

# GMSB 330

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[00:00:04] Hey, it's Antony Whitaker here and welcome back to the Grow My Salon Business podcast. As I always say, it's great to have you here. Today's episode might be a little bit different to usual because I'm gonna show you something or I'm not actually gonna show it to you. I'm gonna talk about something that once you see it.

[00:00:22] You sort of can't unsee it in a business context. So this is for you if you are working harder than ever, but not getting ahead. And if you are the busiest person in the salon, but you're still stressed about money and if you feel like you are stuck on a hamster wheel that just never stops.

[00:00:40] And I totally understand what that might feel like. Either way, you are not alone. And more importantly, it's not your fault, but there is something that you're doing that might be, or probably is keeping you stuck, and it's not what you think. It's not your pricing. It's not your marketing, it's not even your team.

[00:00:57] It's deeper than that. And once you understand what it is, then everything else starts to change. So today I'm gonna talk about the number one mistake that keeps talented salon owners overwhelmed and struggling, and more importantly, what you should do instead. So let's dive in. So here's what I see constantly.

[00:01:19] In fact, it's sort of my story and I can almost guarantee that it's your story too. Like all good stories, there's lessons within it that you have to have lived through to rarely understand. So a talented stylist, someone who's genuinely good at their craft, creative, passionate, great with clients, decides to open their own salon.

[00:01:41] That's you. That was me. They're excited, they're motivated. They have a vision, and for the first few months, maybe even the first year, they're pretty much running on adrenaline. But then reality starts to set in. Maybe they're working six days a week, maybe they're working 10 hour days and they're doing 80%, or certainly the lion's share of the salon's revenue themselves.

[00:02:05] The team is small, but it's very definitely underperforming. Or perhaps it's just that they can't find good people, or the people they have keep

on leaving, and so they're buried behind the chair doing lots of clients, but they're also buried in admin and ordering supplies and dealing with scheduling conflicts, whether with clients or staff members.

[00:02:26] Basically constantly fixing an array of problems that come with business ownership. They can't take a vacation or a holiday because the salon would literally fall apart without them. And here's the real problem. They're probably making less money now than they did as an employee working for someone else.

[00:02:44] So that's the story. Does it sound familiar? I'm sure it does. To many people that are listening, you see, I see this pattern over and over again. Like I say, it was me too when I opened my business to start with. It's the story of the talented stylists that dreams of opening a salon. And so they opened that dream salon, but eventually they become the overwhelmed operator and they wonder what went wrong, what happened to that dream that they had.

[00:03:15] And for years I always thought that the solution was just better systems or maybe better time management, or better staff or better marketing. It's that you know, work smarter, not harder thing. But then I realized that the real problem is actually way deeper than that because what do most salon owners, do when things are difficult?

[00:03:37] When business is struggling and money is tight? Well, what we've all done, and I certainly did it, is we work more hours, we take more clients, we do more colour, we stay late, we do more late nights. We come in on our day off, we push harder. And it sort of makes sense because if the business isn't making enough money, you need to generate more revenue, so you end up doing more here.

[00:04:03] But here's what I realized at the time, and I've just seen this pattern repeated with thousands literally, of salon owners that I've coached over the years, and that is that you cannot solve business problems by doing more here. Let me say that again. 'cause it's really important. You cannot solve business problems by being a better technician, and that's the mistake you see when you're struggling.

[00:04:31] Your instinct is to go back to what you're good at. You're good at cutting hair, you're good at colour, you're good at making clients happy. So when the business is struggling, you decide to do more of that. But. Your salon isn't struggling because you are not good enough at doing hair.

[00:04:48] Your salon is struggling because you're trying to run a business with the technical skills of the hairdresser.

[00:04:55] Instead of the business skills of the owner.

[00:04:58] Think about it. When you opened your salon, what was it that you were trained in? Cutting colour styling, client service, the technical side of the craft. You spent thousands of hours and a lot of money probably mastering those skills. But how much time did you spend learning how to read a profit and loss statement, or how to build systems that work without you or how to market strategically instead of just posting randomly on Instagram or how to price for profit instead of copying the price list from the last sale on that you worked in, or how to develop a high performing team or how to create a culture that retains talent.

[00:05:38] 99% of people I come across. The answer to that question is that you spent zero hours learning that maybe the odd weekend seminar, maybe a YouTube rabbit hole at 11:00 PM when you are desperate for a solution, but no real systematic business education. So you're trying to solve business problems with the only tools that you have, and they're the technical skills of the hairdresser, and that's why you're stuck.

[00:06:04] It's like trying to fix a car engine with a hairdryer. That's an image you can't see. Wrong tool for the job. Now, here's the shift. Successful salon owners, the ones who aren't overwhelmed, who have profitable businesses who've built something that doesn't depend entirely on them, they made a fundamental shift.

[00:06:28] They stopped operating as technicians and started operating as business owners. They stopped trying to solve every problem by working harder behind the chair, and they started building a business. On five foundational pillars, which brings me to the framework that I wanna talk about. After 20 odd years of coaching salon owners, I've identified five specific things that are staring you in your face that separate struggling salon owners from thriving salon owners.

[00:07:02] I call them the five pillars of Salon on Success. And here's what I've learned. Most salon earn are working on one or two of these pillars already. The successful ones manage to master or five. Now, let me walk you through each of them quickly.

[00:07:19] Pillar number one is management and systems. This is about building a business that can run without you. Most salon owners don't really have systems. They have workarounds. Everything lives in their head, they make every decision. They're the glue holding everything together. And that sort of works until it doesn't, until you get sick or want a vacation or just need a day off.

[00:07:44] Successful salon owners have or build documented systems for everything from client intake to consultations, to retail, rebooking, scheduling, inventory management, literally everything, so the business doesn't collapse when they're not there. That takes us to pillar number two, and that is, uh, money and financial clarity pillar.

