won't be selling it as such, so I need to make more money that I can put into my 401k or my super or something like that, because um, I'm not going to cash out at the business. Or if it's I actually want to cash out in the business because I've invested all this money into it, then you're going to have to have a team and have your team working coherently towards the same goal. That and what I was saying before is that we're all here for money. It's just about the environment that we're generating that income and that we feel like we're validated, we're valued as the business owner because a lot of business owners don't feel valued by their staff. They're incentive. We have um, I remember one business owner that was highly offended that her team didn't buy her a nice enough present at Christmas because she buys them nice presents. And it's like that's not your as the business owner, you can't expect your team to be celebrating you like that. They will naturally, if you're a great leader and they feel that emotional connection to you on a professional level, you don't want to ever take it into getting entwined into their personal, but um, they have that professional respect for you, then they are going to do nice things. It's their your team are a mirror of who you are, I think.

Adri Varga: 41:32

Absolutely, I totally agree uh about that, and also expectations, you know, like uh they're working for you, you are not working for them, you know, like uh it's our responsibility to it's our responsibility to look after them. So if they decide that, you know, it's uh or their focus is not on buying a present for you, I don't think you should be really too uh sad about it, you know, like it is what it is. You can have a self-reflection, you know, like why it happens, but you can't make people to do stuff. Uh create uh freedom for yourself is actually to create a list of tasks what you think you can delegate. And my way of delegation always uh was here is the list, what I would like us to sort of, you know, uh find people who would like to, you know, uh work, take on those tasks. And then I had a list of you know, five, six, seven, nine things what I knew my team can take on, but I did let them to choose what they wanted to take on. And yeah, instead of me telling them, hey, you know, like Serena, come here, I would like you to do this, this, this. And Serena is like, oh, I I I'm not really good at this. But if I have the list and I said, I think I can do this, then once you start to delegate, then that time what you are spending on very simple tasks, that time you can spend on growing your business.

Joldie Fielden: 43:04

Exactly. And look, when you're talking about the team creating, for example, Adri and I, our team, we say this is the outcome we want to achieve. And we ask them, hey, can you put something together that you think you can do to come up with this outcome? And Charmy and um Jess and Jean all they make up all their systems and their um uh tasks and their standard operating procedures. Um and they bring it to Audrey and I and they tell us how it's gonna go. They train us to follow their system. So, you know, it's yeah, so we know we know what the outcome needs to be. As business owners, we don't have to go and create the art, we don't have to go and create the system, they create it and they bring it to us, and then we sign off on it, or we um have a meeting and we make changes with it. So as the business owner, you don't have to do everything yourself.

Adri Varga: 43:59

And this is when, you know, again, you know, like but I'm a perfectionist, yeah. I used to be one, but they don't work, doesn't work because there is always room for improvement, and it must be room for improvement because otherwise you won't grow. There is never perfect, there is no perfection in a way, you know, like when you cannot find the tiny things what could work better. But it's fine, you know, like being a perfectionist is actually not a positive thing, it's actually your own limitation. What you really need to step over and say, well, is it really such a big problem that I will stuck here until I don't find a solution? Right, step over and keep growing, keep moving, and eventually solution will come. Because in our company, I think what we do really well is that we are not perfectionists. We expect ourselves and our team to make mistakes, but we also dare to listen and to fix and to create systems and create better ways to do things in the company. And this is how we are growing so well, and how we attracted the most beautiful team members we have. Last night Jody just called me and we were just talking about how um grateful we are for the team that we have, because we have a beautiful team, and everyone is so dedicated, and uh it just makes everything so much more easier.

Joldie Fielden: 45:41

And I think it's something that we do really well that salon owners all say, Oh, we don't need to do that, is that we have a weekly and we actually have two weekly, a Monday and a Friday team meeting, and Audre is there with our team. I can't always be there, but Audrey is always there, and it's just a 15-minute check-in and connection and making sure everyone's feeling valued and what can we do to help support them. What it's never about what we need them to do, it's always about what they need us to do for them.

Adri Varga: 46:14

Yes, absolutely. And I think that two 15 minutes is our gold, you know, like this is what brings uh us together, and we are always there to listen. And uh, if anyone has any uh suggestions, it's always uh being listened to. And we always say to our team, please ask questions. There is no silly question. We're never going to be uh angry at you because you are uncertain about something. Ask the question so we can actually find a solution together. And it works really well because they are not afraid of us, they have a respect over us, but they are not afraid of us to not listen because we don't want to crash anyone's creativity. I want our team or we want our team to feel free to create ideas and come back with that idea to us so we can consider if it's a

good thing, we can implement it in the business. And I never want anyone to feel that they actually they have a really good idea, but they cannot tell us because Jody or I, we think we are better than them. Uh we we actually implemented so many good things in the in the company since we have our employees because of them. Because they are specialists in their field, and we cannot be everything for the company. So we employed really good specialists in their own field, and they are free to give us suggestions. The other thing is we put our team to work together through different systems, policies, or standard operation policies. They work everything through together and then they present it to us. And we created, you know, like those people they never knew each other. And we created a really good team who can work on together, work on tasks together via Zoom.

Joldie Fielden: 48:21

And they feel valued, they feel seen, they feel valued, you know, they love going off together.

Adri Varga: 48:28

So I was thinking while we were talking about, you know, like all this creating freedom and everything, and uh on uh normally on our beginning of the year meetings, we working towards to creating freedom for uh the uh business owners. And um, the best way to do that, starting to actually work through systems and policies for the salon. And some salons they don't have any system, they don't have any policies. So these meetings are really good to actually, if you don't have anything, just create a list of systems together, what you should uh work through together. And I always say when we create systems and policies, me as a salon owner, I can come up with ideas, I can come up with the skeleton of the system or the policy, but I want my team to work through the systems and policies together with me. So again, I'm not just telling them you need to do this, we actually work through things together. And I think these meetings are really good to create new systems and policies, or if you have systems and policies, to review them what is not working anymore and what needs to be tweaked, and you can do that.

