

GMSB 214

[00:00:00] **Antony Whitaker:** Welcome to the Grow My Salon Business podcast, where we focus on the business side of hairdressing. I'm your host, Antony Whitaker, and I'll be talking to thought leaders in the hairdressing industry, discussing insightful, provocative, and inspiring ideas that matter. So get ready to learn, get ready to be challenged, get ready to be inspired, and most importantly, get ready to grow your salon business.

[00:00:30] **Antony Whitaker:** Hello and welcome to today's episode of the Grow My Salon Business podcast. I'm your host, Antony Whitaker. And as always, it's great to have you here with me today. So today I want to talk a little about what I call where the rubber meets the road. Now I think that expression is generally used as a metaphor to say that this is the moment of truth.

[00:00:55] **Antony Whitaker:** So let me explain what I mean and the relevance that it has on you, your career or your salon. Have you ever been to a place, perhaps a hotel or maybe a restaurant or heaven forbid a hairdressing salon where it was like faulty towers? Now if you're Gen Z, you might want to look up what faulty towers is on YouTube.

[00:01:16] **Antony Whitaker:** But what I'm talking about is have you ever had an experience with a business where as a client or as a customer that it was so bad that it was comical? Now I'm sure that most people will know exactly what I mean.

[00:01:31] **Antony Whitaker:** And at the time, it's not a laughing matter. And perhaps you even had a dummy spit and you left angry because what you were paying for and what you were actually getting as a client was like comparing night and day. Now obviously, you can only assume that the owner of the business, whatever the business is, never expected that the experience that you would have as a client, whether it's a product or a service that they're selling, would be so bad.

[00:02:00] **Antony Whitaker:** But the reality is that that happens with many businesses every single day of the week. Now, of course, the opposite is also true and that you might go to a hotel or a restaurant or a hair salon, and the experience is so incredibly good that you marvel at it. And I don't just mean that you marvel at it as a client, but that you marvel at it as a business owner.

[00:02:23] **Antony Whitaker:** Because as a business owner, you understand how there are all these components of a business that sort of need to come together and work seamlessly. In order to make it look so simple, when in reality we both know that it's never as simple as it looks. As a business owner, making that look so simple comes down to a mixture of four things. First, it's about the leader of the business, in this case that's probably you, defining the vision for how you want the business to operate.

[00:02:56] **Antony Whitaker:** Or another way of saying that is, what's the non negotiable experience that you want every client to have? Secondly, as the leader, you develop the systems needed to make sure that those processes and standards aren't just a fluke or dependent on which staff member they see on the day. But instead, that they're part of a business culture that are repeated consistently.

[00:03:23] **Antony Whitaker:** Now, let's be clear. Developing systems and processes so that everything isn't dependent on you having to do it probably isn't your idea of fun. But at the same time, you also recognize that not everyone has the same standards as you

[00:03:38] **Antony Whitaker:** And it's your business.

[00:03:40] **Antony Whitaker:** So if you want things done a certain way, then you need to develop and put in place the systems and processes to make sure that things are done the way that you expect. And that brings us on to the third thing, and that is the business owner needs to develop or instigate a training program so that everyone on their team has a clearly defined role and understands the goals and responsibilities that they have in order to make sure that it all comes together.

[00:04:12] **Antony Whitaker:** And then finally, the fourth step, and that is that as the leader, you understand that in order to maintain those standards, it requires your leadership and a desire to constantly improve and evolve things to the next level. And when you see those four components of a business and they're all working together in harmony, it's a beautiful thing.

[00:04:37] **Antony Whitaker:** On more than one occasion, I've been in a restaurant or hotel or a salon and I've looked around and I've said to myself, this is amazing. And I'm not talking about the decor. I'm talking about the

sense of purpose that everyone in the business has. The sense of purpose to be the best that they can be.

[00:04:55] **Antony Whitaker:** And that doesn't just happen by chance. In a salon environment, we typically put a lot of emphasis on two things. First is what the salon looks like, meaning the decor, the images on the walls, the logo, and the color schemes, etc. And secondly, we put a lot of emphasis on the technical and creative side of what it takes to be successful as a hairdresser.

[00:05:20] **Antony Whitaker:** Now, just to be clear, both those things are incredibly important and they shouldn't be taken for granted or underestimated in any way.

[00:05:29] **Antony Whitaker:** But I'm working on the assumption that you already have the technical and creative skills needed to cut and colour hair, because, well, that's an expectation. And if you don't have those skills, then you need to go and learn them. But oftentimes, where you really fall short isn't about the decor or the technical and creative ability of those on your team.

[00:05:52] **Antony Whitaker:** Where you fall short is that we tend to make a lot of assumptions about communication and standards and the client experience. We tend to think that building a clientele is down to common sense, or that people will automatically pick it up as they go. As if, just by working in the same space as you, that they'll automatically become a mini me version of everything that you do.

[00:06:19] **Antony Whitaker:** That is, assuming, of course, that you actually do it yourself. And when I say do it, I mean whether you do great consultations, or how you educate clients about how to look after their hair between visits, or the way that you communicate and build professional relationships with your clients, or the little touches that go towards creating a five star experience.

[00:06:44] **Antony Whitaker:** Well, how do you get clients to rebook and come back again and again and again, and even refer their friends and family to you? Because it's in those moments of interaction that in a hairdressing salon is what I mean when I say, where the rubber meets the road. That is, when the hairdresser is behind the chair with the client, and that it's the moment of truth.

[00:07:09] **Antony Whitaker:** It's the moment the when and how the client interacts or connects or engages with the hairdresser or doesn't. Whether it's the consultation, the listening, the questions they ask, the body language. The appearance that they have, the empathy they build with the client, the level of professionalism and the knowledge that they have, and even right down to the words that they use.

