

GMSB 219

[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.

[00:00:29] **Antony Whitaker:** Hello and welcome to today's episode of the Grow My Salon business podcast. I'm your host, Antony Whitaker, and it's great to have you here with us today. I want to start by saying a big thank you for the five star ratings and reviews on the podcast. The reviews that you've posted really do mean a lot to me.

[00:00:46] **Antony Whitaker:** I read every one of them and importantly, they help with the algorithm, which allows other people to be able to find. The podcast, for example, from Australia.

[00:00:56] **Antony Whitaker:** Jo Sym choon said, Thank you so much, Antony, for your podcast, your approach, your ability to articulate and contextualize each guest to the industry we both share and love. I love listening to your podcast while also Walking my dog along a South Australian beach. I find your podcasts and courses invaluable.

[00:01:17] **Antony Whitaker:** You keep me inspired, relevant and accountable. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Well, thank you too, Jo and from Linda Deason from the United States of America. She said, such a great podcast with relevant information, whether you've been doing hair for five months or 50 years. So I have a little favour to ask of you.

[00:01:38] **Antony Whitaker:** And that is that you to rate and review us on apple podcast. By doing that, it helps other people find us, but more importantly, it also motivates us to keep producing great content for you. So if you just go to the apple podcast app, search, grow my son on business, scroll to the bottom of the page, select ratings and reviews and write a review.

[00:01:59] **Antony Whitaker:** And we would be very appreciative. So with that said, on with today's episode.

[00:02:06] **Antony Whitaker:** My guest on today's podcast is Geno Stampora. Now, Geno is a returning guest on the podcast. The last time was way back in July, 2019, which if you're interested was episode number 10. And I dare say the world was a much gentler and more predictable and certainly a more peaceful place than it is today.

[00:02:28] **Antony Whitaker:** Now, amongst other things, Geno is a hairdresser. He's a former salon owner and a motivational speaker primarily in the American market, but he does do stuff elsewhere as well. So in today's podcast, we're going to discuss why you can't change today's business challenges with yesterday's thinking. I'm going to talk about technology and the impact that integrating it has on the way that salons operate today.

[00:02:55] **Antony Whitaker:** And we're also going to talk about adapting traditional business models to the changing times and the changing expectations of both consumers and those people that work with us, and so much more. So without further ado, welcome back to the show, Geno.

[00:03:13] **Geno Stampora:** Thank you so much. I'm excited to be here. I'm looking so forward to today. I've been thinking about it for the last few weeks. I love your podcasts. I think you do a fantastic job and I can't wait to share and contribute to your audience. I'm looking so forward to it. No

[00:03:30] **Antony Whitaker:** Geno. I really appreciate that, uh, you know, that positive feedback of the podcast. There's a lot of work that goes into it, as you know, and I know that having you on here, a lot of listeners will get a lot of benefit from because not only are you entertaining, but you have a great message, as well.

[00:03:45] **Antony Whitaker:** So can we just start off by you sort of introducing yourself?

[00:03:48] **Antony Whitaker:** Just give us your sort of two minute backstory, so that we've, you know, got some context around everything else that we say.

[00:03:54] **Geno Stampora:** No worries. I am a hairdresser. I accidentally fell into beauty school. I don't know how or why. I had just gotten out of the army. I didn't know what to do. I looked at all those beautiful girls inside that school and thought I have to get in there and meet those girls. Oddly enough, while I was there, the, uh, administrator of the school, uh, welcome to the school.

[00:04:16] **Geno Stampora:** You're a young man and we don't usually get young men. Why are you here? I said, well, I'm here to get my hair cut. I wanted to meet the girls. He said, what's your name? I said, Geno. And he turned around and he said, do you know, even with just that name, you could be a success in the beauty industry. And I went home thinking and thinking and thinking about it.

[00:04:34] **Geno Stampora:** And I thought I'm going to go back and sign up. So I did. And it was the best thing I ever did. You know me, Antony. I love us. I love the beauty industry. I love everything about us. When I first became a hairdresser, I really wasn't that good. I'm still not that good. Technically, I tell people all the time.

[00:04:52] **Geno Stampora:** However, I feel like in our world, if you're nice, you'll do okay. And I'm a real nice guy. So I ended up going from okay to owning a salon, to owning a few salons, to having a small collection of salons, then a couple of beauty schools, a small distributorship and kind of did everything. And I've loved every minute of it right up until today.

[00:05:15] **Antony Whitaker:** That was good. That was really well condensed for you to be able to get that in that time frame. So, um, look, um, that's great. That gives everyone, you know, who Geno Stampora is in context. Now, as I said in the intro, you can't change today's business challenges with yesterday's thinking. And I definitely believe that.

[00:05:37] **Antony Whitaker:** But at the same time as that, in your extensive career, what are some of the timeless principles? Or values that you believe are crucial for success in the hairdressing industry, regardless of the generation or era that you might be from. Now, another way of saying that Gino is if I'm a 22 year old stylist, why should I listen to you?

[00:05:59] **Geno Stampora:** Well, I think, uh, and you and I have talked about this before, and I don't want to get too long winded, but I do have a philosophy about this. I don't like when people put portions of of, of humans in categories like millennials or baby boomers, or I think we almost have to work backwards and realize we're all human.

[00:06:20] **Geno Stampora:** We're all people. We all have beating hearts. We all want respect. We all want to be successful. We all want to do well. I think everybody wants to get the most out of their lives. I think we have to be

careful sometimes dissecting people and saying, because of your age, you're different. I think we have to take into consideration that what's happened is.

[00:06:41] **Geno Stampora:** The speed of life is faster than it's ever been before, and it's going faster all the time. I mean, they say now, uh, close to a third of Americans, almost half under 35, get most of their knowledge from the internet, get most of their information and news from the internet. My news and my information came from three channels for 30 years on a television set and Now there happens to be a hundred of them.

[00:07:08] **Geno Stampora:** So I think if you look at what is timeless, what's timeless is that, that people want value for their money, that people want to be respected, that people want to feel like somebody special. And I think that stuff never goes away. It's almost like a great hairdresser that does a classic bob, the classic Bob has been in existence for what?

