

Episode Transcript – How to Run a Successful Commission Salon in 2025 (Part 3)

Systems That Set You Free [00:00]

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Todd: [00:00:00] All right. What's up everyone? Welcome back. Happy Monday. How's it going, Jen?

Jen: Great.

Todd: That's all you got?

Jen: Yeah, it's great. That's a pretty decent answer I think.

Todd: Yeah, it's good. It's great.

Jen: Okay, great.

Todd: All right, so what are we talking about today? We're gonna wrap up with our business. So the last two episodes we talked about, I mean, a bunch of stuff we talked about here.

Hold on. I actually have notes of it. Notes of it. Um, where are we? All right, so in episode one of this like little mini series, which was episode 199, uh, we talked about opening a business and mindset. We talked about leadership and accountability, not blaming others. Uh, we talked about the importance of foundations, which is something we harp on a ton. We [00:01:00] talk about, uh, the dangers of discounts and unsustainable promotions.

We talked about creating a client avatar, marketing, and then aligning with, uh, distributors and brands that share your values. And then in episode two, which was episode 200, we talked about hiring practices. We talked about retention, team culture, creating opportunities and growth for people, uh, rewarding and recognizing the team. Conflict resolution we talked about a little bit. I think I kind of forced that, um, at the end there because we haven't had it a ton, but it, it stuff comes

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: you have multiple people, have conflict somewhere. Um, and then I think we wrapped up with building a culture where people wanna stay because I think that that's a super important point because again, it's, it's like marketing with clients when people are always like, how do you get clients?

How do you get clients? If you can't keep anybody, it doesn't matter how you get them.

Jen: Uh, for sure.

Todd: Same thing with staff. So if your [00:02:00] staff is leaving the time, you've gotta ask yourself, why not? Where can I find staff? And so we'll just kind of wrap up, I guess, with what we do at Hello, how our role as owners have changed. How to create systems that help people with feeling like they're part of the team, but also feeling like they have freedom, um, and stuff like that. So first we have our

Jen: Opening take.

Todd: takes.

Jen: Oh,

Todd: talked over. Talked over it. I can't believe it. Our first one and you talked

Jen: I can actually sort of make sense.

Todd: All right, so let's go with. Opening takes.

Jen: Nice job.

Todd: It's pretty cool. I'll work on it more. But there was my quick version.

Jen: Okay.

Todd: what do you got?

Jen: Okay. Um, here's what I got.

Todd: So we just

Jen: I.

Todd: from vacation.

Jen: Yep, I'm [00:03:00] starting right with that. So we just came back on vacation, but it goes into, so it goes into this whole episode. Um, if you've listened from the beginning of, of the podcast, that I owned a salon before hello for I think about 10 years. Uh, and then Todd and I have had hello, now I think five to six years.

So that's a long time and. Every year we try to take some sort of vacation. I did that with my last business. I did that with this business. My point being, this was the first, so I just said I've run a business for almost 16 years, the first in my whole entire life of owning a business that I truly was able to take a vacation and actually vacation.

Um. I'm talking from relaxing, not stressing, not worrying about it. No staff reached out and if they did need anything, they followed all the protocols and systems we had in place. Um, everything went flawless. Like I am shocked and I didn't really realize how much I was able to detach and relax and enjoy my trip until I was driving into work this [00:04:00] morning.

Super pumped to be returning to work. Couldn't wait to see my staff and just like celebrate how proud I was of them. And. I missed them. And then just super proud of the systems that we have in place and how they are respected and how they are followed, and how we have developed such a professional team that everybody knew what to do while we were gone and nothing fell short.

And when you take a vacation, you do truly start to see. What systems are working, what are not, because when you're not there, for us it was over a week and a half. Um, it just exposes everything. And in this case, I, I just was so proud to the point when I came in this morning, my apprentice and the, uh, one other staff that was working came in early just to make sure the salon smelled clean, the diffusers were on.

Like they just wanted to welcome me back. And it was, it's just. Something to be celebrated and we talk about all the stuff that we do and truly when you implement these things and you lead a team, you can walk away [00:05:00] from your business for as much time as you need and you're okay. So it just, I don't know, it was the best vacation I've ever had in my life, I think because just everything was trusted and I truly was able to relax and, um, we'll talk about the systems we have in place, but that is what allowed me to enjoy this vacation.

So thanks to our amazing staff 'cause they are the coolest. Um, and for just taking time away and being with your family and enjoying them.

Todd: A past mentor of mine had a 30 day bus test. He called it. And the bus test is if you got hit by a bus, now, maybe you don't die, right? Maybe you're just outta work. Could your business operate without you for 30 days? Without you, meaning nothing like you, like the staff cannot contact you? I believe that ours could,

Jen: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Todd: for sure, the only things that I, I think people reached out to were like, schedule stuff.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: As far as, as far as [00:06:00] what I

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: unless there was some sort of private message or something that I didn't

Jen: Nope, nothing.

Todd: Other than that it was schedule stuff, which schedule stuff they can handle on their own because they already know our

Jen: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Todd: the only thing that I saw in there. I don't know, like easy to arrive at that point.

Jen: No.

