

E86 - The one thing you can do this month to give you back hours of time.

Welcome to the empowered entrepreneur podcast. My name is Michelle Smit, and I am an ex-teacher turned online business coach for Edupreneurs, the owner of Digiteach and a six-figure entrepreneur. I am in love with empowering educators, just like you to create freedom filled online businesses and lives they love.

If you are looking to uplevel your skills, your finances, your mindset, and change the trajectory of your life as an educator in business, then you are in the right place. Think of this podcast as your weekly dose of business and mindset development to help unlock the infinite potential within you to play bigger with your life and go after your dreams.

We are going to have so much fun together. So thank you so much for pushing play today. Now let's dive in.

Hello. Hello. I hope you are doing amazingly today. I am happy to be talking to you. As always, thanks for being here as always, I am going to be jamming on how to get back your time in business, because let's be honest, we all know how precious our time is. Time is the single most important thing that we have, actually.

We often think money is that thing, but time is not a resource that you can ever get back. Once it's gone, it's gone. And we all have a limited time on this earth. We all will live till I don't know, a hundred, maybe a hundred and something, maybe 80, who knows how long we're going to live, maybe not even that long.

And so time is just really precious. And when you're building a business, your time is so precious. And I just want to remind you, don't ever forget it because we do. We forget how precious our time is. And when we're building our business, we are so hungry for money. All we're doing is just grinding out, spending all this time to make money.

And what we don't realize, is that there's smarter ways of doing this that doesn't require you to have to spend all your time doing this. And as I say, I'm

always about working smarter and not harder. That is like my philosophy in life.

That's why I love strategy so much because I feel like strategy is one of the main ways in which you can work smarter and not harder and being super strategic in your business but when it comes to time. I see this thing happen all the time. I see entrepreneurs teaching business owners, and I'm very guilty of this myself.

Especially in the early days of business. And I think there's a time and a place for it, but just funnelling all of our time into the business. And I think we need to do that. There is a time and a place where you are going to have to put a lot of energy and time into your business. I'm not saying that you can't do that.

You will have to do that to get your business off the ground, especially if you don't have money as a lever, then you're going to have to put more time in. But there comes a point when you actually need to level up and make a CEO decision. And that CEO decision is to outsource. So this is what I'm jamming on today.

I'm going to be jamming on how you can regain back your time through outsourcing stuff in your business. And specifically when I say outsourcing, I mean hiring a virtual assistant in a nutshell. Because I believe that's the first hire for a business owner, is a virtual assistant. And I know when I'm going to be talking to you about this, you're going to have all these excuses for why you can't hire a virtual assistant.

And I'm going to debunk them because I believe our brains will always make excuses because obviously it's a cost to you in the business. You're going to have to pay for that service. But I'm going to just explain to you now how it's such a boss move and how most of us are ready to hire a virtual assistant.

And you don't have to be making a lot of money in your business. Actually, you can even start right in the beginning of your business if you wanted to. If you really didn't have time, you could do it right in the beginning and just make it work. Because I promise you, when you outsource certain work that needs to be done in the business but has no real correlation to money made because there are a lot of tasks within a business that have to be done.

But they don't directly correlate to making money. And what happens is you end up doing these tasks and spending a lot of time on these tasks, because they're often quite tedious and time consuming. And there is no correlation to more money being made because there's only certain income generating activities in your business.

And a lot of the activities we're doing are not income generating activities. And this is why I'm going to show you that hiring a virtual assistant sooner rather than later is a boss move to growing your business, to making more money. So I know it's counterintuitive because you're going to be spending money, but I'm telling you with those hours that you're regaining back, you're going to make more money.

Here are some of the objections that you're probably thinking. The first one is probably, I'm not making enough money in my business to hire. And I'm going to ask you this question now. Maybe the reason you aren't making enough in your business is because you are doing things in your business that don't make money.

Quite simple, right? Maybe that is why you're not making enough money is that you're not doing the right things and for example Spending time replying to customer service emails Someone wanting an invoice someone struggling to log into their course, someone asking for a refund. Someone asking to get a new payment link to change their credit card. There's so many customer service emails that'll come through and you're spending time on those. Are those directly correlating to you making more money?