[00:07:30] **Geno Stampora:** 80 years. And it's still one of the most popular haircuts in salons. We have to look at things that change rapidly, things that rarely change, and most things with business that never change make sense.

[00:07:46] **Antony Whitaker:** Definitely. Definitely. and I agree with what you said about, you know, being careful not to group all humans into certain categories and, you know, I'll often talk about, different generations and I think that sometimes a generation can say can maybe epitomize a certain way of thinking at that of that time.

[00:08:08] **Antony Whitaker:** But I think that the way Gen Z are portrayed as a generalization at the moment isn't really just about Gen Z. It's really about people today. That people today, want a different work life balance, that people today want more flexibility, that people today want more, control over their lives and their income and that sort of stuff.

[00:08:27] **Antony Whitaker:** So yeah, very good point. Very good point.

[00:08:30] **Geno Stampora:** They learn from us. Uh, my youngest, my son, my youngest child, uh, when I talked to him one time about, uh, you need to buy a house now on your own home, you're getting to be 30 years old. He said, I don't know if I want to do that. I don't know if I want the anchor basically. What he was saying was I learned from you that owning a home is a lot of work and that you're always doing something to it.

[00:08:51] **Geno Stampora:** So I think we have to take responsibility for the fact that we taught a lot of the younger people what they want and don't want, and they become smarter and a little more articulate and a little more particular in what they will and won't stand for what they will and won't tolerate, you know, how do I get the most out of my life?

[00:09:13] **Geno Stampora:** And, and I can understand. I mean, when I was younger, I worked 65, 70 hours a week. And I hear, I hear people say today, 35 hours is my max. Uh, but the reality is all of us are learning that, especially post COVID, which I think has so much to do with all of this is that, you know, uh, life happens a minute at a time.

[00:09:37] **Geno Stampora:** And, and how do you make those minutes worthwhile and how do you have time to get into nature and get into life and get into your hobbies and kind of, uh, I used to say to my children all the time and I think it's one of the greatest questions in the world, Antony, how, how can you enrich your life and career and make them more rewarding?

[00:09:56] **Geno Stampora:** That's a personal responsibility, right

[00:10:00] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, good. Yeah, very good. Good point. Um, it's interesting when you, you know, we're just talking about your son then for a minute and it's the same all over the world. If we just go back, I don't know, 40 years ago when I bought my first apartment, the, one of the ways of measuring affordability of housing is that it's a multiple Of what the average wages and I can remember when I bought my first place, you know, the average.

[00:10:25] **Antony Whitaker:** Well, for me, I don't mind sharing the numbers. You know, I bought an apartment. It cost me 30, 000 pounds and that was three times. What my salary was. Well, that same apartment today, based on what the average wages would now be nine or ten times. So, basically what that means is that 40 years ago, it was quite easy to get into the property market.

[00:10:51] **Antony Whitaker:** And I'm obviously I'm living in the UK, so they're UK based figures, but I know the pattern would be very similar in the US. I know it's definitely similar in Australia, New Zealand, etc. And so a generation of young people today, they don't necessarily fill the need to get into owning a place because it is so much harder for young people today than it was for young people 40 years ago.

[00:11:17] **Antony Whitaker:** So there's lots of things that contribute to them having a different perspective. Um, On the world, you know, least of all the changing economy like that, but also, you know, different technology, social media, all sorts of things have have given people a different outlook, a different perspective on what's important in life.

[00:11:36] **Antony Whitaker:** And we're not going to talk a lot about COVID, but obviously. You know, COVID sort of really shook the tin of beans up, so to speak, and people had some time to sort of sit back and, and reassess what they want out of work and what they want out of life.

[00:11:51] **Antony Whitaker:** So many people never had that time. They never in their whole lives had the time to sit back and say, who am I? What am I? And what am I becoming? And I don't like to continuously bring up COVID or talk about it or go back to it because I think it's a black hole. Um, but I do believe that a lot of people overlook the true effects of what COVID did to people, the true effects of what COVID has done to all of us, to all of us in regard to some people have become much more selfish.

[00:12:21] **Geno Stampora:** Some. People have become much more. It's all about me. Some people have forgotten how to communicate the importance of, but if you take kind of what you just talked about and shift it to beauty as an inspirational speaker, primarily in the beauty industry and as an educator. I look at then, uh, why not teach everyone how to be the best you can be as quickly as possible so that you can make the most amount of money in the least amount of time.

[00:12:48] **Geno Stampora:** And it's not that money is the most important thing in the world, but I love to ask people sometimes how much is it costing you? To live like you live, how much is it costing you to work like you work? And, and what if you change the way you did things and developed a little more knowledge and knew how to close the sale and how to connect with people and everything that, that we need to do to be, you know, what I would say, ultra successful in beauty.

[00:13:16] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, definitely. Um, just going back to what you said before, and I don't want to talk about COVID either, you get sick to death talking about it, but it's interesting. It's sort of gone in. In phases, um, the impact that it's had on people everywhere. And obviously the initial impact was, uh, health, impact.

[00:13:35] **Antony Whitaker:** And then there was the financial impact, uh, economic impact. And that's still sort of playing out to some degree. But I think when we look back at it, and we're starting to look back at it now, but when we really look back at it in five or ten years, it will be all about the psychological impact that it had on us as a society and the, you know, the way that sort of has impacted on how we choose to work and live and, you know, mental health and all that sort of stuff, which has become, so much more of a big thing these days.

[00:14:06] **Antony Whitaker:** Let me ask you another question about, you know, you've been in the industry a long time. Um, how do you see the industry evolving and what advice would you give to salon owners looking to adapt to changing needs and preferences of both consumers and employees today? I know that's a bit of a big mouthful, but I hope you've got your head around that.

[00:14:31] **Geno Stampora:** Yeah, I do. Uh, well, you know, uh, first of all, uh, I feel like consumers not only really haven't changed, but over the last few years, the consumers found value in us like they never did before all over the world. Uh, I think a beauty salon was important. I think hairdressers were important, but I think now more than ever.

