

**Ep #268: Side Effects of Inconsistent Referrals**



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Stacey Brown Randall**

***Roadmap to Referrals* with Stacey Brown Randall**

## **Ep #268: Side Effects of Inconsistent Referrals**

Stacey Brown Randall: Have you ever thought about the side effects on your business that's created by inconsistent referrals? Let's dive into some side effects today and the main driver behind them.

Hey there, and welcome to episode 268 of the Roadmap to Referrals podcast, a show about helping you build a referable business. I'm your host, Stacey Brown Randall. My journey from a business failure to a successful business now 10 years in. I know generating referrals naturally and consistently has made all the difference.

Working with clients around the world, we leverage the science of referrals, protect relationships above all else, and help you build a referable business.

In this episode, I want to talk about the side effects your business may experience if your referrals are inconsistent.

Okay, let me just start by saying something I say pretty often. So, for my long-time listeners, hang with me. Here's something I need you to understand about referrals before we dive into a conversation about whether or not they're consistent and inconsistent and why that happens and side effects, and what's the driver behind them.

And that is this, I believe, and you should believe that if you do great work, you do deserve referrals, but you are never owed them. So, while you may deserve referrals, you aren't owed them, which means you're going to have to be willing to do some work to actually receive them.

But what that work is matters, because there are so many different ways that you can go about trying to generate referrals, and you can do it in some icky, terrible ways like asking for them or trying to pay for them. Or you can learn how to generate them naturally without manipulating, without incentivizing, without even asking, and definitely without wasting a ton of time.

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But hear me say this, there's still work involved. If you want something, typically you're going to have to work for it. So, this is no different.

So, I want to dive into a couple of side effects of what it looks like inside businesses that I see that have inconsistent referrals. And I'm going to be talking about mine as well, don't worry.

But I want us to look at the side effects of what it means inside your business when you have inconsistent referrals. But I actually want to start with the end in mind and talk about the ultimate driver behind those side effects.

So, what is the ultimate driver when somebody has inconsistent referrals in their business? You may've guessed it, maybe not, but here's the ultimate driver, fear. As a business owner, you are absolutely 1000% going to experience fear. Sometimes a lot of it, sometimes maybe not as much of it, but you are going to experience fear from time to time.

There's just things you're not going to know you have to deal with until you have to deal with them the first time. We all know that.

And then it doesn't matter if you've been in business 1 day or 10 days, there's always going to be something new you're learning about growing and managing and running your business. And as your business grows, your fears will shift, and they will change. But yet there will still be fear.

So, this is not like, oh, if you have fear there's something wrong with your business. No, that's actually quite normal. So, some of this is normal, the fear that you have because you may be experiencing a situation for the first time or found yourself in a situation where you're not quite sure what to do.

But when I talk about inconsistent referrals, what I'm really talking about within a business is inconsistent client generation. And when that happens, well, fear always takes hold. Because if you don't have enough clients coming in the door, all kinds of fear can take root. You can shut down; you

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can make drastic decisions that are not really right for your business and will waste a ton of money you probably don't have.

And more than likely, you'll probably take your eye off the ball of building long-term sustainable processes in your business and try to go for that quick hit. So, as we talk about the things I see people do in their business, which could be changed if they actually had consistent referrals coming in, just remember a lot of this is driven by fear.

It's the fear of something not working and trying to figure something else out. Now, here's the thing. You may be growing your business without referrals at all, and it may be growing perfectly fine because you have got some other strategy locked and loaded, some other business development or sales strategy locked and loaded in your business. That is awesome. That is not most people.

And if you're listening to this podcast, you're here because you want one of the strategies of how you grow your business to be referrals.

Now, I have said before, and I will always say, you should never only have one way to bring in clients. You should always have diversification in that. Do you need 15 different ways that you're paying to bring in clients or you're focused on to bring in clients? No, but it's usually smart to have more than just one or two.

For my purposes, when I talk about inconsistent referrals and the side effects that has in your business, I'm talking about the idea that referrals isn't the biggest piece of your pie or a large piece of your pie in terms of how you bring in clients.

So, when we make decisions from a place of fear, what we're talking about overall is those inconsistent referrals, really is that inconsistent client generation. And when we don't have clients coming in, which means we don't have cash coming in the door, it can strike fear and we can make some crazy decisions that we think will work. But we know usually in the back of our minds and deep down in our guts, they probably won't.

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So, what's one side effect that I see with people who are truly having inconsistent referrals in their business? Side effect, number one: spraying and praying. Now, I'm all for praying and do regularly for my family, my business, and even my clients. But when I say spray and pray in this context, it's not a good thing.

When we have inconsistent referrals, we will jump into decisions. And one that I see business owners make is where they spend their time and money to make something happen. So, they'll get really busy in a short amount of time, and they will do everything they can think of to try to bring in clients.

