

Hey, hey, and welcome back to another episode of the Your Next Best Step Podcast where we talk all about things that work, things that don't work, how you can scale to seven and eight figures, how to build an amazing team, and also how to really create the freedom to live an extraordinary life. And I am your host Theresa Cantley and I'm so happy to have you back for episode 115. We're just cruising along. Holy moly.

Today I wanted to talk a little while ago, we had asked, we had polled our audience about questions that they had, what they wanted to hear about questions that they might have as it relates to what is happening right now, and the struggles that they have faced in trying to scale their business and really get the momentum back from what we dealt with in 2020. So I kind of narrowed it down because a lot of the questions some of them were the same, some of them were similar. So I kind of picked and narrow down three of the questions. And I know at least two of them, maybe all three, we're going to dig into on individual episodes. But I wanted to talk about these three questions and get the conversation started.

As I said, I had a bunch of questions that came back. Again, some of them were similar. A lot of them centered around marketing. That seems to be a topic, a hot topic with people. Ever since I started my business, it's always been a hot topic. It was a hot topic when I was in my corporate job, my boss and I, he was obsessed with marketing and what people think marketing is and what it actually is I think are two different things at least in my opinion. So I had a lot of questions surrounding marketing. So we're going to talk about that.

We're also going to talk about employees. I know right now it's very difficult. I know in the United States, if you're listening in the US. I'm not as familiar in other countries, but I know in the US it's really difficult to hire people right now. I know people are offering signing bonuses, big, giant signing bonuses, try and get increased pay and trying to do everything possible to hire people. But there's a big, giant piece that they're missing. But as I said, it's a very difficult conversation because a lot of businesses had to lay people off last year. People were on unemployment and now trying to get to hire people back or even hire new people, it's been a very, very big challenge.

So that is what another question is. And then the last one is the age-old question that has to do with increasing sales looking at your business and saying, "I want to increase sales." Okay? So first question is how do I do my marketing with no budget? Which I know a lot of people face this from time to time. I know it is pretty common that when you're having trouble in your business, when things are slow or things aren't going so well, the first place that people want to cut is marketing. And that's actually the last place that you want to cut. Because when things are slow, the last thing that you want to do is shut off the thing that is actually bringing more visibility to your business and really keeping your brand out there so that more people can find you.

So it is very counterintuitive. I know back in 2008, 2009 when the economy kind of tanked, I know a lot of businesses and the business I was working for included wanted to cut marketing. That was the first thing they wanted to cut. So we're going to talk about that. The second question is how do I hire and retain good people? So we're going to talk about that topic. And the third one is obviously, as I said, how do I increase sales in my business? So I think these are three things I know that if I had to rank them, how do I increase sales is probably the thing that people think about the most. How do I do marketing with no budget or how do I do marketing period, and then how do I hire and retain good people in that order.

So we are actually going to start with how do I do my marketing with no budget? This is a question that actually someone asked me not that long ago. As I said, when things are slow, when things are difficult, the first thing that people want to cut is marketing and why? Because people look at it like it's this

secondary thing. I think people think. Number one, a lot of business owners think that there's some kind of magic to marketing. Number two, a lot of bigger businesses think that the marketing is secondary because they think, "We're big. We're growing. We're already out there. Why do we need to do this? Or we have ads running. We have print ads in magazines and we have billboards. Why do we need to do this?"

So they look at it as a secondary thing. So I think that a lot of businesses, when it comes to marketing, people think it's one thing and it's actually something completely different. And if you shift your perspective on marketing, you will be able to do really anything that you want and do it on a lower budget. You don't need a million dollar budget to do marketing. Even if you're a big business, you don't need this like gigantic budget. As you grow, a lot of that for marketing ends up being people. People who are taking care of what needs to happen behind the scenes with marketing.

So how do you do marketing with no budget? Well, let's talk about what marketing is period. In my mind and the way that I always teach it to my customers, marketing is all about attraction, attracting people and building relationships, and then also nurturing that relationship. Okay? So it's about attracting people to you, building that relationship and then taking that relationship to the next level and nurturing it, taking care of it. So as far as marketing's concerned. Okay? Like I said, people think it's this big like black magic or there's some kind of secret to it. And it really isn't.

It's really about what good marketing comes down to is understanding what it is that you do and how you do it differently. And then also understanding who your ideal client is, who your ideal customer is. People think, "I open up a business." And this was a mistake my business partner and I made when we opened up our retail store and we say, "This is who we are and this is what we do differently, but we serve everyone." And that's just not the case and that was one of the biggest mistakes that we made is we said, "Well, we don't really have an ideal customer because we're going to be for everybody."

