

ChatGPT transcript

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Welcome to "Beyond the Mirror" with your hosts Adrienne Varga and Jodie Fielden. In this podcast, Adrienne and Jodie take you on an intriguing journey beyond the surface, deep diving into the world of business in the hair, skin, beauty, and wellness industries. From business success tips and marketing hacks to industry insights and trends, it's all here. They leave no stone unturned. So get ready to unlock your full potential, evaluate your business, leave behind the limitations, and embrace the endless possibilities that lie beyond the mirror.

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Welcome everyone. It's great to be back for episode four. I'm Jodie Field, and I'm joined by my work wife, bestie, and business partner, Adrienne Varga. During these podcasts, we share how you can turn challenges into opportunities, overcome obstacles, and discover practical strategies to create your success. So today's topic is part two of the biggest lessons we've learned while running and growing our businesses.

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Yes, absolutely. Hello everyone, and I'm so excited for this episode. Today, we are going to continue our chat about the key insights we learned along our journey and some key things we wish we knew when we started. We had some great ones in our last episode. I'm looking forward to seeing what more we both have to share, so let's jump straight into it.

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What's next on your list, Adrienne? The next on my list is, "My business is only as good as my team." I think it's very important. That was a crucial learning for me because, in the beginning, I was focused on getting more clients. I wanted more clients, thinking that would solve all my problems. But then there was a gap. I didn't have time to implement things with my team. Everyone did what they thought was best, leading to some disconnection. So I learned that my business will only thrive if my team does.

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I then shifted my focus to training my team and implementing systems so they could understand their roles better. That's a good insight. My lesson is a continuation of that. When trying to motivate my team, I used to think bigger bonuses were the answer. But I realised not everyone is motivated by money. Some are driven by other factors, and the only way to know is to communicate effectively.

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Absolutely. While I'm motivated by money, I also value a safe working environment, training, and a nurturing atmosphere. It's essential to understand that motivations can vary and change over time.

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Exactly. And that brings me to my next point. Involving my team in decisions was a game-changer. It relieved me to realise that I have a diverse team, each with their strengths and weaknesses. By involving them in decisions, we built a strong culture and shared values. It made the business journey less lonely and more collaborative.

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That's a valuable lesson. My next point might be a bit controversial. As I mentioned in our last episode, your team is not your friend. It's essential to maintain professional boundaries. While it's crucial to be empathetic and supportive, we must also protect our business interests. Sometimes, it's challenging to strike a balance, but it's necessary for the long-term health of the business.

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Absolutely. And I completely agree. I recall when you had your salon and I began renting a chair, you employed this wonderful young girl. Would you like to share more about her?

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Certainly. In my younger years, many people went out of their way to help and support me. This instilled in me a desire to pay it forward. So, when this young girl started working for me, I naturally became a mother figure to her due to the absence of such a figure in her life. I often found myself making excuses for her behaviour. I remember one night she called me, deeply distressed, even hinting at ending her life. Trigger warning here for sensitive listeners. I rushed to her aid, helping her in ways that went beyond my role as an employer. However, soon after, she began missing work without notice. It made me question if I was truly helping her or merely enabling her.

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You're right. It wasn't just affecting your family but the entire salon environment. I remember her emotional outbursts, which disrupted the salon's atmosphere. Your nurturing nature compelled you to help, but it began affecting the business. I recall one instance where we had to move her to my kitchen upstairs to shield clients from her breakdowns. It was detrimental to the business, and I'm glad you learned from that experience.

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It was indeed a significant learning curve. It's essential to strike a balance between being caring and maintaining professional boundaries. A business is not just about the owner but also about the employees and their families. It's their livelihood too.

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Absolutely. And clients are very perceptive. They notice when something is amiss, and it can affect their experience. I remember a Pilates studio I frequented in Sydney where the team was cohesive and supportive. However, when I moved and tried a new studio, I could sense the instructor's stress and lack of focus. After two sessions with the same negative vibe, I never returned. As business owners, we must be aware that clients pick up on body language, tone, and overall energy.

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You're spot on. So, what's next on your list? It seems we're still on the theme of teamwork.

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Indeed, it's all about the team. My next point is that success is a result of teamwork. I realized that no matter how driven I am or how clear my goals are, if my team isn't on board, success is unattainable. It's a collective effort.

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Also, how selective I need to be when choosing new team members to join this environment. It's essential to be watchful and address any issues promptly. Otherwise, problems can escalate, and conflicts might arise unexpectedly in your studio or salon.

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Absolutely, I always believe that success is a result of teamwork. You can't build a successful business alone. As a business owner, you need a great team behind you, but nurturing that team and effective management are equally important.

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Indeed, management can make or break a business. It's one of the crucial factors that can determine a business's success. That brings me to my next point: clear role progression. Providing your team with something to work toward, such as milestones or career goals, is vital. Even if you don't have a large team, setting personal career milestones is crucial. Team members need to see that they have opportunities for growth and progress, rather than just coming to work.