[00:14:52] **Geno Stampora:** People having the lack of us understand what we provide in a salon, that, that we give them that safe space and a way to get away from all their stresses at home and the added confidence of knowing they look their best. So, I do believe that in today's world, the consumer sees more value in us than ever before.

[00:15:12] **Geno Stampora:** I think as a salon owner or a business person, you really have to look at adaptability and how do we, how do we make. Our salon adapt to what people want to, you know, there was a time in, in my flagship salon in Georgetown in Washington DC, where, uh, all of my employees wanted to have babies. They were all at the baby age, you know, baby having age 20s to 30s.

[00:15:37] **Geno Stampora:** And a lot of them got pregnant. And we got confused as to how would we fill the chairs and how will we, okay. Bring in enough money to, to be profitable. And we decided we would just move most everybody into part time. If you could do 20 hours a week happily, then come and do it. If you can do 30 hours a week, happily come and do it.

[00:15:56] **Geno Stampora:** So I think a lot of people get confused because they keep looking at the old model. But not only does the old model not work anymore, you can't even think in model anymore because the speed of life, like we talked about earlier is going so fast. The business model is changing basically every day. You know, five years ago, you could get all the loans you wanted to build your business.

[00:16:22] **Geno Stampora:** Three years ago in America, the government gave you money to build your business. I know many of the countries in Europe that your countries gave you money because they knew you didn't have any. Now, all of a sudden the money's gone. The interest rates are sky high. People are trying to figure out what's coming next.

[00:16:39] **Geno Stampora:** I think you want to be careful not to take your eye off the ball. And that is to, to do a great service, both to your customers and to, if you have employees or coworkers, be the best that you can be for them and understand that. That old movie, if you build it, they will come. If you create an environment, uh, your, your, your customers will come.

[00:17:03] **Geno Stampora:** Now I don't want to get long winded, but in, in regard to employees, Antony, I, I've never had a problem with it. Uh, you know, I'm fair, I'm friendly, I'm honest. I take care of my people. I think if that's your reputation, you won't have a problem attracting great help. I mean, the, the. The smart young people today, which, by the way, are the smartest young people ever, uh, they pretty much know where they want to go and they pretty much know where they were, where they're going to fit in.

[00:17:33] **Geno Stampora:** And if you can create that path for them, you don't have to worry about employment.

[00:17:39] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, I like what you just brought up there at the beginning of that about, um, your, your personal experience with team members. And if they wanted to work 20 hours a week, they could 30 hours a week, they could, etc. If you're not prepared to work like that today as a salon owner, you've got a problem because, you know, now I've read somewhere recently, I think, a mutual friend, uh, Gordon Miller, quoted a statistic where he said, um, 60, I think, I think I've got this right, 64%.

[00:18:12] **Antony Whitaker:** Of the American hairdressing market now work 30 hours or less a week. Um, I think, I know I'm very close with that number. So

it's either 64 or 62 and it's 30 hours a week. So essentially, we have become more and more of a part time industry. Um, and we have to, because otherwise you won't attract and won't keep staff.

[00:18:33] **Antony Whitaker:** If you're not

[00:18:34] **Geno Stampora:** Right, right.

[00:18:35] **Antony Whitaker:** you know, to have that, you know, that different outlook, um, another thing I want to sort of connected to that is. Over the last, you know, 10, 20 years, I mean, time flies, we've seen a huge uptick in self-employed. And it looks different in different countries. So, in the United States, there's a lot more salon suites, but there are now salon suites, you know, in the Australian market as well, and in some European countries.

[00:19:01] **Antony Whitaker:** Uh, but. In those countries, there's a lot more self-employed people, and that's been a general trend all over the world. What I wanted to ask you about was where do you think that's going in the future? Do you think the pendulum's going to swing back a little bit? Has it gone as far in that direction as it's going to?

[00:19:23] **Antony Whitaker:** Or do you think it will just continue in that direction? Or are you not sure?

[00:19:28] **Geno Stampora:** I think all pendulums swing both ways. And I think you, it's like investing in the stock market. You can't look at a stock that's growing now and expect it to grow forever. So I think the pendulum is. Shifting a bit. But I think as people get smarter, self employment is something that looks like a great opportunity for them.

[00:19:48] **Geno Stampora:** What I find a lot of times is I had a former employee one time that was going to do the same thing. And I said to her, you know what, before you go into self employment, I want you to think about one thing. You never listened to me when you were behind the chair in my salon. What makes you think you're going to listen to yourself?

[00:20:07] **Geno Stampora:** You know, now you're your own boss. If I couldn't get you to come to work on time, how are you going to get you to come to work on time? So I think there are people that are meant to be there and they

will get there and and make that sweet thing work for them. But I think there's some people like myself.

[00:20:24] **Geno Stampora:** I need other artists around me. I need that excitement and passion that I get from working with a team. I need all of us to kind of help each other. I'd go nuts if I was in that room all alone.

[00:20:37] **Geno Stampora:** So I don't exactly know where it's going.

[00:20:40] **Geno Stampora:** And I kind of don't I'm careful of the people that tell me where it's going because I feel like, how do you know in today's world where anything? I mean, it changed so rapidly. But I do think that uh, if your dream is to do that, it'll work. And if your dream is to have a salon with a staff and you can have adaptability, that'll work too.

[00:21:04] **Geno Stampora:** You know, the there, the great thing about beauty, and I know you know Antony and your worldly like I am, is that no matter where you are in the world, There's a place for a beauty salon. There's a place for a hairdresser. And no matter where you are in the world, there's a client base that really wants to come to you.

[00:21:20] **Geno Stampora:** There's people that, that really want to support you and work with you.

[00:21:24] **Antony Whitaker:** Yep. Definitely.

[00:21:25] **Antony Whitaker:** So, uh, yeah, Well, I want to talk about communication and service for a minute. I know that you know, communication is something that's really important to you. Uh, and the service side of the industry is really important to you. And they're key to success in this industry at so many levels.