Well, thinking that way ends up leading to talking to no one. So the clearer you are on what it is that you do differently. Okay? What it is that you do period and how do you do it differently than anybody else, who your ideal customer is and then how you're going to engage with them. So when it comes to marketing, it's figuring out how you can have a conversation with your customers whether it is live when they come into the store or it's online. And again, how can you attract people to you, but then also how can you build that relationship? So when I talk about marketing with people, I like to say, number one, you need to have an intention. What is your intention behind what you're doing?

So many people go into marketing blindly and think it's going to be, again, about one thing. They think it's going to be about making more sales, but what it actually comes down to is, again, building those relationships. So when it comes to putting together your marketing plan, the first thing that you want to do is what is your intention? What is your intention for any marketing activity? Whether it be emails, print ads, Facebook ads, Google ads, Facebook posts, any kind of social media posts, any kind of video. What is your intention behind what you're doing?

And the clearer you are on that and that intention, ding, ding, ding, should align with what it is that you do different and how you want to attract your ideal customers. So making sure that you have that intention, making sure that you understand where your or what your platform is. How are you going to reach these people? Okay? I know a lot of people who think, "Oh, everybody's doing Facebook so I need to do Facebook." They get on Facebook and they can't figure out why it's not working for them. Well, because your ideal customer might not be hanging out on Facebook. So not to say that you shouldn't do Facebook, but thinking about where is my ideal customer hanging out, where are they, how can I attract them?

And then making sure that you're showing up there as that primary focus, but then you can also have repurposing and things set up so that you're also posting on those other platforms. Because, yes, they might jump on one of those other platforms and maybe you'll have something that is engaging to them. But you want to make sure that if they're primarily hanging out on YouTube, you want to make sure that that's your primary focus is putting out valuable content on that platform for them.

And when I said valuable content, that is a key statement. It's not something that is all about promotion after promotion after promotion. It's something that people will find engaging and create that unique, positive and engaging experience. So understanding what kind of customer experience you want to build with people, customer experience is different than customer service. Customer service is part of the customer experience.

So when you're creating that experience, you are thinking about three different things. How are you going to attract people to you? How are you going to once they come in and they shop on your website or they shop in your store, what does that look like to build that relationship? But then what happens after they leave to continue to build that relationship? When you have all of those pieces, when you can think through all of those pieces and put them together, that's how you can start to build your marketing plan. And what it comes down to is your time. The time that you're spending, engaging with people. The time that you're spending crafting quality content that really highlights your strengths as a business.

There's nothing magical to it. You don't need to spend thousands and thousands or tens of thousands of dollars on print ads. You don't need to spend tens of thousands of dollars on Google ads or Facebook ads. Should they be part of your plan? Sure. You don't need to spend a ton of money on it is my point. You can have a very good and when we talk about your platform and how you're going to get your message out there, you can have a very good healthy mix of social posts, videos, ads that you're running, blogs that you're creating. You can have a very, very healthy mix of that to make sure that you're putting out stuff that's kind of quick, quick results as I'm thinking of how to word this so people are clicking on it pretty fast. People are clicking through with paid ads. That happens very fast.

But then you're also putting stuff out that really builds your authority, really builds your authority in your space, in your industry. And that's going to be more like blog posts or podcasts or YouTube videos, anything that is going to be what we call searchable content. So how do I do marketing with no budget? Basically it comes down to how are you going to build that relationship? How are you going to attract people to you and then build the relationship. And then also nurture that relationship?

What it comes down to is your time, your time that you're going to put into serving your customers. Making them aware, educating them on what it is that you do differently. So number two, let's talk about how do I hire and retain good people. Well, when we talk about hiring and retaining good people, people want to go right to ... Well, a lot of businesses, first of all. A lot of businesses hire on the fly. And that's not something that we want to do because when we hire on the fly, what are we fueling that activity with? Well, we're fueling it with desperation because if you're hiring on the fly, you normally need somebody pretty fast. So it doesn't give us enough time to think about who is it that we really need in this position? And I don't mean hard skills.

I mean who as a person, how do we need them to show up every day? Do they need to be detail-oriented? Do they need to be a self-starter? Do they need to be very engaged aging with customers and not be afraid to start a conversation? Who do we want that person to be? So when we're hiring on the fly, we don't give ourselves time to really think of who do we really want in this position? So before we even decide who we want to hire, okay, and then how are we going to retain them, the first thing we need to do is give ourselves some time to think who is it that we want in this position or in these positions?