[00:07:35] **Antony Whitaker:** What I'm talking about is that it's essential that you have a team of people that have been well trained in the soft skills, the people skills needed to really succeed. And it's so easy to just gloss over that, but let me ask you this. Obviously, I don't know how long you've been a hairdresser, whether it's 5 years, 10 years, 20, 30 or 40 years or more.

[00:07:59] **Antony Whitaker:** But what I do know is that however long you've been doing it, that over the years you've learnt and refined your communication skills consistently to the degree where you don't even realise that you're doing it. And so the person that you've ended up being today, standing behind the chair, has developed a very different level of understanding about what it takes to succeed.

[00:08:24] **Antony Whitaker:** And in reality, it's taken you years to become the person you are today. And that journey is never finished. And yet, you maybe think it's just your ability to do good hair, or your personality, or that it's a gift that you have. Or you simply put it down to, it just comes with experience. Or simply because you care more.

[00:08:45] **Antony Whitaker:** And maybe all those things are true to some degree. But as well as that, it's because you've been taught. You've had mentors. You've read books. You've attended courses. And you've adopted what's worked and you've rejected what hasn't. And you've made those skills your own. And over time, the skills that you now possess Transcripts have just become a part of who you are, whether it's how you do great consultations or how you just know when you need to listen more.

[00:09:15] **Antony Whitaker:** Or how you need to be more professional, or how to talk to people, how to ask for and get referrals, how to be more confident when educating people about what to use on their hair at home, or why they need to book their next appointment before they leave. Those communication skills have become a part of who you are.

[00:09:37] **Antony Whitaker:** So how do you get your team to be able to do that? How do you get that to become a standard? How do you get that to be part of your salon culture? Part of the DNA of your brand? Because if a new client walks in the door of your salon, as the owner, you know that if you give that client to one stylist, that they'll give that client a great consultation.

[00:10:03] **Antony Whitaker:** They'll listen to them, they'll make suggestions, and they'll listen some more. They'll give that client a great haircut and a colour, they'll build a professional relationship with them, the client will purchase home hair care from them, they'll have treatments and colour services and they'll have a great salon experience.

[00:10:19] **Antony Whitaker:** They'll re book and they'll refer their friends and they'll keep coming back for more. But then on the other hand, you know that there are other stylists on your team that maybe are just as competent at doing hair. But if you gave them the same client, then none of that would happen. No referrals. No rebooking, no retail and no repeat business.

[00:10:42] **Antony Whitaker:** So why is that? Seriously, why is that? Because you need to recognize that that is the single biggest problem with your business. And not just your business, but every salon business. Their biggest problem isn't attracting new clients. Their biggest problem is keeping the clients that they have. Client retention is what is stopping them from growing.

[00:11:09] **Antony Whitaker:** And that's not happening because of the colour of your walls or the design of your website or your technical and creative ability. It's not happening because of all the other stuff. You know, all the stuff that you don't pay enough attention to. Whether you call it people skills, or soft skills, or communication skills, it doesn't really matter what you call it, as long as you understand that it's the difference that makes the difference.

[00:11:37] **Antony Whitaker:** It's what gives the client a great experience, and causes them to bond and connect with the individual. And that explanation is so simple, that in all probability, you've just probably glossed over it. And that's part of the problem. So seriously, why is that? Why is it that most salon owners pay so little attention to teaching their teams the people skills needed to succeed?

[00:12:04] **Antony Whitaker:** Is it because, as owners, that you don't know how to teach it? Is it because you don't value the importance of it? Is it

because you think it's something that just can't be taught? Well, I think the answer is that it's all of the above and more. And so some people on your team will figure it out on their own over time.

[00:12:26] **Antony Whitaker:** And some people never do. And they simply don't know how or why it's important. It's a classic case of you don't know what you don't know. They don't understand why their clients don't come back either. So they'll usually just blame the client. They don't understand why the clients don't purchase home hair care.

[00:12:47] **Antony Whitaker:** So they'll usually blame the internet. They don't know why they don't get as many requests. They don't understand why they're not as busy as other people. So the solution is that they need to be trained how to do that. You don't need to wait five or ten years for them to figure it out. Give them the training now so that they can become the stylist that you need them to be and that they need to become.

[00:13:14] **Antony Whitaker:** Now I developed an online course called Super Stylist and it deals in everything I've been talking about. And thousands of stylists all over the world have gone through it and dramatically improved their productivity, their personal income, and the profit margin for the salons that they work in. Many of the salons that have already gone through the Super Stylist course continue to add on their new team members and they use the Super Stylist course as an onboarding or induction tool for all of their new team members to reinforce a culture.

[00:13:48] **Antony Whitaker:** This is how we do it here. The fact that they keep coming back for more is further proof that it works. So, if you're tired of average, if you're tired of carrying people, if you want people on your team to grow and produce more and earn more as a result, then becoming a super stylist is a way forward. So do you really want to change or do you just want to talk about it?

[00:14:16] **Antony Whitaker:** So if you're interested in finding out more about the super stylist online course, then visit growmysalonbusiness.com forward slash courses forward slash super hyphen stylist. So once again, that's growmysalonbusiness.com forward slash courses, forward slash super hyphen stylist. And I'll put that link in the show notes of today's podcast as well.

[00:14:45] **Antony Whitaker:** So that's a wrap until next week when I bring another great guest to you on the grow my salon business podcast. So until then, have a great week and keep safe.

[00:14:55] **Antony Whitaker:** Thank you for listening to today's podcast If you'd like to connect with us you'll find us at [Grow My Salon business.com](https://www.growmysalonbusiness.com) or on Facebook and Instagram at Grow My Salon business And if you enjoy tuning into our podcast make sure that you subscribe like and share it with your friends Until next time this is Antony Whitaker wishing you continued success