[00:21:44] **Antony Whitaker:** How have you seen? Those aspects change over the years. And I'm not just talking about social media. Um, we've already touched on it when we mentioned different generations at different generations and the relationship they have with, you know, older generations, changing and have always changed. And that's just the way it goes.

[00:22:04] **Antony Whitaker:** But what I wanted to ask you is, how have you seen that that change over the years? And what strategies would you

recommend? Thank you. for maintaining strong client relationships. As a salon owner and relationships with your team members that are younger than you, if you're a salon owner, does that make sense?

[00:22:26] **Geno Stampora:** It does make sense. I love it. that's a great, uh, four questions kind of put into one, but

[00:22:31] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah,

[00:22:32] **Geno Stampora:** a, that's a great group of questions.

[00:22:34] **Geno Stampora:** So, okay. I think, uh, first of all, um, I believe people today have to be very careful about their level of passion and their level of energy. And I think that, uh, uh, we tend to be an industry of artists that can very easily lose sight of our passion. Uh, there, there's one thing to be said for a person that starts beauty school and how passionate and excited they are.

[00:22:58] **Geno Stampora:** And even by the time they finish beauty school, it's kind of gone, they're kind of burnt out already and now they're looking for a job and they kind of, so I think it's important. One of the things I've always focused on is I loved beauty in beauty school. And when I fell in love with beauty, I never let that love go away.

[00:23:17] **Geno Stampora:** I, I still love it today as much as I ever have. We, uh, we went on vacation last year and, my family wanted me to do something crazy like kayaking or hiking or something. And I said, I'm a hairdresser. I don't really do that. You know, I'll tell you what you guys go do that. And I'll go find a salon and they were like a salon.

[00:23:36] **Geno Stampora:** I said, yeah, my people, I'll go find. Well, what if they don't know you? I said, I'll bring a pizza, any salon if you bring. They're going to love to see you and I'll go in and I'll hang out and be with my people. My passion has never wavered. So I think the first thing is keep your passion high. Be passionate about your customer.

[00:23:56] **Geno Stampora:** Be passionate about your business. You know, people equate passion to expertise, Antony. And if you're passionate, even if you're bad, they think you're good. You know, they just see it as, well, gosh, you love what you're doing so much. You, you must be better at it than most. I think that that's the first step.

[00:24:13] **Geno Stampora:** I've always had a thing about giving a hundred percent and I believe my whole life changed when I developed the habit of giving a hundred percent a hundred percent of the time and I think you have to be careful with every guest.

[00:24:25] **Geno Stampora:** It's not about how much you like him. It's not about how much money they have. It's about your position in life and your position in life. If you're a hairdresser is to do your very best every time, all the time, all day long with every guest, lock them in, you know, make them love you. Find a way to make them love you and stay with them.

[00:24:44] **Geno Stampora:** Now, the last part of your question, service, uh, you know, I've always had a servant's heart. I have a servant's mentality. I love to serve people. I love to make their day. I love to smile. People walking down the street and to some people, a smile is nothing. You may not even get a return, but to some people, a smile changes their entire attitude of the day.

[00:25:07] **Geno Stampora:** It's so valuable. So I think it's important if you have a servant's heart, you have a servant's mentality. The, the hard rock cafe and the hard rock hotels, the hard rock casinos, their, their motto is love all serve all why can't we establish that as a motto and then you don't have to worry about service.

[00:25:28] **Geno Stampora:** You'll you'll find yourself making a point of being on time, making a point of not just taking care of people, but my mode behind chair was in my five foot by five foot space. I was going to make them realize there's no one quite like me, that, that they don't have to search. And, you know, kind of like you talked about, I know the UK is kind of exploding with some sweets and stuff coming in.

[00:25:52] **Geno Stampora:** It's not just that it's that people have more choices than they've ever had before. The consumer. There's a salon everywhere, or there's somebody in a suite somewhere. So you've got to find a way to really lock down that guest and, and make them love you, and it's not that hard.

[00:26:08] **Geno Stampora:** Just takes focus.

[00:26:10] **Antony Whitaker:** yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. to go in The current podcast

[00:26:13] **Antony Whitaker:** Out this week, is with a guy by the name of Alex Ioannou. I don't know if you know, Alex.

[00:26:19] **Geno Stampora:** I love Alex. I know him. I've worked

[00:26:21] **Antony Whitaker:** good? He's a, he's a lovely guy. and I've known him for 40 years. We sort of started our career at the same time. And. You know, before we started recording, I said to you, I try and get an angle for every podcast guests that I have.

[00:26:36] **Antony Whitaker:** And the angle I wanted to have with Alex was about the humanity side of success. You know, because he's just such a, he's such a wonderful human. He's just a very nice person. You go a long way to be a more genuine, nicer person than him. And so that's what we focused on in that whole episode. And. You know, it is such an important like ingredient to it all, isn't it?

[00:27:00] **Antony Whitaker:** I mean, yes, you've got to be good at doing hair. Yes, you should be good at social media and all this stuff as well. And yes, you should be embracing, you know, new technology and artificial intelligence and on and on it goes. But sometimes, and I think this sort of is also tied in with what you and I are talking about, is that don't throw out the baby with the bathwater, if that expression is appropriate here, that there are certain.

[00:27:23] **Antony Whitaker:** Things that underpin success, and probably number one, uh, again, another mutual friend of ours, Winn Claybaugh, he wrote the book, Be Nice or Else. And, and Alex is sort of the poster boy, really, for, for being nice.

[00:27:36] **Geno Stampora:** He's a gentle man. I mean, he's just wonderful. You, you, you got to love him.

[00:27:42] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah.

[00:27:43] **Geno Stampora:** He doesn't give you any alternative.

[00:27:45] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, exactly.

[00:27:46] **Antony Whitaker:** The other thing, and I'll probably get into trouble for this, uh, if I don't phrase it correctly, you, you mentioned, um, burnout. And

that's another thing that we talk about a lot now. And I sometimes joke about this and I can joke about it with you and say that in our generation, we couldn't afford burnout

[00:28:09] **Geno Stampora:** right.