[00:08:09] This is about understanding your numbers and how to price for profit. Most salon owners avoid looking at their financial reports because they don't understand them. They price based on what their competitors charge or what they think clients will pay. It's not based on their actual costs and desired profit margin, and then they wonder why they're busy, but broke.

[00:08:34] Successful salon owners know their numbers, they understand profit margins break even, cost of service, all that stuff. And they make decisions based on data, not on desperation. Pillar number three is all about marketing. Marketing that actually works. And this is about building a system that attracts the right clients, converts them into regulars, and keeps them for years.

[00:09:03] They're the three fundamental concepts of what marketing is all about. Attract the right clients, turn them into regulars, and keep them for as long as possible. Most salon owners seem to think that marketing is just posting on Instagram a few times a week and hoping that people show up. They have no real strategy.

[00:09:22] They can't tell you what's working and what's not, and they don't even realize that 60% of their new clients never come back for a second visit. Successful salon owners have a complete marketing system, not just random tactics. They know how to attract their ideal client. They know how to deliver an experience that makes those clients want to return and build long-term loyalty that lasts.

[00:09:46] Pillar number five is all about the performance of the people on your team, your stylists, whether they're stylists or colourists or barbers or beauty therapist or whatever the, the title they've got. It's the income producers. I refer to them often as super stylists. And so pillar number four is all about your

responsibility as a salon owner to transform your stylists into productive professionals.

[00:10:14] Most salon owners are frustrated with their team. They're frustrated with their low rebooking rates, their minimal retail sales, their inconsistent client experience.

[00:10:24] The owner is usually generating the majority of the revenue, or certainly more than anyone else on the team, and most of the rest of the team or some of the rest of the team, let's just say that they're not working as hard as what they could be. Successful salon owners develop their team systematically.

[00:10:42] They train them on consultations, on re-booking, on retail, on client experience. The business skills that turn average stylists into what I refer to as super stylists. So that the owner isn't carrying the entire business on their back financially. And when you turn people into super stylists, hand in hand with them being more productive is that they earn more money, and I'm yet to meet a stylist who doesn't want to earn more money.

[00:11:12] Pillar number five is all about team and hr, meaning the human resource side of the business. So you know, the hiring, the culture, the retention and growing people. This is about building a team that actually wants to stay. Most salon owners are sort of stuck in the revolving door, constantly hiring and training, and then losing people on the back end.

[00:11:36] They often have no real hiring system, no onboarding process, no intentional culture, no retention strategy for their team, not just their clients. Successful salon owners build teams intentionally. They recruit the right talent. They create compensation systems at work, and they build a culture where people want to stay and grow within their business.

[00:12:04] Maybe not forever, but they certainly stay longer than they would've otherwise.

[00:12:10] Now, here's the critical part. All five of these pillars work together. You can't just fix one and expect everything else to change. If you build great systems, but your team is still underperforming, you are still stuck. If you master your numbers but can't retain clients, you are still struggling. And if you have a great team but no marketing system, you'll hit a revenue ceiling.

[00:12:34] You see, they all work together. They all feed off each other, and that's why most salon owners stay stuck because they're working on one or two

pillars, usually the ones that they're most comfortable with and ignoring the others. But the successful ones, they master all five systematically over time with a framework.

[00:12:57] So. If you are overwhelmed right now, it's not because you're failing, it's because you're trying to run a business with incomplete information. You were never taught this stuff, but it can be learned, and that's why I've created something for you. I've just launched a free three part video training that I call the Five Things Holding Your Salon Back From Growing and How to Fix them.

[00:13:22] It's completely free. Just the complete framework that I've used to help thousands of salon owners transform their business. It's three videos. Each of them are about 25, maybe 30 minutes. The first video, video number one, breaks down the foundational problems. Why you can't step away without everything falling apart, and how to build a business that can work without you.

[00:13:47] Video number two is the thing that I rarely. Want to emphasize that I was talking about at the beginning. It's a, it's a model that I've developed, a framework, so to speak, that is a really great tool for most salon owners to, to dig into and understand, diagnose if you want, what's really holding their salon back.

[00:14:09] Video number three is all about money and marketing problems and why your seller is busy, but not necessarily profitable and exactly how to fix it. This isn't theory.

[00:14:19] This isn't just more motivational fluff. This is the exact step-by-step framework that I developed for going from overwhelmed operator. To strategic business owner, and if you're serious about making the shift, if you want coaching, accountability, and support to implement all five pillars systematically over 12 months.

[00:14:40] Then at the end of video three, I'm opening up applications for something I've actually never offered before. It's called Grow Business School. It's a 12 month transformation program, limited just 10 salon owners. We're already filling spots and applications will close on January the 28th, or when we hit 10 people, whichever comes first.

[00:15:02] But start first of all with the free training. Get the framework and see if it resonates with you. Now, here's what I want you to do right now. I want you to go to the show notes for this podcast. Click on the link and register for

the free training or go to [grow my salon business.com](http://growmy salon business.com) and you'll see on the homepage where you can register for it there.

[00:15:25] So three videos, the complete framework, and if you wanna go deeper, if you're ready for the full transformation business, school applications will be open. But either way, start with the training, because once you see the framework, once you understand what's really holding you back, as I said, you can't unsee it.

[00:15:42] And that's when everything changes. Next week, I'm coming back with part two of this series. We're gonna go deep on one of the five pillars, the money pillar, and I'm gonna show you exactly why your salon is busy, but not always profitable, and what to do about it. You won't wanna miss it. Until then, go watch the free training.

[00:16:02] Let's build something incredible together in 2026. In the meantime, I'll see you next week.