I get it. We've all been there. Whether you're starting your business, you experienced COVID during your business, you're going through this economic recession or downturn or whatever they're calling it right now, or it's just something going on in your industry. The reality of it is you will see ebbs and flows to your business and to how clients come in the door.

But when clients aren't walking in the door, and in this case when they're not walking in the door through referrals, typically there's a fear that sets in. And that means we're going to start doing things that may or may not actually work for us.

I'll see people join a ton of networking groups like right away, and they'll start networking and calling everybody they know. They'll start going out there and begging for business. They'll start asking for referrals even if they don't want to, because there's nothing consistent about how clients are coming in the door.

Slowdowns are normal, they just are. Not every business experiences them, but I think those businesses are lying. There are always slowdowns. Their slowdown may not be defined in the same definition as your slowdown, but we all have ebbs and flows to our business.

But what I see when there is fear driving a business owner to make decisions because there aren't enough clients walking through the door,

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which could be solved if we had a referral strategy in place bringing you referrals on a consistent and ongoing basis.

I see a whole bunch of spraying and praying, a whole bunch of decisions being made of where to go, what to do, where to spend money, what new tactic, what new strategy, what's the bright shiny object? Am I now going to get on TikTok and do that dancing? Please say no. Or maybe you say yes, and it works great for you.

But we see a lot of people trying a lot of things. It's like throwing everything and the kitchen sink and anything you can think of to get business going again. Again, ebbs and flows, highs and lows, good months, and not so great months are always going to happen in business.

But what usually precedes that is how well or how not well you are managing your business development or your sales efforts. And that comes down to also how well you're managing your referral generation.

So, it's important to recognize that one major side effect when you don't have consistent client generation, you don't have consistent clients coming in the door giving you money which means cash flow for your business.

That means you probably also don't have consistent referrals. And one side effect we see from that is a whole bunch of spraying and praying when it comes to what you can do to try to change the situation.

Hey, pardon the interruption. Did you join us for our summer school? In July, I taught three classes on what you need to know about referrals. If you missed them, you can still dive into the classes where I unpacked the definitions you need to know, but folks often confuse.

The science of referrals, the ecosystem of referrals within your business. And I guide you through an activity to uncover your referral gaps plus your low hanging fruit and show you how to create a game plan to move forward with for the back half of 2023.

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Go to [staceybrownrandall.com/summerschool](https://staceybrownrandall.com/summerschool) to put your name on the wait list to access these classes. As soon as we finish breaking the classes down into bite-sized learnings, think mini-lessons, you'll be able to access them. The wait list link again is [staceybrownrandall.com/summerschool](https://staceybrownrandall.com/summerschool). Now back to the episode.

Okay, so let's talk about the second side effect that I see people do. And this is very nicely tied to side effect number one of the spray and pray. And that side effect number two is they fall victim to tactics that aren't right.

I saw someone that I follow on LinkedIn post. It was like a funny post where he had all these screenshots of people who were targeting financial advisors and they were targeting financial advisors with their marketing, which is our call centers will set appointments for you or you don't pay.

And his joke was about how they all are trying to be different, but yet they use ... all these little snippets of these ads that he had in this picture, showed them all using the same language.

They think they're different when they're trying to approach you with this latest and greatest strategy. They think they're different, but actually in effect, they're all doing the same thing and saying the same thing and they all look the same too.

It was a really funny post. But it got me thinking about all the different things that are out there where you can spend your money to grow your business. You cannot turn on a social media feed or read an article or in some cases open your email inbox in the mornings and not be pitched. I know. I get pitched all day long and I have a business, so I'm pitching as well, I get it.

But the truth is, when we have those inconsistent referrals and that inconsistent business or inconsistent prospects and potential clients coming into our business, we do start looking for what else should I be doing? Or maybe I'm not doing what I need to do, because you don't have

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to be in business for more than five minutes before you're going to be pitched 1000 million different ways on how to generate clients.

But here's what you need to understand. You need to find the ways that'll work for you, and that is most important. There's two key parts to that statement. What will work as in it will produce the results you want and what will work for you.

There are some people who have the most brilliant digital minds I've ever met, and their ability to run an SEO or cost per click campaign on Google ads or YouTube is a thing of beauty. And they have honed a science of how they can generate clients for you through that. And if that's your cup of tea, I think that's something you should investigate.

But if that strategy involves you understanding digital marketing and producing videos and copywriting and script writing and stuff so that they can actually run ads for you and you don't know a thing about it, you may be falling victim to tactics that just aren't right to you.

Now, I'm all for you pushing yourself out of your comfort zone to learn how to do some things you probably need to know how to do, but don't fall victim to the bright shiny object or the great big claim someone is making if they can't back it up and it doesn't feel right for you. Think about that.

There's lots of ways to bring in business, but if you only needed three, maybe four or five ways to bring in business, what's going to work for you and what's going to be right for you? And only you can decide that.