And even taking them step back even further, what do we want our team to look like? Not based on where we are today, but based on where we want to go. And I heard something interesting this morning. I heard something on a podcast where the podcast host said, "A lot of people think that they can't afford to either outsource work or they can't afford to hire someone to do the work." And the thing is is that if you're trying to do everything yourself and you're not looking into the future saying, "This is the team that I want surrounding me so that we can collectively make this vision happen."

If you're not thinking like that and you're trying to do everything yourself, well, you can't afford to hire anybody because you are preventing your business from growing energetically, because you don't have the energy or the creativity or the motivation to want to build anything, number one. And number two you also because you are trying to do everything yourself, you're actually blocking those results and you're not able to reach as many people as you could if you had a good team. Right?

So I think I thought about that. I was like, "Wow, that's interesting." And it's so true. It's so true. I can't tell you how many people I have talked to and we talk about, "We need good people, but we can't afford it." Okay and then we look at their schedule and they have their schedule completely back to back to back to back to back crammed with appointments and tasks and things that I look at it. And the first glance I'm like, "Wow, like 90% of this can come off your plate" and you could hire somebody to take care of this for you. You could teach them how to do it and hire them to do it.

So when we talk about how do I hire and retain good employees, first thing you need to look at is who do you need to hire? What do you want your team to look like? All right? Again, this goes back to what are you trying to do? What difference are you trying to make? How is your business unique and then identifying the team that you want to build. From there, we also want to look at and this is something that people shy away from a lot is what does our development program look like? What does our development program look like to not only train people initially, onboard them, but then how do we continue to develop them? And this is a whole other podcast episode, which we will talk about and dig into as far as what does that process look like and how do you even put that process together as far as onboarding training, retaining and developing? What does that look like?

So again, people want to and I've seen this a lot recently. People are just throwing huge signing bonuses in the restaurant industry. Join our team and get \$1,000 signing bonus. Join our team and get \$2,000 signing. Bonus people are increasing wages, which is a great thing. It's a great thing. I mean, there's a lot of businesses that I see that really need to increase what they're paying their employees. But even beyond any of that, because you get those employees in, then what? And this is the retain part. You get these employees in, you entice them to come in by paying them more. But then if you look at kind of the back of it, that foundation of your team, there is none.

There is no development. There is no help. There is no coaching. There is no. So it's empty. And again, we're going to talk about this in another episode and really dig deep into it. But for right now before you think about hiring and retaining your people or hiring new people I should say, get super clear on who it is that you want, who it is that you really need. What do you want your team to look like? I call it a team map. What does it look like if you're a business owner and you're up here as the CEO, what does it look like underneath that? Do you have a management team. And then underneath that, do you have different segments? Do you have a segment for an area in your business for operations and you have another one for finance, and you have another one for visibility, which is marketing, social media, customer experience? What does that look like?

And then from there determine, "Okay, what is the plan going to be in the next 30 days, 60 days, 90 days to get these people on board?" And then what is it going to look like too and we think about it. We look at our budget like what does your budget look like? A lot of businesses and this blows my mind. In the past 10 years, the realization that a lot of business owners don't have a budget to work with. So they're

kind of planning in the dark, which isn't a good thing. But looking at your budget and saying, "Okay, this is where we want to be. This is who we need. This is where you want to be in our business. Who can we hire in the next 30 days and train 60, 90, and then beyond?"

So when you're thinking about hiring and retaining good people, and again, we're going to dig into this in actually the next podcast episode is really how to create that process for onboarding. What does it look like, what processes you need to really put in place to really bring motivation and momentum into your team and empower them to make better decisions. What does all of that look like? But for right now, how do I hire and retain good people? Just to answer that question, first thing you need to do is decide who is it that you really need to hire in the first place?

Don't put desperation behind the things that you need to do. It never turns out well. Think of it, be proactive, think ahead, think visionary. What do I want my business to look like and what do I want my team to look like? And the last one, and again, we're going to talk about this also is I get this question a lot. I mean, it's probably the number one question that I get when people start working with me is, "I want to increase my sales. How do I increase my sales?" And then the next part is fast. "I want to increase my sales from zero to a million dollars in three months." No joke. I got that from somebody.

So the thing that we need to look at is talking about increased sales. Okay? The thing we really need to look at is is it really sales that you need to increase? A lot of people want to increase their sales, but they don't have the foundation to support that increase in growth. And what I mean by that is it's like building a house without a framework. Building a house without a blueprint. Building a house without a foundation. They want to just build the house, but there's nothing supporting the house. So what's the house going to do? It's going to fall down. Right?

