

Ep #225: Defining Core Values



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Stacey Brown Randall

Roadmap to Grow Your Business with Stacey Brown Randall

Ep #225: Defining Core Values

Stacey Brown Randall: Sometimes you learn the best things when you listen to podcasts. But you know that, right? I mean, you're listening to this podcast right now. But sometimes you do learn the best things when you listen to podcast, as I do as well. And this episode, was inspired by an episode on a podcast that I listened to.

Hey there, and welcome to episode 225 of the Roadmap to Grow Your Business Podcast, a show about helping you build a referable business. I'm your host, Stacey Brown Randall.

Hey, if you're a member of my Growth by Referrals Online Program (current or previous), I want to make sure you're ready for 2023 with your referral plan built. Your referral plan to take care of your referral sources is key to continued referrals in 2023.

And yes, my friends, it's less than a hundred days to Christmas. You know we are starting to talk about next year in 2023.

So, in our time together, we're going to come up with your touch points, even the one that is an absolute must every year. Yes, and (here's the best part) we'll make sure you have the language created to go along with each touchpoint. Because you know, you've got to plant those referral seeds correctly.

So, I want you to join me for a day and a half in December, where we'll spend time on day one on all things referrals. We'll talk about referral sources, we'll talk about your referral plan, touchpoints, language, all the things you need to know to be ready to go for next year.

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And then on day two, we'll talk all things reverse goal-setting. Details have been emailed to you. So, check it out and plan to come join me.

And speaking of reverse goal-setting, if you're not a member of my Growth by Referrals Program, but you want to learn my reverse goal-setting process, and hang out with me in December, then join me for an epic day.

We will be getting ready for more than just 2023, hence the reversing part of my process so you can have the best year ever. Early bird pricing is available through October 15th. So, sign up now and reserve your seat. Just go to staceybrownrandall.com/goals.

Let's dive in.

My good friend, and a Growth by Referrals client, Julie Bee host a podcast called They Don't Teach This in Business School. And a while back, she did an episode on her core values. It struck a chord with me many, many, many moons ago.

I sat down and created my values for my business, and her episode had me go hunting for the document where of course, I had documented them.

And guess what? I couldn't find it, which I'm a pretty organized person, so, if you know me, you're like, "Oh boy." I'm a pretty organized person. So, I was, well, let's just say, I would say it was a little annoying, but it was probably slightly north of a little annoyed that I couldn't find it. But my gut tells me that document of my core values was lost when I upgraded last year to a new laptop.

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Not everything goes perfectly, does it, when technology is involved, even though it's supposed to make our life easier? Okay, I digress.

So, I decided there was no better time than the present to create a new list of core values. During this process, I did have a memory jolt to how one core value in particular was on the list the first time around, and continues to be on the list now.

But the truth is I built these core values actually when my first business was in place. And if you guys know my story, you know that I had a business, I had an HR consulting firm that I ran for just over four years before it would actually fail.

I would find myself back in a job, back in corporate America. And that really sucked. And after that I was like, "Okay, so when I get out of here, how am I going to be successful?"

And so, I had core values then that I kind of pulled forward when I started this company that I've had now going on almost a decade. But I'll be honest with you, I wrote them, I knew what they were at the time, but I never had them anywhere where they were like out. They didn't ever live as like the screensaver to my desktop, my laptop.

They weren't printed and put up in my office somewhere, because the truth is I've moved offices three times since all of that. So, I had an office, gave it up when we moved, and then had an office in an apartment when Covid was happening. And then we moved to our new house. And now, I have my own, as you guys know, the little log cabin office that the Referral Ninja Studio as my kids call it.

And so, I never had it reprinted and put up, it just wasn't something that was always up. And I'm not saying you have to, and I'm not saying I'm necessarily going to print out these new

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core values that I've created. But what I did notice as I was coming up with my new core values of kind of what I stand for and what my business stands for, what I did notice is that they've changed.

I don't know what is this, like 17 years since probably the first time I sat down to do ... maybe 15 years since I sat down to do them the first time — they've changed. Some stay the same.

So, it was kind of interesting when I was writing them down and I was kind of figuring out my process for how I wanted to come up with my core values.

And I think Julie, in her episode about core values on her podcast, They Don't Teach This in Business School, she actually gives a really good overview of the process she went through to create her core values.

For the sake of time, I'm not going to go through that process for me, but I think that it's important to have core values for your business, and I think it's important to revisit them because that was the one thing I realized.