And here's the thing, I'm not saying do the stuff that feels good and don't worry about the results. You better worry about the results. They better produce outcomes.

My clients inside my coaching program, they know we are tracking what's happening in their business and how many referrals they're receiving and what and who they're closing every single quarter.

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They know it. Come April, come July, they know that's what I'm talking about. Hey, how'd the last quarter go? Let's look at this. We're tracking this stuff. We understand this stuff. Because it not only needs to work it, but it also needs to work for you.

I have people that I've had conversations with and they're like, "I'm thinking about joining your program to learn referrals or spend \$2,000 a month in this marketing thing someone can do for me." And my response is always, "Well, which one's right for you and which one will work? And if it's not working for you, you can always make a different decision later."

But we're going to get pitched. Don't let yourself fall victim because of the fear to pick up tactics that aren't right for you. Most of the time when we do that, we end up spending money we don't have and waste it because it doesn't give us our results.

Alright, our third side effect of inconsistent referrals. Well, then you are setting yourself up to experience collateral damage from the old school ways to generate referrals. You've heard me probably talk about these old school ways to generate referrals. I call them old school because they're the ways that have been taught for decades and decades and decades.

And most of us, they don't work for because they don't feel right. They damage relationships and they ultimately don't work in the short-term and definitely in the long-term. Now, there will always be people out there that will tell you that you should just ask for what you want or ask for referrals.

But if you understand the science behind it, you understand that the more you ask that becomes the trigger and the more damaging it becomes to actually those relationships. So, you can generate referrals in a different way.

But I see people who want referrals, and they have inconsistent referrals now, which means they also have inconsistent clients coming into their business. That inconsistent prospect to cash, prospect to paying client. So, you've got this inconsistency happening, there's also inconsistent referrals.

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And they'll have conversations about, well, I really just need to go ask. I just need the short-term fix. I need to go do what I need to do. Send out that blast email to everybody I know that I'm open for referrals or ask everyone I see over the next 30 days to give me referrals.

And you're going to experience some collateral damage from jumping in, in that way because you're going to damage your relationships and it's not actually probably going to work.

And usually when people say, "I did ask a bunch of people and I did get some referrals." My next question is always "Awesome. How many did you close?" And their response is usually, "Well, none of them are actually real client potential." And I'm like, "I know." Because that's what happens when you ask for referrals.

People just give you what you want in some ways to make you go away. But that doesn't mean it's actually quality. That doesn't mean you won't get a quality one from here or there, but I want more than that for you.

So, when you have inconsistent referrals, not only will you spend a lot of time and waste a lot of time spraying and praying and fall victim to tactics that aren't right for you. You'll also, in some cases I see people revert back to those old school ways to generate referrals that will have collateral damage for them. They will experience the collateral damage of that. Maybe not right now today, but it does happen.

I want to finish today with a story of a client that's in my coaching program, and I'm going to dive into it even deeper coming up in the next episode. But I just want to leave you with this. We're all going to have issues or those moments where we think business isn't going well. Right now, it's 2023, we're in a recession, and some businesses are doing great and some businesses aren't.

And people are a little bit tightly holding to their wallets than ever before, as they're just trying to figure out what's happening, what's going on. And I'm

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not going to get into it from an economist perspective, well, because I'm not qualified to.

But the reality of it is business is going to look and feel different. And it's happened last year too. And I have a client and they came to me, and they said, "There's a month where we didn't get any referrals." And the first question I thought to myself is, is that normal? Most people think, oh my gosh, that's terrible. What's happening? It's not working. And my response was, "Is that normal?"

And they had the ability to go back because they tracked this stuff, to go back and look and be like, "Oh, that month is always down. But it usually writes itself by the next month or two as long as we stay the course."

So, even if you do have a referral strategy in place, even if you have the strategy that I teach, if you're a member of one of my individual strategies like Growth By Referrals or Referring Machines, or you're in my coaching program, Building a Referral Business, and you're learning all the strategies, you will have highs and lows with those two. There's no way you can't.

But if you're staying consistent in what you're doing to be able to receive consistent referrals, it will happen. You may have some downs and ups, and I'll tell you more about exactly what happened with that client when we do the benchmarking and the tracking in our next episode.

But just remember what you measure usually goes up because that means you're paying attention to it, and that means you're doing something about it. I just want you to do something about your referrals.

I don't want you to experience any of these side effects because you have inconsistent referrals, meaning inconsistent client generation, which also means inconsistent cash flow. You deserve better.

You can get to the show notes for this episode, episode 268 on the show notes link at [staceybrownrandall.com/268](https://staceybrownrandall.com/268). You can find the link to join the

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wait list for summer school and to apply for a coaching program, Building a Referral Business.

Next week is episode 269, and we're going to make tracking sexy again. Yep, you heard it.

Until then, you know what to do, my friend. Take control of your referrals and build a referable business. Bye for now.