

Ep #237: My Top Business Lessons from This Year



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Stacey Brown Randall

***Roadmap to Grow Your Business* with Stacey Brown Randall**

Ep #237: My Top Business Lessons from This Year

Stacey Brown Randall: We made it; final episode of the year, final week of the year, and it's time for me to share my three top business lessons I learned this year. Well, three is my lucky number after all. So, three business lessons seems very fitting.

Hey there, and welcome to episode 237 of The Roadmap to Grow Your Business Podcast, a show about helping you build a referable business. I'm your host, Stacey Brown Randall.

Now, don't forget, before I dive into my top business lessons, just a reminder, this podcast name is changing next week with episode 238. I don't want you to come looking for next week's episode and be caught off guard or surprised that the name has changed.

Remember the objective, the purpose, the content, 100% staying the same. We're just giving it a better name. It's probably four years in the making. Maybe I waited a little long, but we're doing it. We're changing the name.

And if you want to guess what our new name is, please hit me with your best shot. What's your guess? Put it in the Referrals Without Asking Facebook group on the "guess the name post," just leave me a comment. I can't wait to see what you guys are guessing.

But remember, when you tune in next week, first week of the new year, this podcast will have a new name, but we'll still be delivering the same great content we aim to put out every single week.

Okay, let's talk about the year. I'm not going to do a year in review, but I am going to share my three top business lessons from this year.

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It's been a year, hasn't it? I mean, maybe we say that at the end of every year, and I think 2020 was probably a year we said it in a very different way. But I do believe we get to the end of the year. It is important to pay attention to the things that we learned and take those lessons and pull them with us into the new year.

So, here are the three things, the three lessons that I learned, and not always in the fun way. But here are the three lessons that I learned that are going to definitely carry me forward into next year.

So, here we go. Business lesson from this year, number one; the things I do consistently I have help with.

Now, that may sound like duh, Stacey, but it really was like major recognition, or maybe it was reckoning that I had earlier this year when I was talking about the things that I'm consistent with in my business. And comparing that to the things that I'm not so consistent with in my business.

And I was looking at the list and I was like, "Oh, for the love of pizza, the things I'm consistent with I typically have help with. And the things I'm not consistent with, I'm typically doing them all by myself." So, let me give you some examples.

One thing I do consistently is produce a weekly episode for this podcast, and I've done it for over four years. That's right, I actually hit my four-year anniversary earlier this year.

And as I started reflecting on my ability to drop a new episode every single week on Tuesdays at 6:30 AM Eastern time, but to drop a new episode every single week for 52 weeks for over four years – that is some consistency my friend. Like that's impressive consistency in my book. But the truth is, over the years, I have always had help with this podcast.

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Now, I do come up with what I'm going to talk about. I plan out an editorial calendar for the year. That doesn't mean like on January 1st, I know everything I'm going to talk about for 52 weeks, but I have a good idea. I've got topic ideas that are brewing. Of course, I leave lots of room for things to change because sometimes things change.

And so, from that perspective, I am definitely doing a lot of the work when it comes to the podcast. But that's really just I'm creating the content.

After I sit down and I have my outline of a script and like I have right now for today, and I'm talking to you guys about it, I'm recording; then I make sure I have all the things that I need, like notes for my podcast editor and all the things they need, images and stuff in this file and I upload it.

And then I don't touch it again until poof, magically, Tuesday morning, 6:30 AM eastern time, it is live for your listening pleasure. Somebody else or a company is handling all of that.

And so, to speak, with the social media. I don't know if you guys have noticed, but my social media game has definitely been upped. We've been testing a lot of things and I still don't know how I feel about all of it to be fair. But I did hire somebody to help me with my social media posting, which guess what, I've been much more consistent with it.

This podcast, I have somebody that helps me with the editing and the publishing of it and making sure it goes live. Promoting this podcast, I've got somebody helping me with that from a social media perspective in addition to other social media stuff.

