

Well, hello there, and welcome back to another episode of the Your Next Best Step Podcast. I am your host Theresa Cantley and it is an absolutely gorgeous day. It is about 70 some degrees where I am, which normally we don't get temperatures like that this time of year, but it is absolutely gorgeous. I will take this over the rain any day, but yeah, so I hope you're having a great, great, great week. I wanted to talk a little bit today, or a lot a bit, about something that really holds leaders back. And it's something that I've seen, especially a lot with everything that's going on this year. Everything that's happened with COVID and with a lot of the ups and downs that we've experienced this year, I've seen this happen with a lot of business owners and leadership in businesses, and that is this one concept that ends up holding people back.

They think, "Oh," their business is doing so poorly and it's they've had a downturn and things aren't working out and they decide that they want to cut costs and cut people and all of this stuff. And what they don't realize is that the business, the reason why the business is doing poorly is because not of anything else other than themselves. Again, I've seen this with clients of mine. I've seen it with people that I've talked to, where they are just overwhelmed, stressed out, burned out, and can't figure out what is the problem? I get, we've done all the marketing. We've promoted our business. We've put emails out there, we've done all this stuff and we still can't get our business to turn around. We still can't get the results that we really want to get. We can't figure out why.

When we sit down and we start digging into things, I start to see it's nothing on the external piece. Okay? like I said, a business starts to go through a downturn. They start to have things happen and the next step is, "Oh, we need to cut expenses. We need to cut people. We need to cut labor, or we need to," whatever. They kind of stop everything, which makes the energy in the business flow even less and makes things happen even slower. Instead, what really is happening is the people who are either in a leadership role or if somebody ... If it's the business owner, what I've seen is that they are the ones that are actually causing the downturn in the business or causing the chaos. A lot of times, it comes from them being the bottleneck, because what ends up happening, especially in times of uncertainty and things that we've been through this year, is people go back to that fight or flight.

They go back to that survival mode. Okay? What happens is when we get in that survival mode, that's when we become the bottleneck. I did an episode a little while ago about functioning in chaos versus functioning and a possibility and opportunity. When you're functioning in chaos or you have all these things happening around you, all of these circumstances happening around you. Okay? There's nothing we can do to control those circumstances. They are what they are. As I've said before, shit happens. Stuff happens. Functioning in chaos or starting to panic or starting to get, and I hear people use this all the time and I cannot, it makes me cringe. The word crisis mode, we're in crisis mode. It's like, "Okay, if you continue to say, you're in crisis mode and you're functioning in crisis mode, what do you think you're going to continue to get?" Crisis mode and crisis.

Instead, we want to do something different. Okay? Being the bottleneck, what does this end up looking like? Or why does it happen? Okay. There's four things. There could be more, but there's four things that I've kind of ... As I've studied leaders and business owners, four things that ended up happening. Okay? The one is, the first one is control. We try and control everything. We try and control the situation. We go back to, I need to be in control of everything. I need to do everything myself because either we got to cut expenses. So I need to do everything myself, or we need to we don't have enough people, so I need to do everything myself, or I need to make sure it gets done. Right. I'm going to do everything myself, so we can try and control everything.

I've seen this recently with someone that I work with, they're doing a new concept in their business. One of the leaders who actually is the main leader besides the business owner, goes through these spurts of trying to just control everything. What ends up happening is yes, you will see some success if you're a

control master, because you will push those results or try and push those results through. On the other side of it, or what ends up happening during the process of trying to control everything is you demotivate your staff, you burn yourself out and you squelch any kind of energy. It's almost like trying to shove all ... Like shove all kinds of stuff into a really, really tiny hole and you can't push it through. What does it do?