I was like, "Oh, I'm sure I'll just be able to come up with the ones I had created before," because they meant so much to me then. And the truth was I didn't. I came up with some brand-new ones except for this one that kind of just stuck around and will probably always stick around. It's definitely a part of who I am. And so, I'll talk about that when I get to it.

So, I would recommend, if you don't have an updated version of your core values for you, and your business, I do think you should take some time to do this. It's maybe a great thing for you to tackle for fourth quarter, or maybe even if you have some time off over the holidays

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Though, I'm not really a big proponent for you doing extra work on your holidays, but sometimes it's the only time we can make time for things like this, that are so necessary, so important. But let's be honest, they do lack some sense of urgency.

So, making values align decisions, I think makes it easier to make hard decisions. And that's why I really think having a version of your core values or an updated version of your core values, if you haven't actually done them in a while — I think when you have them, it helps you make really hard decisions.

When you can look at a hard decision and you can say, “Is this decision that I'm going to make whichever way I decide, is this aligned with my values?” And if you have core values, makes it easier to do that.

So, I thought it would be helpful if I shared mine. Maybe this will jolt your thought process as listening to Julie's jolted mine. But maybe this will jolt your thought process on creating your own company core values. So, I have four, these are mine.

Number one, time is the gift, not the enemy. There are a few things sacred to me. Time with my family is at the top of the list. But if I'm being honest, it feels like there is never enough time for everything.

So, I work really hard to switch my thinking that time is the gift, not the enemy. Not something to feel like I'm constantly losing, or something that is fleeting and I constantly don't have enough of.

I think constantly thinking — okay, I just said constantly like 14 times I feel like in that one sentence. But I feel like when I'm always thinking there's never enough time, it makes time the enemy and the robbing of it right as the enemy and not the gift that it ultimately is.

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So, it does mean for me, if I look at time as a gift and not as an enemy, not as a thing that I'm losing, not as a thing that's been taken away from me, it does force me to get really clear and careful about how I spend my time.

So, I would say over the last number of years, I have made some very hard and uncomfortable decisions to protect my time. Not always hard and uncomfortable for me. Sometimes hard and uncomfortable for the person on the receiving end of not getting the answer from me that they wanted. But I will make those hard and uncomfortable decisions to protect my time.

Here's one thing that I've learned, is that I don't like looking at my calendar for the start of the day or worse, I sometimes think even the start of the week, and feel like my day or my week has run over me before it's even started.

When I look at a calendar that is jam-packed with meetings, calls, things that I have to do, and for me, it may look different. You may go to physical meetings on your day in and day out. I don't really go to physical meetings, but lower do I spend a lot of time staring at myself on Zoom.

And I think it's important for us to recognize that, because if I get up in the morning and I look at my day and I'm like, "Oh my gosh, will I survive this day?" Because there's a lot of stuff on that calendar, or I look at my week and I'm like, "Oh my gosh, I have to survive the week." I don't want to feel that way.

Yes, will I feel that way sometimes? Of course, now that McKenzie is full into the rehearsals for the middle school musical at her school and Jacob's baseball season, which baseball's not till the spring, but whatever, it's like September, October we're already playing. Like he's like full in four days, five days a week with baseball practice after school. It's a lot.

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So, some days my days just feel like I'm going to be run over once like three o'clock hits and I have to go do kid stuff. But the truth is I have recognized, as the owner of my business, and as in control of how I run my business, and it doesn't mean I get to do everything I want to do.

On some level I need to be making my business work and be successful and be helpful to the people that interest their time and capacity, money and resources to me to help. But I don't like looking at a calendar and feeling like, wow, the days run over me, and it hasn't even started, because I treasure a lot of blank space, like a lot.

I have had virtual assistants in the past who have managed my calendar and they're like, "You kind of make it really hard to schedule podcast interviews." And I'm like, "I know, I'm sorry" because I treasure a lot of blank space.

Which means when I'm deciding on a new offering for my business or maybe a promotion that I'm going to do, or even like I did last year, like actually changing the model for my business — so, not just the newer offering, but changing the model.

If you've listened to any podcast episodes from earlier this year, you know that I retired like four or five programs, and I shifted the model of how my business really operates.

Yes, I still have my signature online programs like Growth by Referrals and Referring Machines, and I still will go to conferences and speak and things like that, but my model really, now, centers around building a referable business, my group coaching experience.

And we're hitting our year anniversary, and it's been amazing with some amazing humans that have been in it, and are now

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renewing and continuing to stay in it. Which you know, that means that it's good when you have people who are like, "Yeah, no, I'm not leaving after my year is up." So, you know it's good then.