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I can confirm that many salons have started implementing different levels or stepping stones within the business to help their team members grow. They set clear targets or goals that team members need to achieve to move to the next level. It's essential because people in the hairdressing, beauty, Pilates, or yoga industry are motivated when they see progress. If they don't see room for growth, they may consider leaving.

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Exactly. Even if it's just two or three levels, it's still something for them to work toward. And it doesn't always have to be directly related to their current role; it can be something that contributes to their personal or career development.

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Absolutely. Very few employees stay with a single employer for 20 years these days. It's not like it used to be. We shouldn't be afraid of what they might do next. As long as they feel valued and continue to learn and grow while with us, it's a win-win. Of course, we must choose wisely where to invest our resources and who to invest in; it shouldn't be done haphazardly.

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Exactly. It's important to be selective about where we invest and whom we invest in. It's not a one-size-fits-all approach. And when you have these stepping stones in place, there should be clarity and consistency in following the rules. Otherwise, it can confuse everyone and undermine the system you've established. I recently worked with a salon owner who was considering moving some long-term employees to the next level, but upon reviewing their performance, it became evident that not all of them were meeting the set goals. I advised her

to be cautious because changing the rules based on time rather than performance could disrupt the entire system she had put in place.

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Having such systems in place is crucial because if team members don't reach their targets, they shouldn't move up a level. This underscores the need to measure every aspect of your business, not just the financials. It's essential to measure everything, including each team member's performance, through regular one-on-one meetings and quarterly performance reviews.

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Absolutely, measuring performance is vital. It goes beyond financials; it's about evaluating all facets of your business. One-on-one meetings and quarterly performance reviews serve as indispensable tools in this regard.

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This leads me to my next point: team meetings. The way you conduct these meetings and set the tone is critical. In the past, when working for others, I remember weekly team meetings often focused on what everyone was doing wrong. This created a negative atmosphere, and we'd approach these meetings with trepidation.

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I can relate to that. What I've learned over time is the significant difference between being a boss and being a leader. In the past, many business owners acted more like bosses, merely telling their employees what to do, often with a self-centred approach. But times have changed, and businesses need to evolve too. The significant distinction lies in being a leader. Leaders guide, teach, motivate, and mentor their team. They lead by example, fostering teamwork. It's more challenging than being a boss, but in the long run, becoming a great leader will make your business flourish. Once you create a positive culture, word will spread, and talented professionals will seek to work with you.

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Indeed, the industries have evolved, especially in recent years. People no longer want to work for bosses who make them feel bad about themselves. There's a trend, especially on social media platforms like TikTok, where individuals share how their bosses treat them poorly, and it's gained significant attention. This reflects a shift in the mindset of the younger generation. They would rather not work than work for someone who mistreats them. It's essential that we, as business owners, strive to be the best to attract the best.

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What I've also learned, which connects to this, is that if I'm unhappy with my team or feeling frustrated, I need to take a step back and ask myself why I'm creating this environment. Your team mirrors your behaviour. This leads to another important lesson: we teach people how to treat us. Our actions and behaviour set the tone for our team. If we allow ourselves to be unreasonable or display negativity at work, our team will follow suit. It all comes back to us. Setting boundaries is crucial, and once we set them, we must consistently enforce them. Just as you would train a puppy or teach children, it's the same principle.

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If you tell the puppy not to jump on the couch ten times, and then two times you let the puppy jump on the couch, then the puppy is going to get really confused, and then it just thinks, "I could jump twice." So you keep trying it, and hopefully, she's going to get tired of it, and she's just going to give up on it. So your team is always going to test your boundaries. So it's your job to actually set those boundaries tight and make sure they're going to stay there.

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Like the universe in life, what you project is what you get back. So if you're not projecting the right things, then you're not going to receive. And that's the same with your business, your personal life, your team, everything, which actually brings our learnings are really similar, which is funny to see, which was about respecting boundaries. So respecting your team's boundaries and also respecting your own boundaries and learning how to communicate those boundaries effectively.

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I see a lot in the industry at the moment where they're firing clients because the clients aren't respecting their boundaries, but they need to have a look at how am I setting those boundaries, am I communicating it? And I know it's through years of frustration, feeling like they're being taken advantage of or working for employers that don't respect their boundaries. And then, say if a client's late, they're expected to be the one to catch it up. And all this resentment within the industry towards our clients or our staff has built up, and we really need to pull that apart and take a good look at why is it happening and what we can do to fix it.

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Instead of jumping on that mob trend of just saying, "I'm going to fire my client," by all means, if you're saying, "I need to fire my client," it means you're attracting the wrong type of client for who you want to work with. Yeah. And also, you need to look into yourself, why am I attracting those clients who are disrespectful, they don't show up, and all those things? So what is my part in that? How am I running my business? What kind of environment am I creating? Because we attract exactly the same as team members. We attract the clients who mirror us.

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It is absolutely confronting. It's absolutely confronting. But I know I experienced the same, and I worked in different salons, and I know it was a different environment. Some salons were like, in some salons, I was very lucky because we were really working well together, and then the clientele were showing that. And I used to work in a quiet beachy salon where I didn't last long because I don't like gossiping and I don't like beachiness.