But when I started paying attention and making a list, basically, the list started with things I was proud of that I had accomplished this year, and the podcast always makes the list

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because it is an undertaking in and of itself. And I was really proud of it.

And then I was like, “Oh, yeah, that I have help with.” And then I looked at social media and I was like, “Yep, I have help with that.” And let's be honest, I don't touch my QuickBooks or do my taxes at all any of the years. I sign forms. Like okay, that's how much I owe, or whatever it is. I have help with all those things, and those are the things I do consistently.

And then I looked at the things that I was like, okay, what do I need to do better next year? And I was like, “Ooh, a lot of those things are on me. They are on me.”

And so, when I paid attention to what it looks like to be consistent with, and the things I have help with — it doesn't mean I need help with everything, but it means I need to start thinking about how I'm going to do things differently that I'm not outsourcing, that I don't have help with.

And how am I going to make those things more consistent if I'm not at a place or unwilling at this time to bring in help with those things? And it was a moment, I'll tell you when I had a little reckoning with myself, like, okay, we need to take note of this. It's important for us to recognize.

Now, if you were wondering, consistency is not going to be my intention word for 2023, though actually, it probably wouldn't hurt. Maybe I should have like a sub-word. That's not the point of intention words to have a sub-word ... a sub-word. Sorry, it took me a minute to spit that out.

But I do think it's something for me to recognize as I move forward with my business about my ability to be consistent on the things that I have help with, and leaning into that when I need it.

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And then also, being a big girl and holding myself accountable when I need to with the things that maybe I need to be more consistent with, but I'm not actually at the place where I am having help with those things.

So, for you, using this as a business lesson that you can apply for your business, just paying attention to the things that you are doing well and the things that you want to improve — paying attention to just the pattern behind what went well this year; what am I proud of versus what am I not proud of or what didn't go well ...

The exercise in of itself is a great exercise, but for me, it was paying attention to what they had in common. All the things I'm doing well, behind it, there's someone or a company or something helping me. And the things that I'm not doing as well as I should, usually, it's the things, I'm relying on myself to do.

And maybe you have a large company, maybe you have a team of 20, maybe you have a team of 10. And so, there's a lot of people doing a lot of things in your business and not as much as actually reliant on you in terms of like daily tasks and daily duties.

That's great. There's probably other things that you're going to make a list of, of the things that went well and didn't go well and the things that you maybe need to hold yourself accountable to.

But for those of us who are solopreneurs or we have very tiny teams like ourselves and maybe a half a person or a full person or an army of outsourced folks to help us, but it's just me, myself and I as a solopreneur — depending on the size of your business, the reality of this is sometimes if you're doing it all, we have to pay attention to where we probably need help.

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And it was a really big aha moment for me to just write down the things that went well and then recognize the pattern behind them with, wow, those are all of the things that I have help with, and the things that not so going well are the things that I'm usually relying on myself for.

What I will tell you though, is when I wrote down some of the things that were going well, and I said like my group coaching program, Building a Referral Business, when I looked at that, I was like, well, actually, that is all me with my clients, but they're there too. Like I'm not having their success. I'm helping them with their success, but I'm not having their success.

And so, it was really interesting just paying attention to the things working and the things not working in my business, and then paying attention to, okay, what does that mean for me as the business owner so that I can make things better next year? The things that need to be made better. I'm not expecting perfection out of myself. I gave that up a long time ago.

So, that's my first business lesson for you. Use it how it may apply for you. Hopefully, if it does, that's amazing. But paying attention to what went well, what didn't go well, what are the patterns, the commonalities among those two columns, and paying attention to what that means for you. And if it means consistency as it did for me, notice when you're consistent and when you're not.

For me, it's when things that I have help so I need to pay attention to, I'll be leaning in to times that I may need help if something I say is important to be done consistently. Because sometimes when we rely on just me, maybe not as much, okay?