Todd: it's worth it.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: And if you can't do that, then you really don't have a business. You just have a job or you're working for yourself. There's nothing wrong with either

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: at all, but I, I think that's cool and I think that should be celebrated too. so I'll, I'll try to be quick, but I have two. Things that I wanna talk about. So the first one, my opening take is that human beings, just by nature, we struggle to unlearn things. So whatever we learn, we really struggle with unlearning that. And we just think that that's the way that it is always, and that's the way it's gonna be. so whatever you might have learned about [00:07:00] business 20 years ago, 30 years ago. There might be better ways to do things now, and by there might be, I mean, there are 100% better ways to do things now than 20 years ago because we have things like, I don't know, technology, it's 2025, so that's my first opening take.

So sort of like one A, one B. So B is I've, I've been seeing a ton of just use chat, GPT, just use chat, GPT, and people are talking about using chat GPT for. Lease agreements, which is wild to me. They're talking about using it on how to reply to clients and all and on and on, right? Here's the deal.

Jen: I got it.

Todd: Chat bots can be wrong.

They're large language models. They can be wrong or they can give false information if they don't necessarily understand. What you're looking for, they sometimes will make things up because [00:08:00] that's how they're coded. So what's my point with this? My point is you have to know before you can rely on something like a chat bot to help you with your business. For example, you have chat GPT, write out a lease agreement for your renters. If you don't know law, you don't know if that's correct. You don't know if that's gonna hold up in court. You don't know anything because you are not a lawyer. So sure, you could have it write it out, but I would highly encourage you, strongly encourage you to have a lawyer

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: that over. So maybe you're saving a little bit of money on having a lawyer actually

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: the agreement for you. That's great. And I'm not saying don't use chat. use all sorts of AI with our business. We

Jen: You just have to check it.

Todd: you, yes. You have to check it, which means you have to know what you're talking about. So for example, [00:09:00] we opened with a version of AI in our software that we had added in, and what it does is it scans our software, it scans our bookings, and it might say, Jen, you are usually in every eight weeks, it's been 10 weeks. You don't have an appointment on the books, I'm gonna shoot you an email and then follow up with a text telling you that we have appointments for you. So we've been using AI in this way since 20 19, 20

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: So AI isn't anything new. It's been around for decades. I just want people to be careful with the chat GPT thing, because I had several times where I've noticed that it's wrong. I, I use it for writing and I use it for prompting. What I, what I use it for, for writing is prompting my ideas or organizing things. Like I'll put in a bunch of ideas that I have and then ask it to help me organize those things, or to [00:10:00] bullet these things or to structure things so that it makes it easier for me to look at. I'm definitely not. pasting. Um, are there sentences that I'm like, oh, that's good, and I just grab it? Yeah, sure. But you have to read through and make sure. So I would just encourage people to be careful with that stuff. That's my opening take.

Jen: Okay.

Todd: all I got. All right. Let's talk about, let's move into, um. Let's talk about owners ownership. What's that? Look what that looks, blah. What that looks like over time. What, what did our roles look like when

we opened Verse, what do they look like now? And I think we, your opening take kind of got a little bit to it,

Jen: Well, I mean.

Yeah, I would agree. Yes. I think they looked different than they do now. I think we were,

Todd: Way, way different.

Jen: yeah, in the beginning. I mean, there's a lot of things happening and you're, you're kind of trying to figure out [00:11:00] where your strengths and weaknesses are and how you can balance each other out. Right. Um. I think we knew a little bit of those things with,, Todd taking on social media, website stuff, things that I don't, at the time, I don't think he really enjoyed doing, but he, he's good at it and he can do it and was able to take that on.

Fairly easily, I'll say what that grew into today is completely different than from where it started. Um, and I think a lot of times fear keeps people from starting stuff, but you gotta just start, you just gotta do it. And then now the way our Instagram looks or how you do use social media for certain things, um, it has a mission to it and a vision.

And there's, there's a cohesiveness that maybe just wasn't there in the beginning. Um, I knew from the beginning I'd be doing the education portion just 'cause it's. Just, uh, something that is in my,

Todd: literally have done your

Jen: yeah, it's just in my wheelhouse. Um, what,

Todd: 25

Jen: yeah,

Todd: Me, I've been

Jen: yeah.

Todd: at this point for, [00:12:00] well, I got my license when we opened, so Well, we'll just say five

Jen: Yeah. And I've educated since I pretty much started.

Todd: when we opened, I had been doing hair for just in

Jen: Right, right. Um, and what that looked like in the beginning to where it is today is extremely different. Um, we knew it had to evolve. I was, Todd was like, I, the way he learns things like, Jen, I need a manual. I need you to write stuff down. And I'm like, I, that's not how my brain works.

Um. I just couldn't get all the words and I couldn't really see my vision for education. But,, again, you just start and we needed to grow a team, so I started educating with them and to where it is today, it's very different. Um, I, I definitely could write a manual on it today, uh, pretty quickly, and, uh, would be able to pick a few people on our staff that could take that and help build our team.

Um, but that took time.

Todd: is, which is what we're working

Jen: Yeah, which is exactly what we're working on. Um, we had a vision, we had a vision to have an education team. Again, the path [00:13:00] to it, we, it wasn't clear to me, but over time and, and putting in the amount of education I did with each of the individuals that are now still with us, um, at, opened up a door to find two people that wanted to start teaching under Hello.

Um.

Todd: I want, I want to touch on something that I think is that could really help people, and it's because you just brought up staff. You can't go from to a hundred on your own.

Jen: No.

Todd: Whatever those markers are, zero to a million, zero to a billion. I don't care. our first team, maybe they took us from zero to one, then we sort of had another team and maybe they took us from one to 10. now this team took us from 10 to a hundred, the first team was not really. Into our long-term vision? I don't think

Jen: Agreed.

