

GMSB 335

[00:00:05] Hey, it's Antony here and welcome to today's episode of the Grow My Salon Business podcast. And whether this is your first time or perhaps you are a regular listener, thank you for tuning in today and thank you for the compliments regarding the podcast. I always appreciate them and if you're one of those people who haven't yet left us a review for the podcast, I would love it if you did.

[00:00:24] Ratings and reviews are extremely helpful. They do matter in the rankings of the show and it helps other people to find my podcast and. I genuinely love to hear what's been helpful to you. All you need to do to leave us a review is go to the Apple Podcast app, search, grow my salon business, scroll to the bottom of the page and leave a review and you would make us very happy.

[00:00:45] So with that said, let's get on with today's episode. There are many responsibilities that come with being a salon owner and an employer of others, and if we're totally honest, many new salon owners give very little thought to most of those responsibilities before they open a business. I know that I'll put my hands up.

[00:01:05] That was definitely me. And perhaps that lack of preparedness is particularly relevant when it comes to the ongoing training and education that salon owners are meant to provide, not only for themselves, but also for those on their team. Instead, what happens is a lot of salon owners have this sort of weird idea that the team members they employ are meant to be what I refer to as oven-ready with all the skills needed when they start working with you.

[00:01:34] And if they're employing people who are in an apprenticeship or assisting program, they often work on the assumption that those people will somehow just pick things up simply by being in the same space as them. Many new salon owners seem to imagine that somehow someone else at a hairdressing school or college, or whatever the term is, where you live, will have trained your potential employees to be technically competent and have the people skills, communication skills, and the service standards that you expect them to have.

[00:02:06] But it just doesn't work like that. And I get it going from being a stylist, working for someone else to becoming a salon owner is a big transition. I mean, one day you are working for someone else and then just like me, you decided to open your own salon and so you started to plan for it. And at that

point, not only were you focused on being a busy stylist, but you started to think about what the salon of yours would look like.

[00:02:32] What would be the products you'd use? What would be the design and the decor of the salon, as well as all the other things that are new and exciting about your new venture.

[00:02:41] And then once you've opened the business, you have to be focused on the financial and management aspects that go into the day to day running of a business. But there's often not a lot of thought given to the responsibility that you have to training your team to being the people that you want them to.

[00:03:00] So your team picks up bits and pieces from each other and from social media, and maybe they attend a product company sponsored event and attend the occasional hairdressing show. Do you know what? I think that perhaps for a long time, maybe that was enough. Maybe, but it certainly isn't anymore. As most people listening to this will know, I have a range of educational courses for salon owners and their teams, and one of them is called Super Stylist, and it's about helping the stylist to become the best version of themselves, not just as a technician doing hair, but as an all round hairdresser, including being an effective communicator, being someone who is responsible for building professional relationships, and giving every client a great experience.

[00:03:46] Great service as well as great hair so that those clients come back again and again and again, and that they refer others as well as trusting the stylist's advice when it comes to their hair and product recommendations and how frequently they should return. The bottom line is that it teaches them to be more productive and therefore to be able to earn more money for themselves.

[00:04:12] And that's really important because I'm yet to meet the hairdresser who doesn't want more money in their pay packet

[00:04:20] But the problem is often that they want to get more money, but they don't want to earn more money. And that's where the real problem is because in most cases, they are paid exactly what they should be paid relative to what they produce and still enable the business to be profitable. And so to get more money, they have to learn to produce more money.

[00:04:42] And that's where we come full circle to the subject of training. Because training your team isn't just about the technical, creative aspects of hair. It's about training them to become better. All round hairdressers, doing

better consultations, giving every client a great experience, giving the client advice about their hair and the products to use at home, giving them better service, telling them when you need to see them again, and even asking for referrals.

[00:05:10] And when a stylist rarely knows how to do all that

[00:05:14] then they'll produce more money and therefore earn more money for themselves. But here's the thing. Sometimes a salon owner will say to me. How do I get my team to do the course? And I must admit that that stops me in my tracks every time you see, here's what I want you to think about for a minute.