Some of it comes through, but it's so compacted. Trying to control everything, there is more damage on the other side of it. It might not seem it when you're in the moment, but on the other side, you become the bottleneck because everybody's trying to get you to get everything done. Also there's so much more damage that happens on the other side of it with your team. Like I said, with yourself and just with the business in general. The second one is that fear, okay? We go back to the fear of, again, I said, fight or flight. Like we go back to that survival mode and having that fear of this isn't going to work out and we're not going to be able to do this, and we're going to have to close our doors or our business is going to go, we're going to continue to go down and we're not going to be able to compete.

What do we do? We end up looking at what everybody else is doing, which leads to the next one. Comparing yourself. Comparing yourself to everybody else in the industry. If they're pricing something a certain way, or they're doing something a certain way, well, that means that you do too. I'm here to tell you that is not the case. In fact, you want to do the exact opposite. I mean, I had a conversation with a client of mine last week and they were working on some pricing, like doing some new pricing for 2021 on their product. They said, "Well, Theresa, the industry's perception of our market is XYZ. Therefore we can't raise our prices beyond whatever."

When you start doing that, when you start trying to compete on price, you end up becoming a commodity. Number one. Number two, if somebody else is messing up the pricing and you're trying to be like them and mimic them, well then guess what happens? You're just perpetuating the mess up and taking that pricing problem. You're making it bigger by pricing it like that in your business. I always recommend to people, don't compare yourself to anybody else, because there is nobody else like you, there's only you. What can you do? Focus on being yourself, focus on what makes you unique, okay? Then the fourth thing is trying to have everything be perfect before you move forward.

This is a big one I've, I've talked to people when we're working on a project and we're trying to get something new out. They're like, "Well, I'm just OCD. It's my OCD coming out." It's like, no, it's fear coming out. I'm sorry to tell you. It's fear. Nothing will ever be perfect. Just like the human body is imperfect. Nothing in life is perfect. We think it can be, or we think we want it to be, but in reality, nothing is perfect. If you wait for something to be perfect, you're going to be waiting forever. You'll never end up putting it out. Then what happens is we kind of go in that cycle of fear and comparing ourselves and you can see how these are all tied together.

All of these things, you might have one, you might have all four, but all of these things is what ends up leading to a bottleneck. We don't get stuff out that new things out, new products or services or offers or whatever. We don't get them out. We don't bring new people in our doors. We also don't retain the amazing customers that purchase from us once or twice or three times. We don't retain them so they keep coming back and keep supporting us. What can you do instead? Okay? We want to get out of this mindset of where we end up controlling everything. We are the reason why we're not seeing the results that we want to see in our business. It's not the outside circumstances, because we're always going to have outside circumstances. I mean, we've talked about or have heard about how Uber and Airbnb and Tesla and a bunch of these innovative businesses were born out of times of crisis or times of economic downturn.

Blaming external circumstances as to why our business isn't growing, I'm sorry to say. It's just, it's a deflection for not taking responsibility and not taking ownership for where we've become the

bottleneck or where we haven't stepped up and held ourselves responsible for the things that haven't happened. Okay. What can you do instead? Well, first of all, be okay with going with your gut. Being okay with trusting your intuition. You've built the business once, maybe twice, maybe three times, but you've built it before. You'll be able to build it again. Okay? Trust yourself. Trust your gut that you know what you're doing. You have a business, right? You've been able to make it work for so long. Right? Trust your gut. If something doesn't feel right, don't do it. If something doesn't feel right and doesn't feel like it's in alignment with what your business, with what's at the core of your business.

If you haven't determined, what's at the core of your business, that's where you want to start. Okay. If it doesn't align, don't do it. Trust your gut as to what's right and what's not right. The other thing is, don't be afraid to bet on yourself. Don't be afraid to bet on yourself and say, "I got like, I can do this. I can lead in the face of uncertainty and my people. I have a good staff around me. I have a good team around me that are going to help me to make things happen. I don't have to do everything myself. I've built a good team. I've have processes in place. So this is going to work." Okay? Bet on yourself to the point where you're betting on yourself to win, not to lose. Have faith that you know what you're doing and that you can get through this.