But when I'm deciding about offering something new or why would I retire something, like I did in the past with Goal Finishers Club, or launching something like Building a Referable Business, or just deciding if I'm going to take that coffee meeting and say yes to that coffee meeting or not — I remind myself that to feel like time is a gift and not the enemy, I need to make careful decisions on how I use my time.

But folks, I do want you guys to know that this core value of time is the gift and not the enemy has been a journey, and one I have not always excelled at. One that sometimes I'm like, "Oh, looking back, that's not awesome."

20-year-old me and heck, even 30-year-old me wasn't great at this. It's taken me to a place now where all of that that I've seen, it's allowed me to decide how I want to spend my time and ultimately, how I want to make money.

I think when you decide to start your own business, there's something you're good at doing, but how you offer it, like the services, the products, however you offer that is going to dictate on what your work world looks like.

Do you want to offer everything one-to-one or do you want to offer things one-to-many, or do you want to have a mix of that? And I have a mix of that because that's what lights me up. But that also is what protects my space and my time because I again, don't like waking up in the morning looking at my calendar and feeling like the day has already run over me.

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I will have days like that. I just don't want them to be the majority of my days. So, that's my core value number one; time is the gift not the enemy.

Here's another one, it doesn't really need as much of an explanation I think as the first one. I'll keep the rest of these a little on the shorter side, so I'm not having you guys listen forever.

Core value number two, excellence over perfection. Now, I am a recovering perfectionist. If I were to tell you how many times I used to ... well, okay, and sometimes still catch myself; rereading emails that I had written before I hit send, you would laugh.

You'd be like, "Are you seriously rereading that email for the fourth time before you hit send? Hit send." You may have a grammatical error, let it go. People will not think that you're an idiot.

But I struggled with professionalism. I don't really know where it started in my life. I don't really know kind of if it was something that I felt like intrinsically I brought on myself or extrinsically, if it's kind of applied to me, if there was like a mishmash of those things. The truth is though, I do know I am extrinsically motivated. Nothing lights me up more than someone to tell me like how much they appreciate me. It's true.

When my clients or my students in my programs or my clients or my members inside BRB, are like, "Oh my gosh, this is amazing. Thank you so much because you did this, this and this." I'm like basking in it. I'm like, "Oh my gosh, this lights me up. This is why I want to get up in the morning."

And so, I know that I'm extrinsically motivated. I know people are probably like, "Maybe you shouldn't share that Stacey,

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because it's better to be intrinsically motivated.” But you know what? That’s not how it's designed. It’s not how I was made.

It's something that I work on. Always driving to do and strive to do things for myself, but the truth is I love knowing that what I'm doing helps people. But sometimes in the mix of that, I can get stuck in a place of wanting to make sure that what I am doing is perfect.

And what I discovered long ago is that it is not about perfection, but it is about excellence. I want to be excellent for my clients. I want to produce excellent work. I want to give excellent advice.

That doesn't mean I'm always going to hit the nail on the head every single time. And sometimes I will put something out that personally, I think is above average, and my clients will be like, “That is excellent.” And I'm like, “Thank you, but ...”

But the goal is when I'm done with something, it's okay for it to be 80% and go. But if it does for my clients what it's supposed to do for them and it is excellent, then it doesn't have to be perfect. And for those of you sitting there thinking is there really a difference between excellence and perfectionism?

Yes, there is definitely a difference between being perfectionist and trying to always be excellent. And I think you have to determine what your definition of that is. I know that mine, they're not similar. My definition of being excellent does not look like being perfect, and not trying to be a perfectionist.

And that helps me make decisions when it's time to move forward and launch something that maybe isn't perfect, but is it excellent, and can you refine it over time and make it even more excellent? If the answer's yes, then we move.

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And I've noticed that even with building a referable business, the changes that we're making to it or have been making to it once we hit like the nine-month mark, or maybe it was more like the six month mark; but the changes we started making is always making it better.

And I'm always telling my BRB members (because I don't make changes that they don't know about) I'm like, "Okay, this is what I want to test." And I want to test it for three months and I think this will make it better. This will make it more excellent. And they are always game, which is awesome. And I get feedback on it, whether or not something is better or not.

Always improving I think is a really important core value to have. And for me, it's seeking excellence. It doesn't mean everything is excellent and it is definitely not perfect, but I am seeking it.