Todd: There was a lot of micromanaging, there was a lot of, Hey, why didn't you do this? Hey, why did you miss this? Hey, what, what's going on here? [00:14:00] uh, as an owner, it's your responsibility, but you also need to be surrounded by the right people, and that's your responsibility too.

So we had to go through several iterations, I guess, of what

Jen: Yes.

Delegation and Growth [07:00]

Todd: Should look like at Hello. And now we have, now that we have a team that buys into our vision and sort of understands it, we don't have that like, Hey, why did you miss this? Or, now I'm not saying it's constantly perfect. The other day when I was in before vacation, was kind of a mess out on the floor. And uh, so I went into the back room and I said, is this somebody's stuff? Then some of 'em spoke up and they were like, it's mine. I'm so sorry, I just needed to sit for a second. And I said, no, it's fine. I just don't wanna clean up if you are using it. It was like color bowls and stuff. And then I said, I'll, I'll grab it. And then she got up and said, no, I have to reigh the bowls, blah, blah, blah. So she could have easily sat there and said, yeah, Todd clean 'em up for me.

Jen: Right.

Todd: she was like bought into, no, we reigh the bowls, so I'll get up and do it. She wasn't [00:15:00] trying to be lazy, it was just something that happened and I wasn't mad or anything.

I was just like, whose me? Is this because. Let's get it cleaned up because I, one part of what we like is just a clean salon that's organized. There really shouldn't be a mess with people walking out back. just part of it, part of it. And our initial team was not bought into that at all. And that's on, again, that's on us. None of them are bad people or anything like that. Um,

Jen: It goes back to the leadership, right?

Todd: yeah, it's something that's important for leaders to, to learn, I guess.

Jen: Yeah, I, I see it on Facebook all the time. How do you get your staff to clean? No one wants to clean. No one cleans the sinks. My first salon, no one cleaned the sinks. It was always an issue. This salon that is rare, if anything is not cleaned at that sink. Uh, we have a way to communicate so that the other staff members know if the sinks been clean or not.

Um, these are just systems we put in place so that. It's the way we communicate without being like, I cleaned that. Like you don't need that to be [00:16:00] heard 10 times in a day, which actually would be way more than that. Um, so we use the neck rests for the clients and when you're done, you spray it down, you wipe it down, then you take the neck rest off, that tells the next person that's going to use a sink.

It's been sanitized. Um, something we implemented. It's not hard to do. And if you don't have. Staff that's buying into that, then you either need to come up with maybe a different system that works easier for them or lead them differently, or maybe they're just not the right fit. Um, I remember in the beginning we were talking about cleanliness and sanitizing.

Um, and I feel like I've said this before and I had to admit like, I'm not even really sure how I sanitize anything like this sounds awful because I've been doing here At that point, I think. 20 years. Oh. Um, and I also said if we're gonna, if I'm gonna lead from a position of cleaning and cleaning, not like everything and, and anything, there needs to be a really easy, systematic way to do that.

Um, and then Todd and I, I brought Todd in and we went through this thing and he is like, what if we had these bins on the station? What if we have this cleaning set up this way in the back? And I'm like, this is. [00:17:00] Simple, flawless. No one even bats an eye on it at it, and everybody does it. It's not even a question.

There's never even anything to say about it. Like things just get cleaned. But we led from a place like what's the system and how do we make it super easy that it's not bogging you down on time.

Todd: I think that's a, a huge part of it too, is just the simplicity. So when you're creating your systems, you don't want something that's gonna confuse people or that they constantly have to go check a handbook.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: What you wanna do is have it just easy. So it's almost intuitive. They don't have to think. It's the same thing when you're having, when you're looking into like your booking software, for example.

I want it frictionless. I want it as few clicks as possible that somebody can book an appointment, they can see the pricing, book an appointment. what we want. the second part is my 2 cents is your staff, your employees. They need to understand the why. Why is this important? And if they buy into what you are doing and they buy into why it's important and you make it easy, [00:18:00] there's really no reason.

Why would they not do it? You're taking that thinking out of it for them. So now that they can go and just be creative and have fun with their clients.

Jen: I totally agree. I, we say all the time, uh, when we are in one-on-ones or whatever. If we're implementing something new or just going over the stuff that we already do, and I always say, let me explain the why. To some of you, you may care to some, you may not. You just are. There's people that will just do whatever you tell them.

Totally cool. But there are people that are way more inspired by understanding the why. So we explain the why to every single person in our salon. Some are gonna use that to, like I said. Be excited about it. Some are gonna be like, cool, thanks for telling me, but I was gonna do it either way. I, in that case, treat them the same because at some point they might come to a different level where the why gets them still doing it, right?

Um, but it's something we just talk about all the time. This is why we're implementing this, this is why we're doing this this way. Um, this is what we're expecting out of it. Uh, do you understand? Do you have any questions? Is there something you don't understand?

Todd: Yeah, and we use, so we, one of the things we do is we use [00:19:00] Slack for our employee communication, right? So everything that happens in the salon. Generally it's not a hundred percent 'cause nothing's a hundred percent. But what people will do is if they have something to share or say, or a complaint or anything, they'll send it to me and Jen so that we both did.