Hey, pardon the interruption. Are you a longtime listener of this podcast? If yes, that matters to me, and I want you to know it.

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I might not know every person who listens to this podcast, but I feel it. So, just for you, my loyal podcast listeners who listen the week a new episode drops, I want to offer you a \$200 discount on either of my online programs; Growth By Referrals or Referring Machines.

Yes, this is just for you as a podcast listener. You will not find this anywhere else for podcast listeners. You're not going to see it on social media, you're not going to see me send an email about it. It is just for people who are listening to this podcast episode in the week that it drops, which means there's a deadline.

And that means by January 1st, this \$200 offer will disappear. You have to be listening to this podcast because you need this discount code.

So, when you go to Growth By Referrals or Referring Machines, you get there from staceybrownrandall.com, click on the programs tab, then just select Growth By Referrals or Referring Machines.

Make sure you take a minute to read which one is right for you because they are different programs. When you click through to the "I'm in" button that takes you to the checkout page for either of those two programs, there is a place for you to enter a discount code that'll take \$200 off the total. And that \$200 off discount code is 2022podcast. It is case sensitive. All letters are lowercase, and it is one word, 2-0-2-2-p-o-d-c-a-s-t.

I do ask that you don't share it to any non-listeners of the podcast, but you could certainly say, "Hey, by the way, go listen to this episode, there's a discount code, you get \$200 off" And then they can hear for themselves.

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Again, go to staceybrownrandall.com, click on the programs tab, select either Growth By Referrals or Referring Machines. And when you go to the checkout page, you're going to put in this code "2022podcast," all lowercase, and it is case sensitive. And you have until now, until January 1st. After January 1st, it'll no longer be available.

Okay, now back to our top business lessons learned from this year.

Alright, so we talked about number one, let's talk about number two.

My other top business lesson that I learned this year was joining a mastermind, because in that mastermind, I learned so many things. And I'm going to be honest with you, I learned things I didn't want to learn, but I needed to learn. Isn't that always the case?

I think surrounding yourself with a like-minded group of entrepreneurs and business owners when you are on this business owner journey is really, really important. Our mastermind leader, he feels like he runs emotional support groups for entrepreneurs. It's absolutely right, that's totally what it is.

It's not like he gets on a mastermind every single week and he's teaching us something about his area of expertise — that's not the job of a mastermind leader. They bring these entrepreneurs together, these business owners together, and he does lead like directed conversation.

He does ask questions that we then share that pulls information out of us. But we also get to do hot seats where we get to bring a burning question or a problem that we're dealing with, and we get to present it out to the audience.

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We get to present it out to the mastermind group members. And there's different versions of hot seats that he does, but he also asks questions that allow us to share about things in our business and where we learn about each other.

And what's really cool is he actually brought us all together. He runs five groups. So, he brought all groups, and I think each group has somewhere between 10 and 12 people. But he brought all groups together to meet up in Nashville earlier this year in the middle of our mastermind, like five months with him.

He runs his masterminds on a five-month cycle. And it was really amazing because then I got to meet these mastermind people that I have just come to love and adore in person, which makes me love and adore them in even more. But I also got to meet other mastermind group members from other groups that I'm not in. And the community behind that is priceless.

So, if you have the opportunity to join a mastermind, I want you to seriously consider it. And here's the thing, I'm not talking about a mastermind that's going to cost you \$10,000 or \$15,000. I know those exist out there. There's some that actually exist more, and they probably have great value.

But this mastermind and the way that it's structured, they're small, they're intimate, we go deep, we get to know each other. And of course, we get out of it what we put into it. So, showing up to our twice a month session was really, really important.

It was funny as I was watching this mastermind unfold and the friendships that are made, and just like loving this group of humans that are in my mastermind group, I started thinking to myself, oh my gosh, I would not mind replicating this in my own business. I'm just running mastermind groups, or emotional support groups for solopreneurs, because we are just in a different land sometimes, I think.