Core value number three; do what you love so it's easy to care. This one's so big for me. You want to know what the worst feeling as a business owner is? Is coming to terms with the fact that you never want to talk about your topic, your chosen area of expertise, again.

Now, let me say this real quick. This has never happened with referrals. I don't seem to tire of talking about referrals, which means because I found my jam, we don't always find our jam. I found my jam. But with my first business, that wasn't the case.

My first business, I was an HR consultant, and I was focused in employee engagement and generational diversity. And I remember clearly standing on a stage in South Dakota of all places, and between two big snowstorms praying that I would get out when I was supposed to. I did, thank goodness.

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But I remember standing on a stage in South Dakota and I remember thinking to myself, because remember I talked and taught on generational diversity. I remember standing on that stage in South Dakota and I remember thinking to myself, “I am so tired of talking about these millennials.”

So, no disrespect to any of you millennials that are listeners to this podcast, but I taught people how to consider the differences between the generations and why the generations are the way that they are, making overly gross generalizations about humans, and putting them into boxes for the sake of people to understand them.

And there was a lot of truth in it, but I just got to the point where like I'm tired of talking about this whole other generation. So, those of you thinking, “Wait, Stacey, aren't you a millennial?” Oh, bless you. Bless you so much for thinking that I'm a millennial. I'm not.

I am at the tail end of Gen X though, and I hang tight to my Gen X. I love my Gen Xers. So, I just got to a point where I was like, “I don't want to talk about this anymore. I don't want to tell another company how to engage with their employees when they won't make the changes they're supposed to make anyway.”

Now, that's not always true, but sometimes that's how I felt. Bringing broad into companies to help them with their employee engagement and generational diversity, and at the end of the day, the leaders really weren't going to change, but they wanted to make it look like they were. And I just tired of it. I tired of the topic, and I tired of kind of the business itself.

Now, did that lead to that business failure? No, but it certainly didn't help. There were some other key things that led to my business failure.

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But there was a moment when I was shutting it all down and I thought to myself, “I'm really thankful that I don't have to talk about generational diversity again. I don't want to stand on stage and talk about this again. I don't want to write another article about this again.”

And there are people who do it and they've done it their whole lives and they're amazing at it. It just wasn't for me. So, finding your jam, finding what you love so that you can continually care about it and continually want to get better at it, I am always checking out research that comes out about referrals and about even anything in this space of referrals and sales.

I'm constantly paying attention to what are people being taught and what are the tactics usually that I think are wrong, but anyways, story for another day. What is it about referrals that I can learn better? I'm always paying attention to the science behind it. I'm always doing my research.

I love having conversations with people about this, whether it's in the Starbucks line or it is somewhere else, and I love answering my clients' questions, helping them to understand how to apply something that I teach. There is nothing that lights me up more because I love it. And so, it makes it really easy to care.

And because I love it and I love the people who trust me to allow me to work with them to become my client who trust me — let's be honest, not only with their business processes and procedures around referrals, but they trust me with their money, I don't work for free

And they trust me, and I care about them and I care about what that means for them. And I want to give them everything I've got, which means on a daily basis, I actually have to do what I love.

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It's a good thing that I love what I do because it helps me care. It lights me up, I love it. And so, I think that's really important. It's got to be a core value. Do what you love because it's the only way you'll be able to care about not only your business, your topic and yourself, but the humans, the clients, the referral sources, the prospects, those who work with you, those who one day will work with you and those who send people to work with you. That is the easiest way to care about them, is because you're doing something that you ultimately love.

And my fourth core value – wow, this episode went a little bit longer than I had anticipated. I thought, oh this will be a short one. It's just four core values.

So, let's wrap this up with core value number four. And this is the one as you can imagine that stuck around from my first set of core values to this set of core values, of course, of what I can remember.

And my fourth core value is this; be a light. It's no secret that I'm a Christian, but I'm not called to preach at you, and I'm not here to make anyone feel like they are not welcomed in my world if they are not a believer — far, far from it. My job is to be a light by having all feel welcomed no matter your faith.

You're here not because you're actually going to get a Bible lesson because I'm not really qualified for that. But you're here because you want to know how to grow your business, and you want to do it from a referral perspective.

And if you feel the light of Jesus that shines through me, hopefully, most days — if you feel that, great, awesome, that's the real reason that I think I get to have a business at the end of the day.

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And but that's not ... I never want anyone to actually feel like you're not welcome to you or you can't learn from me if you're not. Like that's crazy, that's ludicrous. That's not my job. My job is to be a light.