I say we use

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: Okay. So that's a platform we use. You can use whatever you want. There's a ton of amount there. Uh, we actually use the free version because think it gives you 90 days and there's really nothing that

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: to be. If something needs to be said over and over again, we're not just gonna pin it, we're gonna say it over and over again.

Jen: Because it clearly needs to be heard.

Todd: right? It's, it's just something that needs to be said. So, uh, where was I going with that? Oh, I think just having clear communication with your employees also helps too.

Jen: Absolutely.

Todd: yeah. Uh, let's talk about meetings because you brought those up. So we do beginning of the year meetings. [00:20:00] Then I, I'd like to do 'em in the fall,

Jen: was gonna say probably right around coming up to where it would be next.

Todd: back

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: maybe ish. And so we do, we call 'em one-on-ones,

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: ones. 'cause there's two owners, right? There's Jen and I and those are, those are usually really great. I think in the last meet, in the last round of meetings, 20, 25, January, February, we finished them up, I believe. I think there was like one or two, like minor complaints.

I'll put it in the complaint bucket and they were things that we could handle. I think we mostly handled it within those meetings.

Jen: Yeah, everything was, it was good.

Todd: So yeah, things just get smoothed out. But so having regular meetings, and by regular, I don't mean every week, I don't mean like at a, at a restaurant, having a pre meal every single day. It doesn't even have to be every quarter. you are in your salon, I would highly recommend if you are somebody that's more [00:21:00] looking to build an autonomous business, I would have a management layer that's doing more regular meetings and then can meet with them

Jen: Yes, I'm in the salon

Todd: are

Jen: three to four times a week, so it's very easy for me to have touch points with everybody. Um,, and Todd's always like, how are things going so we don't have to do these. Kind of annoying meetings all the time. And then the big ones, we have it. It just brings it all together. I will say what you do different than what I used to do is these meetings are not just a bitch fest and not for them to be staff led.

So Todd comes in, we. Create like an agenda. Um, last time was certain questions, certain things. Um, the biggest thing we were challenged with, which is kind of silly, but very normal, was cleaning. Um,, not everybody felt everybody was cleaning enough, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. So Todd even would ask each person, like, rate yourself on cleaning.

And then all of a sudden,, they're, they're the same ones that are complaining about cleaning. They're like, well, on a good day I might be a five. And on a bad day, probably a one. Oh, I'm part of the [00:22:00] problem of cleaning. I'm complaining about and I'm not cleaning, and it was a great way to laugh and it didn't have to be this super stressful thing.

What I do see over time, newer members to the team, when we talk about having meetings, they have a freaking panic attack. Like they almost come in in tears 'cause they're so afraid of getting in trouble or they're so afraid of this negative experience. The longer they're with us, the attitude changes and they're so excited for their meeting.

They're so excited to have one-on-one time with Todd and I and they can't wait to just. Have like a, a meeting of the minds and hear where we're coming from and add in whatever they need to. Um, so it's always fun to develop the stylists and as they're longer with us, have them look forward to those and they can't wait for them.

But again, you have to have an agenda and you have to make sure you're getting to where you wanna be and not have it be a waste of time.

Todd: I was muted there. Um. I think that's part of leadership is, is inspiring people like that. So you, have people that, let's use [00:23:00] the cleaning thing 'cause I see that a ton

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: On Facebook groups and stuff, people are like, how do you get people to clean? if you get them to realize on their own they

Jen: Mm-hmm. Yes.

Todd: the same with education. Like how do you feel like you did with education this year? And then define it. Don't just leave it for them to guess because they're gonna be like, oh, I took that, a lot of YouTube videos. Like or whatever. And maybe that's not what you're into. Maybe you're talking about classes or maybe you're a salon that I see a lot of people looking for like retreat stuff and whatever. my boat but, or not my cup of tea or whatever, but to each their own. Unless you define something, your

staff has no clue what you're talking about. You cannot run a business on assumptions.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: think they think they think they think you're both off. So that's a, that's a cool point that you brought up, Jen. Like when [00:24:00] we go through our meetings, it's,, rate yourself on this. And it's not just about our staff. We close out those meetings with where have we let you down this

Jen: Yep.

Todd: Where have we failed? we're blunt, like I'm blunt when I ask the questions.

We, Jen and I do not feel like we hit a hundred percent of things. Because we're human beings.

Jen: And they usually are telling us how great we are. And then I, this last one I was like, so this is where I failed you and this is how I failed and this is what I'm gonna do this year, and this is what now I commit to doing this year. Um, and they're all like, well, I just think you're amazing and I appreciate that. Thanks. But let's be real. Um, this is what I could have done better.

Todd: right. Yeah. That's cute.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: you don't, again, they don't know where your mindset, they don't know what's in your mind. So they, just like, I'm just happy to work here because my friends are all miserable at the

Jen: Yep. Yeah, so, and it's, I, it's. I, I don't have a problem pointing out the things that I did not do well. Um, and I think by pointing them out, it allows them, now I'm giving them permission, like if there's anything else you need to add here, like, we're [00:25:00] already, this is the things that I wanna do better. And, and I mean, generally that's about where it sits, but, uh, sometimes it's explaining to 'em what you feel didn't go well for yourself or your business or whoever, um, leading your team and what you're gonna do about that.

Todd: I, um, the, one of the things I wanted to talk about too, Jen, was sort of delegation. We don't have a management layer because there's two of us and we really don't need it because we're in there. You are in there. I'm in there, and it just sort of works.

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: So we don't have, like, we don't even have a front desk person, which probably would blow some people's minds.