[00:28:10] **Antony Whitaker:** you just you couldn't afford mental health.

[00:28:14] **Antony Whitaker:** You it was just those words. Were literally not uttered, weren't they? I mean, and it was a very different sort of work environment and I don't, I do not, I am not calling this generation a snowflake generation. For example, I'm not saying that. Uh, and I think it's great. that mental health is really, uh, given much higher priority, um, in terms of just, just the dialogue of society today that acknowledging that mental health is important.

[00:28:51] **Antony Whitaker:** It's incredibly important. But I also sometimes battle with People sort of rarely waving the burnout flag, or often they'll use that term about the hustle culture.

[00:29:04] **Geno Stampora:** Yes.

[00:29:04] **Antony Whitaker:** And the thing for me is, I like work. I don't apologize, but I love work. I work really hard. I work long hours. And you know what? I always have.

[00:29:15] **Antony Whitaker:** And to whatever degree I'm successful and I didn't get successful working 25, 30 hours a week. And so I grapple with that in my head of saying to people, look, if you only want to work 25, 30 hours a week, three days a week or whatever, that's fine. As a business owner, as a salon that's fine. I'm cool with that.

[00:29:34] **Antony Whitaker:** You know, but at the same time, if you want to be successful and if you want to get the nice things in life, whether it's a car or being afforded to go on holiday or buy a new apartment or whatever, you have to work for it. And so I always grapple with this balance between hard work, the hustle culture, and finding some balance with burnout, I think the reason why I don't get burnt out is that I love what I do.

[00:30:02] **Antony Whitaker:** If I didn't love what I did and I was working in the post office and had to work 60, 70, 80 hours a week, I think I would be suffering from burnout. But I need to stop talking and get your sort of input on this. Like, like stare me in the right direction on that. What are your thoughts about that?

[00:30:18] **Geno Stampora:** Well, I think we've made burnout and that, that whole aspect of life so easy, uh, that, that it's become easy to say, uh, I can't take it anymore. You know, I'm done. I don't know that we've gotten soft, but I do think we have an issue with purpose that that there's a lot of people that never really established.

[00:30:41] **Geno Stampora:** What is my purpose in life? You know, where should I be in life? My purpose in life is to be an educator is to be a hairdresser. Uh, that's my skin. That's what I was born for. Now, does it mean that I love to go to work every day? Of course not. there's a lot of days I'd like to stay home, but what I have to do is.

[00:31:00] **Geno Stampora:** I have to find a way to keep that passion alive. Anybody in a relationship understands the easiest thing you can do in a relationship is run away when it gets tough, but sometimes when it gets tough, the best thing to do is to look into it. How do we rekindle that fire? How, how do we rebuild that passion?

[00:31:17] **Geno Stampora:** So, and I hate to use passion again, as an example, but you know, uh, being an educator, Antony, one of the things, whenever I get interviewed, modern salon will say to me, you know, how have you maintained this for 45 years? I'm like, listen, I believe every person has greatness within them, and I believe my job in my industry is to help someone see that greatness and help them bring that greatness out, help them have that inspiration, and I think people lose sight of the fact that if you lead an inspired life, it's a lot easier not to get burnt out.

[00:31:52] **Geno Stampora:** It's a lot easier not to let that happen. You follow where I'm coming from,

[00:31:57] **Antony Whitaker:** yeah, yeah.

[00:31:57] **Geno Stampora:** If, if we take those things and realize, I'm not saying social media, AI, and all that stuff is bad, but listen, if you put your

phone down just for an hour or two a day, don't live through it, live with it, but put it down and listen to a podcast or a train, a lot of burnout is because you're not Bringing new information into your head.

[00:32:20] **Geno Stampora:** You know, um, I, like I said earlier, I don't believe that there's a model today that we can follow because the speed of life is just too fast. But I think you can find what are those things that make you happy, that make you want to work hard, that make you want to be successful. I don't know about you, but I grew up.

[00:32:39] **Geno Stampora:** poor. My parents died young. When people say to me, sometimes I'm burnt out. I look at them like, my God, you're alive and you're relatively healthy. let's shut off everything for a minute and put life in perspective. Facebook is not life. Instagram is not life. LinkedIn is not life. These are people that can make stuff up and put it out there.

[00:33:00] **Geno Stampora:** Okay? What life is, is what's happening to you right now in your environment. So I just spoke to a salon. Two of the hairdressers aren't busy. And I said, well, what would you do to be busy? And they're like, well, well, I don't know. And I said, let me tell you what I would do. Let me tell you what I did when I wasn't busy.

[00:33:18] **Geno Stampora:** I went out and knocked on doors and developments and passed out my card. I went out and talked to people. I went to restaurants at night and went to tables and said to people, I love your hair. Here's my card. You need to come to me. So you have to ask yourself sometimes, what am I willing to do for an extraordinary life?

[00:33:36] **Geno Stampora:** You know, we all have the opportunity and especially in beauty. See, when you talked earlier about, uh, Gordon's, uh, statistic, which I have heard that that many people work 30 hours a week, well, because in our world, in the beauty world, if you work 30 hours a week, smart, you make what I used to make work in 65 hours a week behind that chair.

[00:33:56] **Geno Stampora:** I mean, the money is there. The income is there. I hope that I answered your question. I hope, I hope that makes sense, but I almost get frustrated trying to get people to realize if you're relatively healthy and you're alive, you're lucky if you're alive and you're relatively healthy, then don't let burnout in, you know, fight it, find maybe burnout is telling you, you need to learn something new.

[00:34:20] **Geno Stampora:** You, you need to read a book. you need to listen to a podcast. You need to go to a seminar. You follow?

[00:34:27] **Antony Whitaker:** Oh, totally. Totally. I mean, I've got two, I often mention my daughters on the podcast because they are of that generation. They're 23 and 25 now. And it really fascinates me how open they are to talk about their mental health. Um, and how their generation and friends are, they will talk about it like, like, you know, you and I might have talked about, oh, I've got a sore leg that they will just as readily talk about their mental health, which is, which is really positive.