Joldie Fielden: 49:42

Another way to and and doing it, and it's it takes a workload off us, you know. Like we don't and they enjoy it and and they're so proud of themselves, and I'm so proud of them, you know.

Adri Varga: 49:56

Yes, absolutely. So these are just basically, you know, like the basic things uh what we are uh we can work on uh when we have a beginning of the meet, uh beginning of the year. Uh so really what you need to be uh remember, you know, don't make it as a by lecture. You actually want to co-create in the meeting, yeah. Uh, and if you can book it somewhere nice, you know, like uh if you can take your team. So we had uh once the weather was really kind to us in January, so I could take my team to the beach. So we just went to the beach and we had our meeting uh on the beach because here in Australia normally very hot in January, but that day it was really good. So we just went to the beach, sit there, we ordered food and all those things, so it was really nice. But you can take your team anywhere, you know, like you can just uh rent out a little place in a restaurant at the back room, you know, like you can actually uh find

a proper place. But you know, if it's going to be in your salon, just make sure you're going to do a little bit of a catering for them. Uh you're going to provide proper coffee or proper drink, just it doesn't need to be expensive. I didn't start it expensive because I didn't have the money, but the way I started it, I made sandwiches. So then the next steps to remember is you want to print out the agenda, obviously, bring the snacks and show genuine interest in everyone's input. Because you really need to be open-minded. And please put every negative thoughts aside. You should not be offended about if someone is pointing out something is not working well in your business. For me, every feedback is like a golden nugget because I just I purchased the ingredients, I made sandwiches for my team, and I made sure I ordered the coffee from next door, so that was a nice coffee. But you can make it on budget, it doesn't need to be high-end. But once you grow there, it's really nice to have actually some prepared catering for your team. First, you want to know what your team is really thinking about your business. And secondly, if you can make it better, why not? Just make it better. And uh, it's not an attack against you when someone is feeling free, feeling free to tell you, look, this is how it works right now, but I think it could be better. I think if we would do this, it would be better. So just prepare yourself. Nothing is negative, everything is just a feedback.

Joldie Fielden: 52:36

And I think that's important that your team aren't trained in how to communicate with you effectively, taking your emotions into consideration, whereas you need to communicate with them, taking their emotions into consideration. Yeah. So you need to be able to not expect them to uh be aware of how it's going to come across because it may just come across in the wrong tone, or they may be a bit upset about it, or or whatever. You have to just make sure you don't react. You can react later in private. Absolutely. You'll have a rant and a cry and a like, why don't they but you actually want to hear those nuggets because that little voice, it one, it'll take a lot for them to actually say it, and it will be they're taking a big risk in saying it too, like in their mind, like what's the blowback going to be. So you want to make sure that they don't fear any blowback from you because you don't like what you're hearing.

Adri Varga: 53:36

And you can lose trust very easily if someone opens up and then they're going to be punished for it. So that's not leadership. And also, even if you hear something that you don't like or you know it's not something that you want to implement, you always say thank you for input and you say, Let me think about it. You never have to give answers right away to anyone if you don't know what you want to do about it. Thank you very much. I took some notes, I really appreciate your input. Let me think about it, and we can discuss further in our next meeting.

Joldie Fielden: 54:12

That's really good. That's a good little nugget.

Adri Varga: 54:15

Write that down, folks. So the last thing, uh, just for a quick recap, just remember use tools like surveys, visual planning boards, and even games. Very, very important uh to make it fun. Uh, don't make it too dry and boring because no one likes dry and boring. So you know your team and uh just try to make it fun.

Joldie Fielden: 54:37

So, what we'll do in saying that, um, I think you've got your um checklist that you mentioned earlier.

Adri Varga: 54:45

Yes. So that checklist is going to help you to organize your beginning of the beginning of the year meeting. It's going to tell you exactly what to do, what to prepare with. So if you are interested to uh have that document, just uh feel free to follow. I think the link what we're going to put into the description.

Joldie Fielden: 55:08

Yeah, we're going to go, there'll be a link in the description. You can always just send us a DM if you can't find the link. Um, that's fine. We'll know what you're talking about. And or shoot us an email. We're available.

Adri Varga: 55:21

You can find us at Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook is at focusgd. And our website is www.focusgd.com.

Joldie Fielden: 55:33

Here you go.

Adri Varga: 55:35

All right, guys. Happy Merry Christmas, guys. Yeah, and we really hope that this is a little bit of a hap for you. It's still plenty of time to prepare that meeting because it's just beginning of December. So, you know, after the season, you can sit down and you can plan ahead. You don't really need to do this meeting in January. You can make it end of January, beginning of February. It's absolutely fine. But uh, I would like you to consider to map out a meeting and have a look how it's going to um impact your business. Sounds good.

Joldie Fielden: 56:13

All right, well, that's us. Um, we will be back our next episode. We're actually going to be introducing one of our star team, uh, Cheryl. And Cheryl is uh one of our support coaches, and we absolutely love her. So um she was also one of Aju's clients um in uh for a long time as well. So it'll be a great story to introduce you because she's been through it with Aju from both sides of the fence. So it'll be nice to hear what she says.

Adri Varga: 56:45

And she's been through everything. She had her own salon, she ran teacher, she was helping someone else to build a business, so she has all these experiences and really great stories. So we will see you next time, guys. Bye. Bye.