The other thing is, again, you're not going to have all the answers. You're not going to have ... It's not like every, like during situations and whether your business is doing amazing or your business is struggling, you're never going to have all the answers as to this is exactly how you need to do it. Okay? If somebody tells you that they have all the answers, and this is exactly how you have to do it. If you don't do it this way, it's not going to work is bull. It's bull crap because every business is different, right? Every person is different. Where it starts is how you're showing up in your business and how you are connecting everybody together so that you're all in alignment and all rowing the same way in the boat. Be okay with making decisions, without all of the answers.

A lot of people want to wait around until somebody tells them exactly what to do. Unfortunately you're going to be waiting forever. That was a hard lesson I learned long, long, long, long, long ago is that nobody is going to tell me exactly what to do, because nobody is me. The only person that can make those decisions in the best possible way for my business is me. Nobody else. People can give me advice. People can give me guidance, but if someone says, you have to do it, this, this, and this. If you don't do it this way, exactly the way that I'm telling you, it's not going to work. I don't think that's true. I think you can have a framework to work in, to solve a problem in, but ultimately, like I said, every business is different. Every person is different.

You're the one that knows really what is ultimately best for you. I know for myself, I know long ago I used to listen to all kinds of advice and I ended up getting myself confused. In reality, again, bet on you, bet on your ability to figure things out. If you felt like my business isn't going anywhere or my business is going backwards, or I feel like things aren't working out, the first thing that I would recommend that you do is take a look at yourself. Are you being the bottleneck? Okay? Are you holding things up? Are you trying to control things? Are you facing decisions and situations with a fear-based thinking, or are you approaching them with an opportunity based thinking? Are you waiting for things to be perfect? Be perfect before you get the new menu out or be perfect before you put out a new type of product or be perfect before you change your pricing.

Are you waiting for that? Are you comparing yourself to everybody else in your industry before you decide that you're going to do something and maybe even this and the worst thing in the world, copying off of them, if you can say yes to any of that, then it's time that you start thinking differently and stop being the bottleneck and start being a leader. A leader that can take the vision, get connected back to it and take focused action to start moving your business forward. To have the ability or talk to your team, get everybody connected and start moving things forward with focused action. If, again, if you answered

yes to any of that, then you may be the bottleneck in your business. You may be the reason why it isn't moving forward. The first thing that you can do is recognize that within yourself.

Then the second thing that you can do is tell yourself, it's okay if I don't have all the answers, I'm never going to have all the answers, but that doesn't mean that I can't start taking small steps, one step at a time to start moving things forward. I hope this week's episode helped you. Again, I've seen it a lot with people lately, and especially with everything that we've been going through, we're getting to the end of the year and striving to try and plan for 2021 with so much uncertainty as to what exactly is going to happen. Here's the deal. You don't need to be the bottleneck. You can be the solution. Your people can be the solution. You know, you already have what you need to move yourself forward. To find the answers for yourself so that you can take the next best steps.

Until next week, have a great rest of your week. If you are unsure as to what to do next, as to what next steps to take. If you're like, yeah, you know what? I am the bottleneck. I am the bottleneck and I need some help to fix this. A lot of times it comes down to priorities, getting an idea as to what your vision is, so that you can start moving forward. If you need some help, then you need to book a revenue enhancement call with me, a revenue enhancement assessment call. Basically what we do on this call. It's a 30 minute free call. We just go through, okay, what's happening right now. Let me get super clear on that.

What next steps do you need to take or what's happening right now? What's working? What's not working? Then what next best steps do you need to take? If you want to book a call with me and you're looking for some guidance and some help from somebody who has helped many, many, many small business owners with this, then definitely go to [TheresaCantley.com/revenue](https://TheresaCantley.com/revenue), and make sure you book your call with me and let's get started. Until next time, have a great rest of your week and take care. Bye for now.