[00:34:56] **Antony Whitaker:** It's good. Um, you mentioned you, you mentioned AI and you mentioned Facebook and Instagram, etc. There. Let's just talk a little bit about technology for a minute because technology has. Significantly impacted on the way that salons operate, um, you know, in the, in the time that we've been in the industry, uh, what are your thoughts on the integration of technology in the industry in all its forms, and how and why is it important that older, more seasoned professionals embrace new tools and trends in order to stay, you know, relevant, both creatively and business wise.

[00:35:35] **Geno Stampora:** Right, well, I think, uh, as an artist, sometimes the hardest things to do are embrace new. New learning, new ideas, new discovery, new technology. I think first of all, the most important thing about this technology is rely on it, or bring it into business because it will help you to see what you're doing, right?

[00:35:58] **Geno Stampora:** What you're doing wrong. One of the things I think that has always been a problem in the beauty industry is we really don't have quality control. Uh, nobody tells you in the morning, you're going to go to work and have a great. day. I mean, I used to see times where my staff walked in. I told them I was going to put a defibrillation machine in the break room.

[00:36:15] **Geno Stampora:** And when they walked in, I was clear. Now get out there and look alive because half of them would come to work, you know, looking dead. And I think that if a client looks at you and you don't look happy, healthy and raring to go, they start thinking, I'm gonna get a shitty haircut.

[00:36:30] **Geno Stampora:** And once they think they're going to get a shitty haircut, it doesn't matter what you do. That haircut's shitty. That's just pretty much how they think, you know, it just becomes the mentality. So I think use

all the technology to benefit the building and growth of your salon, but don't rely on it.

[00:36:47] **Geno Stampora:** Rely on building business one customer at a time. Rely on getting a customer to hear your story, buy into it and love it, and then share your story with their friends and family at the coffee shop. I think [00:37:00] if you do it that way, you can make it all work well.

[00:37:03] **Geno Stampora:** And I kind of feel like I then have to measure time, you know, and everyone has to realize whether you're, whether you're listening to this podcast and you're 12, or you're listening to this podcast and you're 92, time is the fabric of your life. So where's the most important place to put your time right now?

[00:37:24] **Geno Stampora:** Where's the most important place to really focus on that time? What do I need to learn? What do I need to change? How much do I need to change? How much do I need to learn? What, how do I think? Fill that gap. What's lacking in, in my life? What's lacking in my career? And then how do I build that? Can I use technology?

[00:37:44] **Geno Stampora:** Yes, possibly. Can I use old school thinking? Of course you can, because old school thinking it's never going to go away. It's there. And it works. Does it mean that that's how you should run your business? No, there's some technology you can bring into. I mean a great software in your business will show you quality control.

[00:38:03] **Geno Stampora:** You know, I remember the, when we first started having salon software and I put the software into my salon and I was able to read how many customers you did and how many customers came back. And I quick had a meeting with one of my staff members and I said, um, you, you've got to stop doing hair. And she said, why?

[00:38:21] **Geno Stampora:** I said, because she used to say all the time, if a client didn't come back, they died. And I said, well, after looking, you're killing the entire community. No longer. Sorry. Sorry. And

[00:38:36] **Antony Whitaker:** oh, I like that one. Okay, that's good. That's very good. Okay, um,

[00:38:43] **Antony Whitaker:** let's sort of uh, as we head towards the sort of tail end of this, let's talk. specifically more about the sort of younger generation in the industry as well, although we've been talking about that a lot anyway. But I really want to sort of focus on that.

[00:38:57] **Antony Whitaker:** how can Create environments that attract and keep talent while still meeting their business goals. Is it, I know we've been talking around that, but

[00:39:12] **Geno Stampora:** Yeah,

[00:39:12] **Antony Whitaker:** we could sort of really focus on that for a minute,

[00:39:14] **Geno Stampora:** And, and, uh, let's go back to which we didn't cover. And that was the thought of communication because that ties right into where you are right now. Uh, of course, business goals is, is how do I have profitable employees and, and how can I be profitable? You know, the biggest part of business is in the end, are we making money?

[00:39:34] **Geno Stampora:** And if we're making enough money, then we know we kind of feel like we're doing all right. I think that, uh, communication is lacking. And I think that everyone needs to take the time to look at. It's like you talked about with your Children. Um, people talk about things now differently. They talk about things that we never talked about before.

[00:39:55] **Geno Stampora:** They talk about mental health. We hid mental health for many years. We never want to even bring it up. Almost as though it didn't exist, you know, I remember one time mentioning to someone that my father was an alcoholic and did he ever go to AA? I said, well, when my father was an alcoholic, there was no AA, you know, it, it takes a while for this stuff to come around.

[00:40:14] **Geno Stampora:** You know, we're very slow in evolving toward helping those people, but communication today, I think you need to communicate to a young person. First of all, people stay where they grow. And people leave where they get stagnant. So you can't let a salon ever become stagnant. It's got to be all about growth and all about artistry and all about technical and business skills and how do we grow together?

[00:40:42] **Geno Stampora:** I, and I, I'm going to speed up a bit because I want to share all this with you really quick. And in being a part of the team. Antony, there's five great fundamentals to building a strong team. Number one is to share credit and knowledge with each other. You've got to share credit and knowledge with each other.

[00:40:59] **Geno Stampora:** If you're the top retailer, you've got to teach the person next to you how to sell retail. If you're the top booker, you've got to. Talk to the weakest booker and tell them how you're doing it. Because artists, we, we, we learn from each other. Fundamental number two is cover your team, which is very simply, if you have nothing nice to say, don't say anything at all.

[00:41:19] **Geno Stampora:** Don't take time to judge people, give people the space to be who they are, and then find a way to work with that. The third fundamental is to stimulate spirit. Now I have. A high level of spirit, and I don't really need it stimulated by somebody else, but I have a lot of friends and a lot of family that need spirit stimulated.