My faith is important to me. I don't shy away from talking about it, I also don't lecture on it or preach at you because that's not my job either, but it is about who I am, and I want all that come here to feel welcomed, and I want all to come here to feel like they can learn.

I don't want anyone to come here and feel like they ever get preached at, which maybe you feel like that right this moment, but it's how I run my business. And when I make hard decisions, or when I make decisions to do things, and when I decide to sit down and like pray about the different things that I have going on in my life, sometimes business, most of the time not — I know that that's a sustaining part of my life. And I know that I am where I am because of my faith, and because of my relationship with God and me seeking Him and me seeking Jesus.

But that doesn't mean you have to. That's not what this is about. My job is to be a light, to shine a light and to let you know that when you come here you will be welcomed, and I will happily teach you.

I can't teach everybody because I don't work in all industries, you guys know this. I'm pretty clear about where my methodology works and where it doesn't work. So, I don't teach in all industries. That's not what I mean.

But I mean, whoever shows up, whatever their faith. At the end of the day, what I'm asking of you is that you care about the people who take care of your business and you want to run a good business. If you get that, you are welcomed here. But I am

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called to be a light. And that is one of the things that I will continue to do, and it is one of my core values.

I want everyone to feel welcomed. I want everyone to know that you can do this if you're willing to put in the work, and you have the right mentality around what it looks like to generate referrals naturally. You just got to learn what to do and then do it. That's my job. That's what I'm here for, and in the process, I hope that I am a light.

So, those are my four core values. They are again, time is the gift, not the enemy; excellence over perfection; do what you love so it's easy to care; be a light.

If you want to check these out again, you can definitely check them out on our show notes page for this episode, which is staceybrownrandall.com/225. That's right, episode 225. It's kind of crazy, like crazy that we're at episode 225.

But that is the show notes page. You can also on the show notes page, staceybrownrandall.com/225 — you can also find the link to join me for my reverse goal-setting process that we are hosting at the Refocus Retreat.

Now, just as a reminder, the Refocus Retreat, if you are not a member of my Growth by Referrals Program, and of course my BRB members are attending both days for free because it's a bonus for those that joined.

But for those that are a member of my Growth by Referrals Program, you can actually come for our full reverse goal-setting day, but also tack on a half a day and we'll get you completely ready with your referral plan.

So, if you're a member of the Growth by Referrals Program, and you want to work with me live and in person on your 2023

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referral plan, go check your inbox for details on the Refocus Retreat. You get like a two for one special.

The retreat for you guys is part all things referrals and part reverse goal-setting. But if you're not a member of Growth by Referrals or BRB, but you still want to come hang with me in December in Charlotte, and you want to learn my reverse goal-setting process (because I would love to hang with you), then I want you to join me.

Early bird pricing is available now through October 15th. So, sign up and reserve your seat. And just an FYI, this is not my Refocus Retreat with that day where I'm teaching the reverse goal-setting process. This is not like a ballroom full of people type of an event. This is a smaller event, 20, 30 people. We're keeping it small, we're keeping it intimate. So, you do want to go ahead and reserve your seat.

And if you are traveling into Charlotte for this, maybe extend your stay. Like come in and check out Charlotte Saturday and Sunday, if you've never been here. Come in on Sunday and have Sunday to check out Charlotte, and then join us on that Monday for the Refocus retreat.

Maybe tack on a day after two. Charlotte's a really cool city, we're going to be in the historic South End District, which is like a stone's throw outside of our uptown area. And it's just an incredible area.

It's blossom and it's growing, it's awesome. We're going to have so much fun standing there, and I'll take care of you the whole time you're there with me. Like from the minute you arrive with breakfast and snacks and lunches and we're even ending the day with a champagne toast to say great job for 2022, and here we go, 2023.

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So, I would love to have you join me. You just need to go to staceybrownrandall.com/goals, and sign up. It'll be the best and expensive ticket you buy all year long, I promise.

So, before I sign off, if you haven't left a rating or review of this podcast, would you please take a moment to leave one? This show reaches more business owners just like you through the number of ratings and written reviews we have.

Of course, I prefer five-star ratings and five star written reviews, but write what you believe. Thanks so much.

Next week is episode 226, and let me just tell you right now, hang on for next week's episode. Yes, it is on referrals, but hang on because my sarcasm is in rare form.

Until then, take control and grow your business. Bye for now.

Thanks for listening to the Roadmap to Grow Your Business podcast. To access all resources and links mentioned in today's show, and to connect with Stacey, head over to www.staceybrownrandall.com.