But part of what we wanted to do with Hello was to blur the lines on what a commission salon could look like. so. Not having those things gives a little more power and a little more freedom and a little more flexibility to our hair pros. And so moving forward with when, when you build a [00:26:00] moving forward.

I don't know why you why I said that at all. I should edit that out, but I'll probably leave it in 'cause it's funny. So when you build a business, you wanna start to get rid of or delegate tasks as soon as possible. In the beginning, you are gonna be cleaning everything. That doesn't always have to be the, the way you can hire a cleaner for us, we were fortunate enough to present the opportunity to somebody on our team.

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: the person that we have that cleans our salon literally cares more than any cleaner

Jen: Right.

Todd: could hire. 'cause it's her work environment and she takes incredible pride in it

Jen: And she gets another source of income.

Todd: and yes, and it, and it helps us create an opportunity for her where we can give her some money to clean. instead of that money going out, it's staying with

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: So stuff like that is again though, now we had to create a system for the cleaning. [00:27:00] You are not just

Jen: Yes.

Todd: clean the salon and then hope that people know what that looks like. to guide them through it. And then by doing that though, it frees you up for to do so many other things. Then you can delegate. All sorts of stuff for us this year, we're working on education. Jen does 99 point 99% of the education. Next year she won't. Maybe it's 80%, maybe it's even 75%. Maybe it's even lower.

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: We have a really capable, really strong team that we've curated. is interested in educating, wants to educate, and it's perfect because we've talked about it a bunch.

They buy into our mission and vision and they buy into what we're doing. So why would they not want to educate for us? Why would they go educate for a brand, say, not that there's anything wrong with that. Jen educates for a brand. If they wanted to educate for a brand, we would get them in touch with whoever they needed.

We would help them, right? But they are bought into what we're doing. [00:28:00] They understand what we're doing and so they don't have to like really relearn anything. They just have to now learn how to educate because

Jen: Right.

Todd: different skillset doing hair. I always talk about this, doing hair and running a business are two different skill sets. Doing hair and teaching hair are two different skillset sets. Uh, what else do we want to talk about?

Jen: Um, I had on my list 'cause I think this is something we've done it since the beginning. Um, and I do see this a lot on some Facebook posts about, um, people that are needing to expand their salon when there are other options of utilizing either space in your salon that you're not aware of. Or what we do, um, is we're open seven days a week, so utilizing other days that most salons are closed and then we don't.

Not every stylist, no one has their own station. So, uh, I think the word is called stations sharing. I don't, you can call it whatever you want. Um, but basically if you're not working [00:29:00] the next shift, you move your stuff. So this was a way for us to grow the business, have a fairly big staff, but when we're working each day, having it feel on the smaller side.

It also gives, um, I guess peace of mind where if someone does need to leave, someone else is usually willing to either pick up a shift or they want that shift. Um, and it's not as devastating on your business when one or two, or even a few more, um, maybe leave at one time or trickle out. Um. Kind of in a time period.

Uh, but it is a great way to make sure that the each station is being used every day that you're open for most of the hours. It was something I wanted to implement in my last salon, um, but I was too scared and I was. Too much pushback from my staff. So I never did it. And when we opened here, we just knew it was a way, um, the space is a bit bigger, a lot of overhead.

Um, and we knew in order to survive that's how we needed to do it and just hired from that 0.1. And, uh, we [00:30:00] were actually lucky enough that we have a staff that thinks it's so cool that we had a room, uh, in our salon that we called the Dexter room because it. It just was a hot mess express. And our Christmas gift, um, the end of last year was some of the staff stayed overnights and they cleared out that room and they basically reinvented it.

And it's amazing and it's a room now for ev all of us to put our supplies in when we're not working at our station. So it almost became this other part of a gift, um, which is really cool, but it's worked really well for us. It also. Helps with, I guess, a level of drama. 'cause you don't have people working together all the time.

There's always, always working with someone different and you don't have someone sitting in the same chair. So clients get a new perspective of the salon all the time, if not every other day, every time they come in, it doesn't matter. Um, but it's created this really amazing, um, I guess culture in our salon and that is something I would suggest.

And it's a way to grow your team without expanding, without it costing you more [00:31:00] money. Um, but just building your business.

Todd: Yeah, I, I love that part of our business. So I, people are creatures of habit, so you're always gonna have people that. towards the same spot, fine. But our staff understands and appreciates that. Oh, the reasons we do it. So if somebody has their station and they come in and they're like that, that's my station.

Communication and Meetings [14:00]

I always use that station. They know it's not their station. They understand that it's Hello Harris Station, and at the end of the day they get over it pretty quick. I know early on some of our, so, iteration one team. Didn't really grasp it. Again, they weren't really bought in. It was a tough time too, so I don't blame them a hundred percent.

I blame myself for not being able to convey why it was so important to us. But I remember sometimes where people were like, well, this person's newer, so they should have to not work on their end. They should work in the middle. And I'm like, what?

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: is happening? This is so petty of stuff, but [00:32:00] that's the more, that's more common for people working in salons to like think about little

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: like that.

For whatever reason, it's because how, that's what you've learned because that's how a lot of salons are. And like I said in the beginning, hard to unlearn things. So when you're like, this is just how it is in salons, then that's how it's gonna be.

Jen: Yeah, you're not gonna change anything.

Todd: Let's talk a little bit about. Different generations

Jen: Okay.

