

## GMSB 217

[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.

[00:00:27] **Antony Whitaker:** Hello, and welcome to today's episode of the Grow My Salon Business podcast. I'm your host, Antony Whitaker. And as I always say, it's great to have you here with me today. Now, most people that listen to this podcast are salon owners, but I also know that we have an incredibly varied mix of listeners from over 70 countries that regularly tune in from all over the world.

[00:00:48] **Antony Whitaker:** So wherever you are and whatever stage of the business and life journey you're at, I just want to say thank you for being a listener and giving me and my guests the opportunity to share what we've learned with you, which ultimately is for the benefit of everyone. So with that said, on with today's short episode.

[00:01:08] **Antony Whitaker:** Over the years, I've been to lots of different salons as a full paying client. I sort of think of it as being like market research and a reminder of what it's like to actually be a client. It's something that I recommend that all salon owners do to be a client in someone else's business. Because, in many ways, it's a great education and a reminder of what it feels like to actually be a salon client.

[00:01:36] **Antony Whitaker:** So have I had some mediocre haircuts, without a doubt, but I've also had some good ones too. Have I had some terrible service? Again, without a doubt, but I've also had some great experiences and been on the receiving end of someone who provides a degree of service that goes way above and beyond what you'd expect.

[00:01:57] **Antony Whitaker:** When I had my salons, I remember a young woman who worked for me. Her name was Liz, and she was a great example of someone going above and beyond. Liz was someone who understood that going to a salon wasn't just about the hair, it was about the entire experience

and that our job as hairdressers It wasn't just to do great hair, but it was to do great hair and to serve others so that they had a five star experience.

[00:02:26] **Antony Whitaker:** And it's that word serve that, for whatever reason, some people in the industry seem to find demeaning. But service isn't demeaning. Far from it. In fact, I did a quick search on Google for quotes about service and there was an avalanche. So let me share a couple with you. I love this one from Martin Luther King Jr.,

[00:02:46] **Antony Whitaker:** who was an American human rights activist and minister, who said 'Everyone can be great because everyone can serve'. Or this one from Muhammad Ali, the boxer and activist, who said, 'Service to others is the rent that you pay for your room here on earth'.

[00:03:04] **Antony Whitaker:** And another one from Woodrow Wilson, who was the 28th president of the United States who said, 'There is no higher religion than human service. To work for the common good is the greatest creed'.

[00:03:17] **Antony Whitaker:** And the last one from Mahatma Gandhi, who was a lawyer and champion of the Indian Movement for Independence, he said 'The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others'. So serving others definitely isn't demeaning. In fact, it should be seen as quite the opposite. I remember when I first met John Paul De Joria, the co-owner of Paul Mitchell, and one of the things that he said to me more than once was, what can I do to help you do your job better?

[00:03:49] **Antony Whitaker:** Now, he didn't just say that to me, he said that to everybody. He's a multi billionaire and he's asking, how can I help you to do your job better? If that's not service, I don't know what is. On another level, I remember a time when I was doing a clients hair and in a casual conversation, she asked me if I knew what time a particular department store closed.

[00:04:13] **Antony Whitaker:** Now, I didn't know, but Liz, who was my assistant at the time, overheard the conversation, and without being asked, she went to the reception, did a quick search, and came back with a business card where she'd written down the name of the two nearest locations of the department store in question and the closing time of each, and discreetly gave it to the client, who was blown away.

[00:04:35] **Antony Whitaker:** Or the time that she noticed a client with a newborn baby. And so Liz discreetly moved the client to an area of the salon where there was less noise. And when I asked her why, she said that it was quieter for the baby and she didn't want to wake it up, and that should the mother want to feed, at least she had the privacy.

[00:04:55] **Antony Whitaker:** Now I could give you many examples of things like that that she did. No one asked her. She was just one step ahead of everyone and anticipated, and I think that's the key word, what she could do to make their experience a little better. She took immense pride in serving others. She was warm and friendly, but there was never a request or question that was inconvenient.

[00:05:19] **Antony Whitaker:** She was just eager to make every client feel welcome and to provide an outstanding experience in the process. So why is this important? Well, I think that across most sectors, whether it's the airline industry, hotels, restaurants, banks, retail stores, or salons. And don't even get me started about government departments and big businesses like energy suppliers or telecommunication companies.