[00:05:32] Imagine that you weren't a hairdresser, you didn't own a salon, but imagine you worked in another industry. So let's, for example, use the Apple store. Imagine the Apple store management invested in some training for the team. Can you imagine the store manager standing there wondering, oh, I wonder how I'm gonna get my team to do the course.

[00:05:53] Or if you worked at the Ritz Colton or a major fashion brand or a movie production company, or a law firm or an airline or whatever it was, would the manager or owner even ask that question because salon owners do. Just recently, I was talking to a salon owner who was telling me about conversations that he had been having with some friends of his who are not in the industry, but they are in business.

[00:06:20] And he was explaining to them about the way that salons work and what hairdressers expect and what they'll do and what they won't do, and the people he was talking to were amazed at some of the things that we do and think of as being normal or blame it on Gen Z or the government, or just society today.

[00:06:40] So is it just me or have we created an industry where the tail is wagging the dog? Where we as owners and managers are afraid to be the leaders that we are meant to be. This expectation that your team should arrive of and ready, that's the first sign of the problem. Because when you believe that someone else was supposed to train them, you never step into the role of actually developing them yourself.

[00:07:07] And when you don't develop them, you can't lead them. And when you can't lead them, they start leading you. And here's what that creates. When there's no organized training program, when you are relying on social media and

the occasional product company event to develop your team, if that's all there is, it starts to become a race to the bottom.

[00:07:28] You get poor staff retention, you get fragmented culture or no culture at all. There's no career path for people, no sense of belonging, no reason for them to want to stay. And here's the thing that most salon owners don't see. There are a few reasons why there's been a movement towards more self-employment in the hairdressing industry, and I'm not necessarily against it, and I totally understand that it's being driven by different forces depending on the countries that you're in.

[00:07:58] But one thing, or one of the reasons that it has in common with salons everywhere. That is part of what's driving people more towards self-employment is that there's a lack of leadership from salon owners. Good stylists don't always leave just because they're difficult. They often leave because there's nowhere to grow.

[00:08:20] They leave because you've created a culture where there's a lack of productivity standards. There's no expectations, there's no development. And when good people see that, they think to themselves, well, if this is all there is, I might as well just go out on my own. The tail wagging the dog dynamic.

[00:08:37] The one where you are afraid to lead is actually contributing to the self-employment exodus that you might be trying to avoid as a salon owner. You worry that they'll get trained and leave, but there's a quote that was attributed to Vidal Sassoon, whether or not he did say it doesn't matter, but the quote is still good.

[00:08:57] Apparently, when he was asked, what happens if you train your staff and they leave? He replied, what if you don't train them? And they stay now. Let me paint you a different picture of what it could be like. What does a salon with a real training culture look like? It's not just about hitting productivity benchmarks, so that happens as well.

[00:09:20] It's about great culture. It's about fun, it's about loyalty, it's about comradery. It's about passion for what they do. It's a sense of belonging, a growth path, a reason to stay. It's being part of something bigger than yourself. It is a salon where someone else is doing such a good job of running the business, but your stylists think, why would I leave?

[00:09:45] It's gotta be about more than them thinking they can earn more money going out on their own because they can earn just as much in a well run

salon with a great training and progression program, a place where they can focus on what they love doing, which is the craft and not all the other stuff of running a business.

[00:10:04] Doesn't mean that they'll stay forever. People will always leave. There's an inevitability about that, but

[00:10:10] That's what you create when you stop expecting people to arrive up and ready and start saying, this is what we do here. This is how we develop you. Because part of being a leader is in the training and development of those on your team. And if you are not taking that responsibility of leadership seriously and providing an organised training program to make them the well-rounded stylist that they're meant to be, then that's a problem.

[00:10:40] But what's important to remember is this,

[00:10:42] just because you opened a salon, it doesn't mean that it automatically makes you someone who is capable of developing a training program that creates genuine skills enhancement and growth opportunities for those on your team. And let's face it, if you own a salon, you can't do everything yourself.