Todd: this is something that I think we handle really well at. Hello. And I think a lot of people drop the ball on it. And I think a, a lot of people out there would benefit from like learning about younger generations, like actually having conversations with

Jen: treating them like human beings.

Todd: makes them, Treating them like human beings, god forbid. Right. But actually learning what they want. What are they looking for, not just at the salon. What do they want[00:33:00]

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: Where are their struggles? What have you come across in your life that you may be able to provide them some guidance or, or something on? Do you want to jump in with that?

Jen: Sure. Um, the first thing that we started doing to understand what. The next generation of hair Pros it was gonna look like, was interviewing a lot of people coming outta school, um, asking questions and then using that to kind of. I guess guide us to how we can meet the needs of them while protecting the business and meeting the needs of the business.

The business needs have to be met first, right? Um, but how can we make this kind of a, a really nice marriage? That also means that we continually interview people coming out of school because. The generation that came out last year and this year may want different things. Uh, currently I'm not seeing a huge change in that, but it will change.

So we need to always be interviewing and we're upfront, we're not hiring right now. Um, it's a future thing, but if you still wanna meet, we'd love to meet with you. Uh, and it also gives us future relationships. When things do change, if [00:34:00] we have an opportunity, we've met someone in the

past that we can offer them something.

And it's not a blind offer, um, but it keeps us on our toes always innovating and making sure that we are operating in the year that we are operating in. That sounds silly, but I think there's a lot of salons out there that 10 years ago put something into place and haven't changed it. Um. Then it just lets us know, like what Todd said, like what are their needs inside and outside, um, and then, and what do they need from us?

Uh, currently,, I, I see a lot of people coming out of hair school that I guess a generation of a lot of anxiety. Uh, it's just where they're at. Um, so how do we meet those needs and how do we make sure they're taking care of themselves? Sometimes, um, it's drink some water. Sometimes I'm like, have you eaten today?

Um, and the cool part in ours.

Todd: point out real, I wanna point out real quick too. A lot of our interview process is nothing to do with hair.

Jen: Right.

Todd: It's really getting to know people, really getting to understand, like I'll ask people, where'd you grow up? Where do you come from? Where's your family life? Like [00:35:00] Tell me about

Jen: Well, because we can, I can teach the hair. We wanna make sure we wanna work with them.

Todd: Yeah, that too. But also understanding them

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: Like, people will come in and they're ready to be like, well, I'm good at foliage and I'm good at whatever. And I'm, I'm always like, I don't care what you're good at. I want to, and I, I see this a lot in Facebook groups too and all other places where people are like, I had someone come in and they were great, but they can't do a full foil and under X amount

Jen: Of course they can't.

Todd: that come, that comes with

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: That doesn't just, you don't, you don't just do things faster. You have to do things. More often, like more repetitions, speed comes with that.

Jen: Yeah,

Todd: the other way around.

Jen: you need to be able to teach them or someone in your salon needs to be able to teach them.

Todd: Or it's like, how do you feel about retail? How do you sell retail?

Like all the, and, and very little of our meeting, if anything at all, unless it pertains to the individual because our, our [00:36:00] meetings are very individual, not to go back in time, but very little of that is like KPI. know, you worked X amount of hours and X amount was full and, um, you sold X amount of retail product.

I don't care. We can look at the numbers. Like people, they, the staff already knows if they sell retail or not.

Jen: Right.

Todd: They, they don't

Jen: And the ones that want to and don't, and I don't.

Todd: Right,

Jen: both awesome. Doesn't matter.

Todd: that's the other thing, that's another thing that we found with the genera different generations is some of them like to sell products and recommend products.

Some of them don't. So we don't really push that.

Jen: Correct.

Todd: Because we didn't build our salon on retail. built it on doing

Jen: Right.

Todd: So you just have to understand where you are coming from too. Uh, as part of that, I think I cut you off,

Jen: That's okay. I think the biggest thing is treating. The next generation as a hair pro, they may be a baby hair pro, and they, they need a lot to learn, but they, they're, they're still a professional and they may need [00:37:00] help with that too. So again, in that interview process, like what are you willing to help?

Like, I am willing to help develop people professionally. On the education side, their skillset, all of those things. Um, some have a bigger leeway. Um, if we're talking about professionally, the leeway is quite short. Like these are my expectations. You may get one or two talking to, and that's about it. 'cause you're here to do hair and there's an expectation with that on the side, completely different.

I will be so patient and give you so many tries if I feel like you're developing, you're really trying. Um, those are just different things. But I understand that both need to be met and sometimes, like back to what I was saying is some of my staff just needs to be developed now into the point where they're getting busier than they were and I need to tell 'em to pack a lunch and make sure they're drinking water so that they can service each client, um, back to back.

However they're booked and they have food to eat to keep them going and keep their energy up.

Todd: you might. You might not have free time to run to the

Jen: Right, which they had six months ago, but now they don't have, and now they're so hungry, they're crashing. [00:38:00] So I don't mind having those conversations. They don't bother me. I, I very much enjoy it. Um, I don't mind if someone needs a mental health day, have it.

Enjoy it. Got you. But you best be going for a walk, drinking some water, having some good food, and taking care of yourself for the next day. Um, if you can commit to that, I then great. Take your day off. Enjoy it. No hard feelings. Um. But this is what this generation needs. Who knows what the next one will.

Um, and that just requires figuring that out and then having a plan.

Todd: Agreed. Yeah. I have some points to wrap up with

Jen: Okay.