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And growing is great. If you want to have a big business and you don't want to be a solopreneur, that's great. But when you're in that solopreneur stage, whether you choose to stay there or you're just there for right now, it can be a little lonely.

So, I don't know, that's like noodling in my head. It is not on the docket anytime soon. But I was like it is so powerful that joining that mastermind group helped me so much in terms of my growth, and the things that it exposed me to, and the hard questions it forced me to ask myself.

And I grew a lot, and it's why it's one of my top business lessons this year, is all the growth that I went through as a human, whether I wanted to or not, kicking and screaming, yes. But joining that mastermind was a game changer this year for my business.

It also got me thinking of my business in a way that I was very closed off to in the past. And that's going to be really cool as I watch those things unfold in 2023 and 2024, God willing.

Okay, lesson number three. So, for my third business lesson that I want to share with you guys, let me just go ahead and say this right now; I am going to go faith-based.

So, you guys know I am a Christian, my faith is important to me. I want all who come and listen to this podcast, whether you are a Christian or not, I want you to feel like you get out of this podcast what you need. We stick mostly to business topics, not faith topics, obviously. And of course, we never talk politics.

But I just wanted to take a minute because this is a really important lesson for me that I have recently learned this year and it's been very poignant for me. But I also want to respect the fact some of our listeners they're like, "Yeah Stacey, I don't need to listen to this" part. I just want to give you that heads up

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before you listen to me talk about my third business lesson of the year that it is a faith-based one.

So, again, I want all to feel welcomed to listen and to gather information and to have this podcast help them. So, whether you are sharing my faith or not, it's totally fine. Hopefully, you'll listen to this and maybe it'll help you a little bit.

So, here's my third business lesson learned from this year. I recently heard somebody say, and I thought, "Oh sweet, it was like she was saying that specifically for me. It was like, God needed me to hear that.

But it has become my other favorite business lesson for this year. And this is not mine. Again, I heard someone say this. She said, "God's favorite way to grow your business is by growing you." God's favorite way to grow our businesses is by growing us.

And I think about the changes my business has gone through, particularly in 2020 and 2021, and throughout this year in 2022. And I don't even mean pandemic-related, not that the pandemic didn't have an effect on my business as it had had an effect on everybody's business; but I just mean the personal journey that I've been on.

And really, when I look at 2021 and 2022 of making a massive shift of how I serve my clients, I never ... okay, "never" is a strong word, but I didn't really ever consider offering a group coaching program.

And then when I finally started thinking about it, and I talked to a few folks who had done it, and they were talking about how you create the one that works best for you, which is where are your clients getting their best results? And then how do you mimic that. And for me, it's when they have access to me.

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So, of course, it made sense then to do a group coaching program and offer something other than just online courses and then a much more expensive like VIP option — like offering something in the middle of the road that gives both. And I was like, duh. But group coaching to me had not been something that I had considered.

But my ability to see that and to embrace that, and then to have such success with it and have over 20 people in our first year in Building a Referable Business, like it has been awesome to watch those people show up and do the work. I mean, not everybody is showing up and doing the work. No judgment, not calling anybody else out.

But the idea of like getting to know those business owners and watching them do the work and having me available for them to ask questions and to help them move forward, I mean, all that has been amazing.

But I guess I would say I was more like, I don't know, I wouldn't say turned off by the group coaching model because I didn't have an opinion, it just wasn't in my like purview that I actually consider like, “Oh yeah, I'm going to do group coaching.”

And then to watch myself go on this journey of making the decision of like fighting it, fighting it, fighting it, okay, maybe I'll do it. And then we being like, “Great, I'll launch it in 2022.” And having a business buddy be like, “No, you're launching it in 2021.” And I was like, “Okay.” And then I did it, and then I've helped so many more people this way. It's been amazing and I've loved it.