[00:05:46] **Antony Whitaker:** But the bottom line is that I think that the level of customer service is in gradual decline to the point of we're doing the bare minimum, seems to be the order of the day. And the reason I bring this up is that this is a massive opportunity to increase your service levels, the personal touches, and to elevate the degree with which you show genuine care.

[00:06:10] **Antony Whitaker:** Because I think that people are desperate to feel seen and heard more than ever right now. And it really doesn't matter whether you're the business owner or work as part of a team. That energy and attention to detail and the level of care that you bring to every human interaction rarely matters.

[00:06:30] **Antony Whitaker:** On a recent podcast episode that I did with Sam Broccato, it was episode 209. If you didn't listen to it, I'd suggest you check it out. But one of the things he picked up on was how in this world of so many salary owners saying they wanted to do away with the front desk and have an automated check in process, that he wanted to go the other way and increase the amount of what he referred to as high touch and personal interaction.

[00:06:57] **Antony Whitaker:** And a podcast I did a couple of weeks back with Alex Ioannou, episode 213 was totally about people skills and care and communication and the human connection. And that got a lot of really positive feedback.

[00:07:12] **Antony Whitaker:** So as much as I love AI and the use of technology in our businesses, instead of being that person that when it comes to care and service does just enough to get by, decide instead to be the person who chooses to be outstanding and go above and beyond whether you've got a reception desk or not.

[00:07:34] **Antony Whitaker:** And while we're on it, this doesn't just have to be limited to salon clients. Extend that same care and level of kindness to everyone on your team. There's so much happening in the world right now that will drag you down if you let it. So make a choice to share your positivity and your presence to make everyone around you feel just that little bit better.

[00:07:59] **Antony Whitaker:** Whether it's just showing a moment of patience, or a kind word to a stranger. These little moments cost us nothing, and they don't just make those around you feel better about their day, but it will also make you feel more connected and positive too. In the context of being the business owner, some of that is about having a series of non-negotiable steps and processes in place that everyone is trained to do.

[00:08:24] **Antony Whitaker:** And as important as that is, what I'm really talking about is the sort of thing that you can't make a system out of.

[00:08:31] **Antony Whitaker:** I'm talking about personal attention to detail. Genuine care and anticipation of what might be needed and that you only see when you look for opportunities to go above and beyond. And don't always think that it has to cost you money because it doesn't, and it certainly doesn't always have to be a grand gesture, but just look for every opportunity with both clients and your fellow team members to go the extra mile and make someone's day with a gesture of kindness or service with no expectation in return

[00:09:03] **Antony Whitaker:** Recently I went to a new showroom with my wife and another couple, and we were met by a young man in the foyer, who was so incredibly charming, and he had the most impeccable manners and people skills. This young man was so incredibly well trained, every detail of his

appearance, the questions he asked, the way he listened, the eye contact, everything was an example in how to do it. We were only with him for five minutes at most, but the impression he made on all of us was instant. And as soon as he excused himself, we all commented to each other about how amazing he was. It's a good example of the expression that service isn't doing what's expected of us.

[00:09:52] **Antony Whitaker:** Service is doing more than what's expected of us. And one last thing before I start to wrap up.

[00:10:01] **Antony Whitaker:** I had a new client in the salon one day. And when I asked her how she heard about us, she said that she had attended a business seminar. She had nothing to do with the hairdressing industry, but one of the speakers was talking about customer service. And she used my salon as an example and recounted the story of a young woman who went above and beyond as a great example of service.

[00:10:26] **Antony Whitaker:** And, on that basis, the person in my chair decided to try us out. Now, there are no prizes for guessing who the young woman was. So, good service isn't just good to do, it's good for business too. So before we wrap up this episode, as you may know, we have a series of online courses designed to help you, the salon owner, build the business that you aspire to.

[00:10:54] **Antony Whitaker:** Whether that means one successful salon or dreams of expansion, either way, the key to success is education and having a path to follow. So to find out more, visit [growmysalonbusiness.com](http://growmysalonbusiness.com) or click on the link in the show notes of this podcast to find out how you can develop the salon management, the financial and leadership skills needed to take you and your business to the next level.

[00:11:19] **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. And if you'd like to get a free download of our salon management checklist, then visit [growmysalonbusiness.com](http://growmysalonbusiness.com) forward slash management hyphen checklist. And I'll also put that link in the show notes for today's podcast.

[00:11:40] **Antony Whitaker:** So, until then, keep safe.

[00:11:42] **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