Todd: you,

Jen: Sounds great.

Todd: else? So, first things first, if you're not on our email list, get on that. So if you want more business insights and little tips and stuff, I put out a weekly newsletter each week. I feel like it gets a little better each week.

We gain some audience and yeah, it seems like it's going pretty good. So jump in there. You can find that. [00:39:00] notes or wherever. Uh, so like closing remarks. And Jen, you can jump in with anything. I just had a few things listed. These are all random, not, not necessarily in order, but you don't really need to have everything figured out to start.

Jen: Correct.

Todd: So if you're looking into opening a commission salon, and the reason we're harping on commission is because that's what we are. So if you haven't

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: to episode one, which is really episode 1 99. This little three, three part miniseries of how we run our commission salon. Go back and listen to that, but you don't need to have everything figured out to start. Uh, the next thing I had was investing in your people will always be worth it because it's something that you see a lot

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: are like, well, I'm not gonna invest in these people. For them to just leave to run rent a

Jen: People will come and go. That's just where it's at, and it's up to them to create. It's up to you to create opportunity so that they see the value of why they would want to stay. It is what it is.

Todd: Exactly, and I would never want to not share knowledge with

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: because I'm scared they might leave. I want them to be the [00:40:00] best they can be, whether they're here for one year

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: and that just is what it is. Um, your culture is built in your bad days, not your good days. those bad days, those little tests there, that's gonna show your staff, that's gonna show your, your hair pros, your employees, whatever you want to call them, that's gonna show them who you are, who you really are. So when your salon is flooding and there's no power and there's birds flying around and there's just all the things and you are just like stressed and people can tell you're stressed, but you're handling it in an organized fashion. Because that's how you have to run a

Jen: So true.

Todd: out, you're not screaming at people, losing

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: you're not acting like, uh, a moron, sorry, on, on the salon floor. 'cause I've

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: owners

Jen: You gotta keep it together.

Todd: like, yeah, that's wild to

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: But yeah, you have to keep your shit together. Really. No other way to say it there. [00:41:00] Uh, so some stuff that I would leave you with to do is audit yourself. Audit your. Uh, systems audit, whatever things you have in place that make your business run smoothly. Poke around in your booking software, poke around on your website. Do the links work. When's the last time you went on your own website and you started pushing buttons? I do that weekly. There's buttons that need to be fixed right now on our website, but I know about them because I go through, I go through and I poke around. Uh, walk into your salon or have somebody walk into your salon. Take a look. What do you see? What do you smell? What's the first thing? Is there like empty coffee cups everywhere? That's a no-no. At our salon, uh, were we, uh, look into your evolution as a leader.

Jen: Love that.

Todd: something that you just, you, you can't just set it [00:42:00] and forget it with a business, it's not going to work. I wish you could, it would be a lot easier to just build it and then walk away, but it's not gonna, uh, it's not gonna work that way. That was really it. That's really all I had here.

Jen: Great.

Todd: Sign up for a newsletter, but I already did that part. What?

Jen: Sign up for the newsletter. It is good. You should sign up for it.

Todd: I was reading the notes.

Jen: Gotcha.

Todd: All right. Uh, well, I guess thanks everyone

Jen: Yeah.

Culture Built on Simplicity [22:00]

Todd: Sorry, this was, this was a little longer of an episode, but it is what it is. We'll see you next week and we'll be back to our regular, uh, probably less focused banter. Bye everyone.

Jen: Bye.

Todd: All right. What's up everyone? Welcome back. Happy Monday. How's it going, Jen?

Jen: Great.

Todd: That's all you got?

Jen: Yeah, it's great. That's a pretty decent answer I think.

Todd: Yeah, it's good. It's great.

Jen: Okay, great.

Todd: All right, so what are we talking about today? [00:43:00] We're gonna wrap up with our business. So the last two episodes we talked about, I mean, a bunch of stuff we talked about here.

Hold on. I actually have notes of it. Notes of it. Where are we? All right, so in episode one of this like little mini series, which was episode 1 99 we talked about opening a business and mindset. We talked about leadership and accountability, not blaming others. We talked about the importance of foundations, which is something we harp on a ton. We talk about the dangers of discounts and unsustainable promotions.

We talked about creating a client avatar, marketing, and then aligning with distributors and brands that share your values. And then in episode two, which was episode 200, we talked about hiring practices. We talked about retention, team culture, creating opportunities and growth for people rewarding and recognizing the team. Conflict [00:44:00] resolution we talked about a little bit. I think I kind of forced that at the end there because we haven't had it a ton, but it, it stuff comes

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: you have multiple people, have conflict somewhere. And then I think we wrapped up with building a culture where people wanna stay because I think that that's a super important point because again, it's, it's like marketing with clients when people are always like, how do you get clients? How do you get clients? If you can't keep anybody, it doesn't matter how you get them.

Jen: For sure.

Todd: Same thing with staff. So if your staff is leaving the time, you've gotta ask yourself, why not? Where can I find staff? And so we'll just kind of wrap up, I guess, with what we do at Hello, how our role as owners have changed. How to create systems that help people with feeling like they're part of the team, but also feeling like they have freedom and stuff like that. So first we have our

Jen: [00:45:00] Opening take.

Todd: takes.

Jen: Oh,

Todd: talked over. Talked over it. I can't believe it. Our first one and you talked

Jen: I can actually sort of make sense.