So instead of looking at how do I increase my sales, the first piece that we want to look at is is it really the sales that I need to increase? Because people look at sales and they think that's the most important number to measure. And reality is how can I make my business more profitable? How can I make my business more profitable? Because profit is actually what is going to help you to continue to scale and grow your business. Not necessarily that revenue. Because you might have \$700 in revenue, but you might also have \$700,000 in expenses. And of that \$700,000 in expenses, the majority of it isn't really being managed.

So we want to look at it to say because profit is what's going to end up driving your growth and giving you the ability to invest back in your business by hiring new people, doing more marketing and just getting better things for your team, for your business so that you can continue to grow and develop internally so that you can grow and develop externally. Okay? So people, again, people look at it and come to me and say, "I want to increase my sales." What they're really saying is, "I want to put more cash in my pocket. I want to have more money in my bank account so that I can do the things that I want to do, live the life that I want to live because I've worked my butt off building my business. I'm not seeing that."

And the reason why is because the only thing that they're looking at is that top line number, that revenue, those sales that are coming in. And what they're not looking at is the foundation. What does the foundation look like? And many times over there isn't a foundation. There aren't any systems. There aren't any processes. There isn't a good team or no team. So there's a lot of things that need to actually be built first. But then also looking like really looking at the numbers and saying, "Okay, really where are we from a profitability standpoint?" And working on that first and then working on increasing your sales.

So we need that foundation first so we have some meat behind our business so that we can continue to scale the business, and also develop our people so that we can really pull out of those day-to-day tasks, and really focused on the grander vision of the business so that we can grow. And again, that is another

episode that we're going to dig into even more as well. But what I wanted to do is just give you a little glimpse of three questions that I get asked a lot when we polled our people. These are the three things that people have said, three different topics that people have said that they're really struggling with right now, particularly as it relates to what we dealt with coming out of the pandemic.

And what does the new normal look like? What does the new life look like and how are we going to maintain, but how we're also going to grow from it? How are we going to change up what we're doing so that we can do the marketing that we want to do? We can hire and retain good people, but we can also not increase our sales, but increase our bottom line so we can put more money back in our pocket and we can live the life that we want to live, and we can reinvest back in our business and our people.

So those are the three main questions that I get asked and that I did get asked when we just recently did our poll. So also in order to help more people, I'm actually going to be hosting a live workshop. It's going to be three days long and it's called the Profitable CEO. So we're going to have more information on this coming up, but I want you to stay tuned for it because it is going to be extraordinary. And we are going to dig into these different topics to give you more information so that you can really put together a game plan based on not just fluffing stuff in theory, but based on real live experiences of business owners that I've helped, what I've experienced myself, and how do you build that strong foundation?

How do you dig into these topics and put together a game plan so that you can come out the other side more profitable, more cash so that you can really live that lifestyle that you want to live. And your business can run smoothly without you having to be involved in absolutely every single thing and really being the bottleneck. So stay tuned for more on the Profitable CEO. Again, it's going to be a three-day live experience, and we're going to have details for that very shortly.

But until then, I hope that this episode helped you. Maybe these are things that you're struggling with. I know a lot of businesses are and it doesn't matter whether you are a one person, two person small business, brick and mortar business, or you are a big, big, big business. These are things that business owners are struggling with right now. And they are things that business owners really have struggled with before. I do think that now things are different. And I know a lot of businesses have wanted to once everything opened up, everybody wanted to go back to how it was. And here's the deal. What COVID did is, number one, it made us pause so that we could look at this adversity. And the people who learn to deal with it and find those silver linings, find ways to do things differently and innovate their business, get their people to innovate and to think differently. Those are the people that are going to rise up.

A lot of industries were exposed for their bad practices. Not treating people well. Having long hours and not paying people very well. There are a lot of industries that during COVID, COVID brought that out and really exposed it. So it's our turn, it's our chance as business owners to really fix things, to put that foundation, to build those strong foundations into their business. Because once you do that, your business can scale faster than what you thought possible and be more profitable while you're doing it.

When you don't put that foundation in place, that's how you struggle and you fail and you end up with no money in your bank account. You can't figure out why you can't afford things, you lose people, you lose customers, and then we end up back at square one. So stay tuned for the Profitable CEO and look for ways that you can do things differently. Look for ways that you can do things differently in your business, not just with the outside piece. As I always tell people, when we want to look at this, like really look at our business and look at how can we grow the business. But more, how can we scale the business? We don't look at the outside first.

I know a lot of people do, but when you work with me you don't, you look at the inside and that really starts with you the business owner. But then also, how can you change things for the better for the people that are helping you to make your vision a reality? So I hope you join me for the Profitable CEO.

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But until then, have a great rest of your week. Let me know what part of this episode helped you the most and I look forward to seeing you soon. All right, take care.