No, it's obviously you giving your customers a great experience, which is absolutely essential. You need to do it. You cannot not do it. It has to be done. You can't have a business if you've got terrible customer service. So you have to do that work but is it making you money at the end of that task. No. Is it taking a lot of time? Yes.

Another thing is spending time creating graphics on Canva, time consuming. Does that action directly correlate to you making more money? No. It really doesn't. Your graphics are not going to make you money. How pretty your Instagram posts are not going to make you money.

It's the messaging, it's the actual content that will generate money, right? It's what you say that makes money. Spending time dealing with tech headaches.

Does that make you money? No. Do you have to do it? Yes, because you've got an online business and you're going to have tech headaches. Doing admin and invoicing.

Obviously invoicing makes you money, but the act of doing the invoice, it's painful. And admin. I don't know about you, but I do not like admin. I find that very painful. It like drains my energy. So perhaps, just perhaps, if you stopped doing those things in your business and you would put that same time that you would be doing those things and you put that into income generating activities, which are: selling, consistently selling, making offers, telling people how they can work with you, building your audience, getting new eyeballs into your world.

That's really important. Launching, having a big promo periods where you make sales, enrol lots of students, make money, all of that stuff. Creating new programs and assets to sell because those are assets. They're going to make you money. Creating powerful content that builds your brand and sells that's going to make you money.

So the problem isn't that you, well, you're not making enough money. So of course that is a problem. But that isn't an excuse for not hiring a virtual assistant. And it may actually be the exact reason why you need to hire a virtual assistant, because you're spending too much time doing things that are not going to make you money.

And the problem is you're trying to do everything for too long and it's costing you. And I see this all the time. I am guilty of it. I believe I did push it too long, but I did hire. And then once I hired, I was just like sold forever. But I'm just saying, you trying to do everything for too long is limiting your ability to earn more money and grow.

And it's also limiting your joy within your business because how enjoyable is doing the admin activities, the customer service, the dealing with tech challenges. How enjoyable is that for you? If you love it, which I highly doubt, then cool maybe you should be a virtual assistant. Jokes.

But if it's draining you, just hire someone to do that. Let them take that work. Let them take that off your plate. The next thing you may be thinking, because I have been there, is people can't do this job like me. For example, customer service.

I thought this the whole time. But I promise you with some proper training and onboarding and standard operating procedures, they can. It's just you and you're not willing to loosen your grip on the control in your business. And that is going to stop your growth because you cannot do it all right.

And it will actually harm you and your business. If you keep trying to control everything and do everything yourself because it's not possible. It's just not the best use of your time. You are not going to have the strengths and all of those things. So you've got to get people who have the strengths and those things to do those things for you.

Whilst you stay in your zone of genius. So back in the day, I did everything in my business, and I do believe there's a time and a place for it. I was the jack of all trades. I did everything for the first two years. Me and Mike did everything together. And I must say we wore every hat. I wore every hat.

Mike did a lot of the tech, and I wore every hat basically. Facebook ads, customer service, everything. Okay? Mike often did the tech for me, thankfully. And I was so grateful for that because I built the skills needed. And I learned all the skills that I needed to learn at that time, but it was intense.

And I remember I was spending hours emailing people. I'm not even joking. Hours a day. I was emailing people back and I can't believe how much time I spent emailing people. And it was such an important thing for my brand. Customer service was number one. So I would always reply back to emails. And I felt that I had to reply back to them personally, it had to be me.

And people would send me long emails. And I would give them a lot of my time. And I thought that, and that was really powerful for my business because people really loved how personable I was and how much I connected with people. And like everyone valued that. So it was valuable, but the time I was spending doing it was not making any sense.

Then I got to a point where, the business was really taking off. It was like in the second year or so. And I had a big launch and I had lots of students join. I think it was like 120 students buy. And when you have an influx of students, you do have more customer service that comes with that.

And I just remember just drowning in customer service. And I was like, this is killing me. And it started to become really painful. And then only did I start realizing, okay, maybe I should hire a virtual assistant and I did, but it was just on the brain curve a little bit too late. I would say. I should have done it before.

I actually should have done it before that launch. And I remember the feeling that person couldn't do the job like me especially the customer service side. They couldn't be as personable as me and it just wouldn't have the same effect if it was someone else. And it really held me back that belief held me back to waiting for too long and I couldn't release the control. Until I had to release the control because I literally couldn't respond to everyone and I remember finding someone who's still with me, my virtual assistant, Melissa. I think a lot of you would know her if you're in my world and in my programs, she started off with me years ago and I hired her based on her values versus her skills, which is what I would recommend if you're hiring a virtual assistant, make sure their values are aligned with yours.