[00:10:59] You're probably doing far too much already. So there are certain responsibilities that you need to outsource, and perhaps training is one of those things. The reality is that most salon owners aren't equipped to build comprehensive training programs on their own, and that's okay. Strong leaders know what they're good at and what they're not, and they know how to delegate or outsource.

[00:11:22] So what matters is that you recognize that training is a non-negotiable part of your leadership role. Whether you deliver it yourself or bring someone else in to do it. When you do invest in training, when you make it a priority, you will still get some people who say, well, I know all that stuff. I don't need to do it, but here's the thing.

[00:11:44] I know how to swim the English channel, but I also know that I'll drown before I get 200 meters offshore. Because there's a big difference between knowing how to do something and actually being able to do it. What determines whether you really

[00:12:01] know how to do something or not is the results that you get. And so in a hairdressing context, if they're pre-booking 80% plus of their clients, and if they have at least 50% new client retention and if they have 15% of revenue

coming from retail, and if they have a full column and operate at 80 to 90% capacity and have a high average bill, and if they have a steady flow of new request clients,

[00:12:25] If that's them, then they do know how to do it. Congratulations to them, because not only are they a great all round hairstylist, but they're probably earning great money as well, and so they should be. But the reality is that in most cases, stylists are underperforming in all of those areas. They have loads of reasons and excuses as to why they are, but the numbers don't lie.

[00:12:50] I constantly hear and see posts on social media about how hairdressers should be paid more, and they should be. But it's not just as simple as saying that they should be paid more. As I said earlier, they need to earn more and they earn more by being more productive, doing more clients and producing more revenue, and then as a result, they will get more for themselves.

[00:13:11] That leverage that you have as a leader when their productivity improves, their pay improves. When they get better at the business side of hairdressing, meaning the practical side of business skills for a stylist, so things like consultations, rebooking, retail recommendations, giving clients a great experience, client retention, then they generate more money, and the more money they generate, the more they get paid.

[00:13:37] And when you have the leadership and follow through from your management team as well, then that is another part of creating success because learning anything requires reflection and talking about how you need to adapt things to suit your culture and the metrics that are important to you and your business.

[00:13:57] So here's what real leadership looks like. You make training non-negotiable. You celebrate those people who engage with the training, you reward their results. But no matter what you do, unfortunately, there will be people on your team who will be resistant to change and determined to prove that it's a waste of time.

[00:14:17] They already know everything, and they'll blame their results on circumstances beyond their control, whether it's the economy or the government, or Amazon or just people today. If that person were on my team, then depending on what their results were, I might let them opt out of the training.

[00:14:35] But then every chance I get, I'd celebrate those who do the training. At every team meeting, I'd acknowledge them for their improvement and reward them accordingly for changes in their results. And who knows if there's someone who didn't do it and they see that other people are earning more money because they are getting better results, they might start asking you if they can do the training too.

[00:14:59] So here's what I want you to take away from this. The expectation that your team should arrive oven-ready is a fantasy. It's not their responsibility to show up fully formed. It's your responsibility as a leader to develop them into stylists that you need them to be. And if you are not equipped to do that yourself, and most salon owners aren't, then outsource it.

[00:15:20] Bring in a program, invest in their development. Make it non-negotiable because when you do that, you start to create a salon where people want to stay, where they feel like they belong, where they can build a career, not just fill a chair. And that's when you start leading like the owner that you are meant to be.

[00:15:40] Now, if you want to explore what structured training could look like for your team, there's a link in the show notes for our online super stylist program that I reference, and that's designed specifically to help salon owners develop their stylists and all the business skills that generate revenue. Not the technical creative, but the business side of being a stylist.

[00:16:00] So make sure that you check that out. So with that said, we need to start wrapping up this week's episode for further information. visit [grow my salon business.com](http://growmybusiness.com) to find out more about our free resources as well as our grow books, our online courses, and our coaching programs. And don't forget to check out the link in the show notes for our online Super Stylist program.

[00:16:22] So have a great week, and join me next Tuesday for another great episode of the Grow My Salon Business podcast. Bye for now.