And so, I think from that perspective, I've really grown as a business owner, and I think it's helped my business grow. And I believe that that is God's way of doing it. He's growing me to grow my business.

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And sometimes, we get stuck in a place of like if it's got to be, it's up to me. Like if it's got to happen, I got to make it happen. And we kind of get in that pattern without realizing that actually, no, somebody else is in charge. At least in my business somebody else needs to be in charge, and that's really important.

And so, I watched the growth that I've gone through with like creating this space within Building a Referable Business, the group coaching model, and then joining the mastermind group this year, of which I have been told, and I just mentioned this in lesson number two, and we're all blending these two together.

But people asked me for years, "Join my mastermind, join my mastermind." And I always said, no, no, no. But I was like open to the idea, like went on my first like business owner retreat, which was cool. And then I decided to join this mastermind and that was really cool.

And I'm just watching myself evolve, I'm just watching myself grow. And it's not all because Stacey's like, yeah, this is what I got to do, I'm here to grow, I'm here to evolve. I mean, some of the stuff I go kicking and screaming about, and then I look back at how awesome it is and I'm like, "Why was I fighting this?"

And there may be that moment for you in your business, I don't know what it is. I have a lot more to learn. Let's be honest, I'm pretty sure God's not like done growing me and I'm really, hopefully, He's not done growing my business. But it's just fascinating to see the things that I've been open to and that I have considered.

And sometimes as business owners, we get to make really scary decisions and they're not fun. I mean sometimes they're fun, but a lot of times they're like terrifying and fun all at the

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same time. And we do that a lot and it's one of those things we have to do. And I think it's important for us to acknowledge that.

And so, for me, the third lesson that I learned this year, and that is definitely one I will continue to take forward is God's favorite way to grow my business is by growing me, and grow me He has. So, thank you Lord.

Alright, so let me just give you a recap of these three business lessons learned for me this year. They were personal. They weren't about, "Here's the latest and greatest thing I learned about how to grow your business." I'm not giving that answer anyways I talk about it every week, it's called referrals, but I digress.

But these were things that mattered to me and they made a huge impact on how I think about my business, how I serve my clients, and how I show up for my business, and who I'm showing up for, and what I'm ultimately trying to do.

And these are the things that, whereas some of these things I may have known, I had to see them in black and white this year to be like, "Oh my gosh, that's what I attribute this success or this growth or these moments too."

Number one, recognizing the patterns behind what's working and not working. And for me, noticing that the things I do consistently in my business are things I have help with.

Number two; joining a mastermind group or an emotional support group for entrepreneurs, however you want to call it. But joining a group of like-minded entrepreneurs that are focused on their personal development and their business development as well, and developing themselves as professionals.

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And then of course, lesson number three, God's favorite way to grow my business is by growing me. Whether I am up for the ride or go kicking and screaming, the growth will come, but it's good because then it helps me grow my business and that helps me help more people, and that is my ultimate goal.

And some people will tell you they go into business because they want to help people. I think actually pretty much everybody says that. But for me — and it's all personal to us in very different ways. For me, having survived a business failure and then starting a second business, I want to help you grow your business in my own special way, which is through generating referrals naturally.

I want to do that because I want to help you avoid the business failure club because I've been there. It's terrible, and you do not need to be a member of that club to like learn some great lessons to have a great successful business. You can have it without ever experiencing failure. And that's why I do what I do.

So, these lessons were important to me. Some of these lessons I feel like I need to get hit over the head with again. They're a lot more, I'm going to be honest. But in interest of time and keeping this episode, not like three hours long talking about all the things I learned this year, there are the three.

Of course, we'll link to everything in the show notes for this episode. That's staceybrownrandall.com/237.

And coming up next week, oh my gosh, it's going to be the beginning of 2023, and we're going to kick off 2023 in style with episode 238.

So, I will see you on the flip side, my friends. Until then, you know what to do, take control, and grow your business. Bye for now.

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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.