It's most important if you're hiring people because skills, you can teach people skills and they can learn. And that's why she's still with me because our values align. And yeah, it was just one of those situations where I was like, I actually can't do this, and I need to release the control.

And this is what I really recommend to you because you are going to be thinking like people can't do this job like me, but I'm telling you they can. And I've seen it happen. I've trained Melissa to respond to people the way that I would respond to people not acting like me. She always signs off as herself.

But she gives people the same warmth and kindness and time of day that I would. And it was so important, the way she spoke to people and the tone of voice she used and all of that stuff. And it was quite a long process to get her onboarding and get her used to the way that I wanted it to be, but she does an excellent job of it. I've released that control years ago and although it was hard, she does a great job of it. And she's the same as me.

And so don't fool yourself and think that people can't do it like you. There are certain things in your business that people won't be able to do. And those are the things you should be doing. And that's like selling. Launching, going live, being the face of the business, whatever that is, people can't do that.

You have to do that. But other things, the behind the scene things, most people can do those jobs. You don't actually need to do those jobs. Just that little objection I hope I've spoken to. And then the next one is the next thing that you may be thinking is I'm going to wait until my business takes off to hire.

And no, that's not the way to do it. You don't want to be not prepared, operationally, or energetically when your business takes off. If you have a big launch and a big, huge influx of students that come into your world, you don't want to not be ready for that operationally and energetically. Because as I just mentioned, with more volume of customers there are more emails, there are more tech issues, things go wrong as normal, like when I had that big launch with 120 people who bought. I had a lot of emails on like login struggles and this and that and that.

And it was intense. I wish I had hired before that it wasn't the best situation. So you don't want to wait until your business takes off and you have a big surge in customers and students to hire. It's actually the other way around. You actually want to hire before that. So you set yourself up operationally and energetically for the big surge.

Because do you really want to be doing that in the busy season of your life and business when you had the success, you really want to be spending hours helping people log into their course. No, and that's not what you should be doing. So take it from me. Don't make the mistakes that I made.

Don't wait until you have that growth spurt, prepare for the growth before the growth happens, set yourself up operationally, energetically, and all of that for that growth. And then you're more likely to have growth because the other side of the coin is if you are at capacity right now.

You're working hard in your business. You just don't have any more time for anything else. You're actually energetically capping yourself for growth because you have no more time and energy left. So if you're at this level now in your business, how are you going to be when you've got 50 more students, a hundred more students, how are you going to be in that growth space if you are at this capacity now.

You need to create capacity for the growth. Otherwise, you're going to even sabotage. It's not even going to happen because you're just not going to have

the energy to let it happen. I believe that it is a CEO move to invest and outsource. It is needed before you feel ready, because guess what?

You never feel ready. Sometimes maybe you do to outsource. Often if you're new to outsourcing, once you start outsourcing, you just want to outsource everything. I'll tell you that, once I hired people, I was like, cool, let me hire everyone for everything. Cause I don't want to do any of it.

So you do get to that point where it becomes so easy to outsource, but a lot of us. And a lot of you that are listening, you haven't done it yet. And you're thinking about it, but you're waiting and you're like, oh, I'm not making enough money. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I just want to say you want to hire that virtual assistant before you feel ready, because you're never going to really feel ready to outsource is going to feel scary.

That first time you do it and it's normal, it's fine. Just lean into it. Like it's a boss move at the CEO move. And now I want you to think of something. If you hire a virtual assistant, you can hire a virtual assistant from about probably like 5 to 20 an hour. Now I'm not saying you should hire someone for 5.

I don't think that's ethically enough money for any human being, but if you hire virtual assistants in certain countries, the prices are less. So as opposed to America, the Netherlands, whatever, whatever. If you hire people from different countries with different currencies, you can pay less.

And you have incredibly skilled virtual assistants and people in the Philippines, incredibly skilled ones in South Africa and things like that. So my virtual assistant is from South Africa and. Yeah, you can hire a virtual assistant from about probably like 10, let's say 10 to 20 something dollars per hour.