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But I actually experienced firsthand that those clients were very difficult to deal with, and the mindset was exactly the same. So the clients mirrored the team members, the team members mirrored the salon. And exactly what we need to be careful of is it really always the client's fault or are we just not really good at taking feedback from the clients because of our ego or because we don't know how to respond or how to react. Reacting is actually

something you don't really want to do. You want to learn to be responsive, and this is when it's going to come back, asking for feedback and everything else.

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But again, that's a certain level when you get to a certain level in your business. So I can see this trend. And anytime when I see anything like this popping up in Facebook groups, I feel a little bit bad about it because obviously it's very difficult to explain to business owners who are in that environment and they are feeling like the clients are terrible to them, and they are doing everything they can, and they still don't get any respect from the clients. It's hard. So normally I don't even get in there because first, you need to have your awareness of "I might have a part in this," and then you can change things.

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But when people don't have the awareness, and the problem is, once a conversation like this starts, there is almost like ganging up against clients. And then those business owners, they're supporting each other in this idea, like they are terrible clients out there, they are disrespectful, and all those things. And also, I wanted to say, I don't mean that you don't get those one or two clients who are really not nice clients, but this is when you're going to have your boundaries. This is again, you're going to have your system surrounding it, and you're going to take the feedback, and obviously, you're going to make sure that you handle the situation really well.

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And if your business is on a higher level or higher vibration, like those clients are going to come and go because they can't live in an environment. So if they come with that mindset, if your mindset and vibration is much, much higher, those clients, they don't feel good in that environment. So they can be WTS clients. But if you respond with kindness and being nice. They don't know how to respond to that because they are expecting you to mirror them. They are expecting you to be bitchy or whatever so they can actually continue the pressure on you. So it all comes back again to taking our part, stepping back where I am and why am I attracting these clients and how can I change that? Awareness is the first thing.

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Yeah, and I think awareness is the first step and then the second step is saying, "What can I do to fix it and how can I change it?" Instead of just focusing on that problem is to like, "Okay, let's try and find a solution and be open to the solution." I know there's a lot of people out there that are looking for it, but they're not actually open to it because sometimes it can be a big ego thing. Like it's a big hit to the ego. There's no way when I had the salon I would have ever accepted that I was the problem.

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It took years and working alongside you for a lot of it to turn around and go, "Now I see it," and I really wish that was something that I had been more aware of back in the day. Yeah, but you see, we do our learning in our own time also. And also eventually you were open to the idea and you wanted to step back and you had your realisation. So sometimes people are so close, they are in denial or they blame people or they are constantly finding excuses. So we call this below the line with the thinking because there are different ways of thinking about it, and this is when it's difficult, when you need to go through your own journey, you're

wanting to change things, you're wanting to find out what you can do better, how you can move out from this situation.

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But as long as you are comfortable clapping your head in the mud, sitting in the mud and complaining about that you are in the mud, then nothing is going to happen, there's nothing that's going to change until you want it to change. I really want it to change. Yeah, absolutely. That brings us to the little bell that's gone off, telling us that that's the end of our session today. That went really fast.

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"It was a lot of fun. I know, it was amazing fun, and I just love sharing our learning. It brings back so many memories, and I'm really hoping—well, hope is not a strategy, but I'm truly hoping, guys, that you're putting it out to the universe.

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Yes, absolutely. But, really, I hope that you guys enjoy it as much as we do, and we provide you with some food for thought. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. You can actually send questions to us through our website. There's a link on the website.

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Yeah, you can send us questions, and we are more than happy to create an episode around your questions. We are also happy to answer those questions. But I think this is it for today. We are looking forward to seeing you next time. And just our usual sign-off: Next Thursday, 9:30 AM Sydney time. If you'd like to take a deeper look into your persona as a salon owner, our quiz, the link is provided on the screen below. Jump on through at focusgdt.com. You will also find links to our upcoming workshops and training. When you click the link, there will be one for salon owners and one for wellness business owners. We hope to see you there. When you take the quiz, you'll also receive a personalised report. Adrienne has put these together based on the answers that you give throughout the quiz, and you'll receive that report along with a video explaining it to you.

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Yeah, absolutely. That report will show your strengths and weaknesses as a business persona and provide guidance on what your next steps should be to improve. So it's a really valuable resource. If you want to figure it out, if you want to find out, just take the quiz.

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And also, just one more thing: If you would like to follow us on Instagram or Facebook, our handle is [@FocusGDT](https://www.instagram.com/FocusGDT), and we are more than happy when you follow us. We create really good content and are building a community. To become a part of our Facebook group, it's also quite valuable. Once you take the quiz or register for one of our workshops, there will be a link for you to join our private Facebook group with the business owners that we've worked with and who have been a part of our community for a while now. All right, well, we'll say goodbye. Have a fantastic day. Absolutely. Enjoy the rest of your day, and we will see you very soon.