[00:41:39] **Geno Stampora:** They're, they're walking around half dead and I have to say to them, my God, you're alive. How can you not be like, just run? You know, you got to get that going. You got to push it out. Fundamental number four is. Don't badmouth your coach. Now, funny, we were talking earlier about Stephen Terry Cowan and Sam Brocato, which this all kind of ties in.

[00:41:58] **Geno Stampora:** My friend, Terry Cowan, one time after I spoke, was kind enough, uh, big hearted enough and coach enough to be honest with me after I got done speaking. And I thought I was just, uh, oh hell, for years, I thought I was the man. I mean, I am wow. Look at me. And she just tore me down to nothing and told me the truth.

[00:42:20] **Geno Stampora:** That I wasn't all the things I thought I was. I went home and, uh, Sam Brocato calls and said, Hey, how was your meeting with Terry? I said, I don't want to be an educator anymore. And Sam said something fabulous to me. He said, Gino, I never thought at the first sign of rain, you'd melt. I said, I didn't melt.

[00:42:37] **Geno Stampora:** He said, you melted. Go back and thank her for being honest with you, go back and thank her for taking you, uh, to a place that

you've never really seen yourself before and, and we've both kind of gone around with this a little bit, listen, uh, if you make a list of the things you want in life, they're not going to come.

[00:42:56] **Geno Stampora:** Unless you go out and work for him. I mean, that's what hard work is all about. So I think if you create a path as a salon owner for this younger generation to see what they can become and see where they can become and see that they can, they can have the greatest life they want within your salon, that if they'll just attach their dreams to the salon dreams, it'll happen and be prepared.

[00:43:22] **Geno Stampora:** It's gonna slowly drift away. And when it does, a great leader brings it back and you get them back in charge. You get them back in touch. Now, communication wise, Antony, it's been difficult. People don't realize that. That is not what you say that matters. It's what people hear. We have to be articulate with words today and no one's really taught us how.

[00:43:47] **Geno Stampora:** Even in the salon, you know, uh, I have the bestselling CDs in the beauty industry. The reason I made those CDs was because I listened to my staff and thought they don't know how to talk to their customer. I'm going to have to teach them how to use words of value and, and how to put words together and how to teach people how to get from where they are.

[00:44:06] **Geno Stampora:** To where they want to be and how to explain to a client, we don't change the world with one haircut or one color that, that I'm going to take you on a journey and we're going to basically do this together. So, I think the answer to communication is everyone should be listening to a good podcast on how to communicate, get a good book on how to communicate someplace close to your house.

[00:44:26] **Geno Stampora:** No matter where you are in the world, there's a brick building called the library and you're allowed to go there and borrow books, and you can borrow a good book on how to communicate. So I didn't mean to ramble on, but I think that that stuff is, is so validly important.

[00:44:42] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah, no, it is. Um, and you've been in the industry a long time and now you don't have salons anymore. And at the, at the beginning you sort of went through what your journey had been with salons and schools and distributors, et cetera. Um, and so you've obviously

seen lots of changes like I have over, you know, 40 plus year career in the [00:45:00] industry as to how the way we do business, uh, has, has evolved just as much as how the fashions of the day have evolved.

[00:45:09] **Antony Whitaker:** And so you've obviously had. Points in business where you've had to completely reassess how you are doing certain things. So the question I'm asking you is what, what bit of advice can you give to today's professionals as to how they can benefit from the lesson that you learned about embracing change?

[00:45:35] **Geno Stampora:** First, surround yourself with great, smart people. That's first. Make sure your friends, your advisors, your coaches, make sure they're great. Make sure they're smart. I think one of the greatest changes in life is To surround yourself with a great doctor, a great lawyer, a great accountant, the days are gone that your accountant was your mother's accountant or a friend of your uncle's, or you need to have the best of the best around you, you know, that's first.

[00:46:05] **Geno Stampora:** Secondly. Learn to listen. The more you talk, the less you listen. It was my problem for 35 years. All I ever wanted to do was talk, talk, talk, talk, talk. And then I learned to listen and I was like, wow, you can learn so much when you listen. So learn to really listen to people, listen to their story, listen to what they did, what worked for them.

[00:46:25] **Geno Stampora:** It might not necessarily work for you, but All of that wisdom can build up within you till all of a sudden, you know, you've heard the saying, uh, I don't know the answer, but I'm going to sleep on it tonight. When you sleep on it, that wisdom in your subconscious sometimes solves that problem for you the next morning.

[00:46:44] **Geno Stampora:** So really take the time to learn, to listen. And there are some fabulous books on learning how to listen Thirdly,

[00:46:52] **Geno Stampora:** take care of yourself, just, uh, know who you are and have a hold on you, spend a little time just with you, not with you and your partner, not with you, just a little time just with you and know what moves you, what are the things that move you, what are the things that excite you, what are the things you want out of life, get a pretty good hold on yourself and realize that you are evolving.

[00:47:13] **Geno Stampora:** So that's going to change a lot. So you need to go back to you every now and then and say, how am I, you know, am I happy? Am I doing well? Is everything good? What do I need to change? What do I need to adjust? And I used to use it as an example all the time that when, when early on, uh, in NASA, when a rocket left the earth and it was trying to go to the moon, they had a computer on there called a midcourse correction computer.

[00:47:39] **Geno Stampora:** People don't have one, but we sure do need one every now and then you need to stop and look at your path and and adjust your midcourse correction computer. Maybe you got moved to the side a little bit and you, you need to recenter. And I think if you, if you take the time to breathe and take the time to recenter.

[00:47:59] **Geno Stampora:** Um, you don't allow burnout in, you know, you don't allow that negativity in, you know, uh, people sometimes lose sight of the fact that negative energy is way stronger than positive energy. It always has been. It's the easy way out. So it's, it's not as easy to be positive, but the benefits are tremendous, you know?

[00:48:21] **Geno Stampora:** So that would be the last thing. Find a way to, to, to maintain a positive motivated attitude.

[00:48:27] **Antony Whitaker:** Yeah. Okay. Uh, three words. I want to, I want to get you to think about first one is flexibility. Second one is control. And the third one is autonomy. When you talk about people today. Okay. I had to pause. I didn't want to say. today's generation. But when you talk about today's workforce, and I think this was happening anyway, this wasn't caused by COVID.