Now say you pay 15 an hour and they work two hours a week for you, and that's about eight hours a month. It's a hundred and twenty dollars a month. Now that's a hundred and twenty dollars for eight hours of work. Do you believe that eight hours of your time is worth more than 120, especially in your business.

If you took those eight hours and you put it into income generating activities in your business, do you think it will make you more than 120? If it doesn't, then there's probably something wrong with your pricing. Your business model or

whatever you're doing in your business. There's something not right there, but eight hours for 120.

Actually, the answer is that your time is worth it, and your time is a lot more worth to you than that money. And if you took that time and you put it into things in your business that made more sense and made money, you're going to make a lot more than that. And you're going to enjoy it more because you're not going to be doing that stuff anymore.

The other thing about it is if you're spending all this time doing stuff that doesn't energize you, it drains your energy. It sucks your life force energy. And that life force energy is needed to grow your business. So you are the CEO of your business. You need to grow your business. That is your role.

That is your job. You need to make moves in your business that is going to be what your business needs to grow. You spending hours doing things that someone else should be doing is a sabotage of that business of the growth of your business. And it's not a boss move. And I want to remind you, just value your time, value your precious time.

And be smart and work smarter. Don't work harder, work smarter. Hire people to do the work and do the work that is within your zone of genius. Because, if there is a will, there's a way, and you are going to make so many excuses about the fact that you can't hire someone, but you can hire someone. I promise you, you probably can.

There's very few reasons why you can't unless you're in like severe debt or something, and you've never made any money and you have no idea how to make money. Obviously don't go and hire someone, but if you've got a business you need to be making money in that business.

You need to hire people to serve you to grow your business. Because you can't do it on your own. And when you hire. You can hire independent contractors. So you don't have to hire an employee. You can just hire an independent contractor. All of the people that I work with have always been independent contractors.

And it's great because you pay them based on the hours they work per month. And these hours can vary. So in a busy launch season, you'll pay for more hours of work. When you're in a maintenance season, you'll pay for less hours of

work. So it's really flexible and it can work well within a business that has obviously seasons because a business will have very busy seasons and more maintenance seasons, and you can fluctuate based on that.

And I will tell you, once you get a virtual assistant, you will not want to go back. And I promise you. It brings me so much joy to pay my virtual assistant to do the work because it keeps me happy with my business and it gives me my time back and I love my time. I love my time more than I love money. I will tell you that.

I will be like dead honest. I love having free time. I love having spacious calendars. I don't like busying my life. I like slow paced energy and I like to be able to do what I want to do when I want to do it. For me it is valuable and like for example, this podcast, would I have the time to be recording this podcast for you every week?

If I was sitting and doing all my customer service emails, probably not. You probably wouldn't be listening to me right now. So thank heavens for outsourcing because otherwise you wouldn't even have those podcasts to listen to. I want you to think about that in your business. So if you want to regain back some time, if you want to stop feeling completely burnt out from all the mundane tasks that are in your business, like admin and invoicing and creating like carousel graphics or whatever it may be. And helping people log into their course material, all of the stuff that just drains your soul. Like it does mine.

It's your job to find someone and hire someone. And honestly, do it now. Don't wait any longer. Do it now. Do it this month, even for two hours a week. I recently helped my coaching client do this, and I'm so excited for her because she is going to see the magic of outsourcing. And once you see it, you are going to never go back and you're going to keep growing your business because you're going to have the energy to do it.

All right, so that's my message to you. Work smarter, not harder. Be the CEO of your business. Be the CEO of your life. Make those boss moves. And you'll be rewarded for it. And I hope you have an amazing rest of your week and I'll chat to you next week.

Bye.

Thanks so much for listening to today's episode. If you are a teaching business owner, freelance teacher or online teacher, and you are interested in creating a digital course or group program to scale your income and impact without teaching more hours, then I have just the thing for you. Grab my Free Scalable Digital Course Roadmap, and it will walk you through the six steps of turning your one-on-one classes into a scalable offer that frees you from the teacher burnout trap.

Creating scalable courses and programs have allowed me to 10x, my hourly rates hit six figures in my business and impact hundreds and hundreds of people around the world without having to be actively teaching all day. If this is what you desire, grab my guide in the show notes and let me help you.

I appreciate you so much. And I can't wait to connect with you in the next episode. In the meantime, go create a business and life you love.