[00:48:52] **Antony Whitaker:** But flexibility, control, autonomy are the single biggest buzzwords in the workforce today. How can employers reinvent, fine tune, tweak, whatever it is to offer more flexibility, autonomy and control in the salon industry today?

[00:49:11] **Geno Stampora:** I love autonomy, uh, and I think it's so important. One of the things I always did as a leader, as a salon owner was everyone's, everyone was involved in every decision because when everyone was involved in every decision. They, that created autonomy, they took ownership of those decisions. So you've got to include everyone that the day is gone of the boss coming out and saying, here's what we're going to do.

[00:49:37] **Geno Stampora:** The day has come where the boss comes out and says, I want to do this. Let's collaborate. How should this be done? So I think that that the answer with autonomy is to get. Everyone to buy into the, the group culture, get everyone to buy into, you know, one of my favorite sayings is, is in the absence of culture, there's culture.

[00:49:58] **Geno Stampora:** It's just not your culture. So if we can get everyone to buy into the culture autonomy. Automatically happens. Control. Forget it. Uh, there is no more control. The only thing you can control is your numbers. And if everybody's doing everything right, that those numbers will be okay. Otherwise, uh, take the ceilings off, take the limitations off.

[00:50:22] **Geno Stampora:** Don't try to control anyone. Uh, let them give, create an environment for them where they can be the best in that environment. Create a station where they can. Outperform even what they imagined possible and then flexibility. Well, it's just come of time. Everyone, no one, you know, most people under 30 today are unattached.

[00:50:46] **Geno Stampora:** They don't even want it. They don't even want an attachment of a relationship. Um, you've, you've got to learn how to be flexible with everything. All the time, everywhere. I think that that's most important. And I think it's, it's not hard to create a flexible calendar to let people basically come and go as they please.

[00:51:05] **Geno Stampora:** I don't ever want somebody to be in my business that doesn't want to be there. I don't want somebody to be in my business that that's mistaking activity for productivity. If they can't be productive, they, they shouldn't be in the salon. We can't afford to have an unproductive person in the break room anymore.

[00:51:24] **Geno Stampora:** There used to be times when the cost of doing business was so much less. You can have three people in the break room, making coffee, eating donuts and talking about life, but, but today that can't be. So a good part of flexibility is get people to come to work when they're most productive. They do their best work and then let them go.

[00:51:43] **Geno Stampora:** Makes sense.

[00:51:44] **Antony Whitaker:** Okay. Good. Good. All right. Listen, we need to start wrapping up,

[00:51:47] **Antony Whitaker:** I think you might've already answered this. Uh, what do you wish you were better at?

[00:51:52] **Geno Stampora:** Oh gosh, I could name a million things. I think I, I'd like to have been a better father. Uh, I'd like to have been a better husband, a better friend. Um, but now I guess, I wish I'd like to have been better at beauty faster earlier. now I think, uh, I'd just like to be a better giver. More of more open heart.

[00:52:18] **Geno Stampora:** I have a thing called my grounding pages. I'll tell you what the next time we get together. I'll read everyone my grounding pages, or if anybody wants to. And if you want to email me, geno G E N O at genostamporo.com

[00:52:31] **Geno Stampora:** I'll send you my grounding pages, but it's just 3 pages. I read a couple times a week to remind me. People matter as much as I do because I'm Italian and I'm an artist and I'm a hairdresser and sometimes I think I matter more than everybody and I have to shut myself down and realize you matter and your problems matter just as much as I do and I like to read those pages because it reminds me of that.

[00:52:55] **Geno Stampora:** It reminds me that it's important to smile, be human, give people a break, help people have a better day. You know, I think that's just a, a big part of life today. And it reminds me to realize that, uh, I can always be more than I am. Back

[00:53:11] **Antony Whitaker:** Good. Good. Okay. All right. Well, we need to start wrapping up now. Where can people connect with you on Instagram or other social channels?

[00:53:19] **Antony Whitaker:**

[00:53:19] **Geno Stampora:** They, that would be at Gino Stampora on LinkedIn and or Instagram, uh, or Gino, G E N O at Gino Stampora. com. I answer every single email I get, uh, and that would be Gino at Gino Stampora. And, uh, if you email me, I promise. Sorry. We'll email back and that's the easiest and best way to get me.

[00:53:40] **Antony Whitaker:** Great. Okay. Well, I'll put those links on our website, growmysalonbusiness.com and in the show notes for today's podcast.

So if you're listening to this podcast with Gino Stampora and have enjoyed it, then do me a favor, take a screenshot on your phone and share it to your Instagram stories and don't forget to subscribe and leave us a rating and review on the Apple podcast app.

[00:54:02] **Antony Whitaker:** So to wrap up Gino, I just want to say thank you. Um, because you, you always bring a lot of wisdom. And, uh, you know, there's a, there's a lot to be said for life's journey and the wisdom and the lessons that we accumulate along the way, And I just, you know, want to want to say how much I appreciate your willingness and openness to share all that with our audience today.

[00:54:22] **Antony Whitaker:** So, uh, to wrap up Gino, thank you for being on this week's episode of the Grow My Salon Business Podcast.

[00:54:29] **Geno Stampora:** Thank you for having me and I want to say the same to you, Antony, you've been a great friend over the years. You've been very inspirational. You've taught me a lot. I love your podcasts. I think it's wonderful that people have an opportunity to really listen. And when you can learn from somebody else's mistake, uh, when you can hear a story about somebody that fell into a hole, um, you can prevent that from happening yourself.

[00:54:52] **Geno Stampora:** So thank you so much for all that you do and all that you are. And thank you all. God bless. Be safe, stay healthy. Thanks for your time today.

[00:55:00] **Antony Whitaker:** Thanks, Gino.

[00:55:01] **Geno Stampora:** You're welcome. Cheers.

[00:55:02] **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](https://www.facebook.com/growmysalonbusiness) 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