Todd: All right, so let's go with. Opening takes.

Jen: Nice job.

Todd: It's pretty cool. I'll work on it more. But there was my quick version.

Jen: Okay.

Todd: what do you got?

Jen: Okay. Here's what I got.

Todd: So we just

Jen: I.

Todd: from vacation.

Jen: Yep, I'm starting right with that. So we just came back on vacation, but it goes into, so it goes into this whole episode. If you've listened from the beginning of, of the podcast, that I owned a salon before hello for I think about 10 years. And then Todd and I have had hello, now I think five to six years.

So that's a long time and. Every year we try to take some sort of vacation. I did that with my last business. I did that with this business. My point being, this was the first, so I just said I've run a business for almost 16 years, the first in my whole entire life of owning a business [00:46:00] that I truly was able to take a vacation and actually vacation.

I'm talking from relaxing, not stressing, not worrying about it. No staff reached out and if they did need anything, they followed all the protocols and systems we had in place. Everything went flawless. Like I am shocked and I didn't really realize how much I was able to detach and relax and enjoy my trip until I was driving into work this morning.

Super pumped to be returning to work. Couldn't wait to see my staff and just like celebrate how proud I was of them. And. I missed them. And then just super proud of the systems that we have in place and how they are respected and how they are followed, and how we have developed such a professional team that everybody knew what to do while we were gone and nothing fell short.

And when you take a vacation, you do truly start to see. What systems are working, what are not, because when you're not there, for us it was over a week and a half. It just exposes everything. And in this case, I, I just [00:47:00] was so proud to the point when I came in this morning, my apprentice and the one other staff that was working came in early just to make sure the salon smelled clean, the diffusers were on.

Like they just wanted to welcome me back. And it was, it's just. Something to be celebrated and we talk about all the stuff that we do and truly when you implement these things and you lead a team, you can walk away from your business for as much time as you need and you're okay. So it just, I don't know, it was the best vacation I've ever had in my life, I think because just everything was trusted and I truly was able to relax and we'll talk about the systems we have in place, but that is what allowed me to enjoy this vacation.

So thanks to our amazing staff 'cause they are the coolest. And for just taking time away and being with your family and enjoying them.

Todd: A past mentor of mine had a 30 day bus test. He called it. And the bus test is if you got hit by a bus, now, maybe you don't die, right? Maybe you're just [00:48:00] outta work. Could your business operate without you for 30 days? Without you, meaning nothing like you, like the staff cannot contact you? I believe that ours could,

Jen: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Todd: for sure, the only things that I, I think people reached out to were like, schedule stuff.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: As far as, as far as what I

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: unless there was some sort of private message or something that I didn't

Jen: Nope, nothing.

Todd: Other than that it was schedule stuff, which schedule stuff they can handle on their own because they already know our

Jen: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Todd: the only thing that I saw in there. I don't know, like easy to arrive at that point.

Jen: No.

Todd: it's worth it.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: And if you can't do that, then you really don't have a business. You just have a job or you're working for yourself. There's nothing wrong with either

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: at all, but I, I think that's cool and I think that should be celebrated too. so I'll, I'll try to be quick, but I have two. Things that I wanna talk about. [00:49:00] So the first one, my opening take is that

human beings, just by nature, we struggle to unlearn things. So whatever we learn, we really struggle with unlearning that. And we just think that that's the way that it is always, and that's the way it's gonna be. so whatever you might have learned about business 20 years ago, 30 years ago. There might be better ways to do things now, and by there might be, I mean, there are 100% better ways to do things now than 20 years ago because we have things like, I don't know, technology, it's 2025, so that's my first opening take.

So sort of like one A, one B. So B is I've, I've been seeing a ton of just use chat, GPT, just use chat, GPT, and people are talking about using chat GPT for. Lease agreements, which is wild to me. They're talking about using it on how to reply to clients and all and and on and on, right? Here's the deal.

Jen: I got it.

Todd: Chat bots can be wrong.

They're [00:50:00] large language models. They can be wrong or they can give false information if they don't necessarily understand. What you're looking for, they sometimes will make things up because that's how they're coded. So what's my point with this? My point is you have to know before you can rely on something like a chat bot to help you with your business. For example, you have chat GPT, write out a lease agreement for your renters. If you don't know law, you don't know if that's correct. You don't know if that's gonna hold up in court. You don't know anything because you are not a lawyer. So sure, you could have it write it out, but I would highly encourage you, strongly encourage you to have a lawyer

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: that over. So maybe you're saving a little bit of money on having a lawyer actually

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: the agreement for you. That's great. And I'm not saying don't use chat. use [00:51:00] all sorts of AI with our business. We

Jen: You just have to check it.

Todd: you, yes. You have to check it, which means you have to know what you're talking about. So for example, we opened with a version of AI in our software that we had added in, and what it does is it scans our software, it scans our bookings, and it might say, Jen, you are usually in every eight weeks, it's been 10 weeks. You don't have an appointment on the books, I'm gonna shoot you an email and then follow up with a text telling you that we have appointments for you. So we've been using AI in this way since 20 19, 20

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: So AI isn't anything new. It's been around for decades. I just want people to be careful with the chat GPT thing, because I had several times where I've noticed that it's wrong. I, I use it for writing and I use it for prompting. What I, what I use it for, for writing is prompting [00:52:00] my ideas or organizing things. Like I'll put in a bunch of ideas that I have and then ask it to help me organize those things, or to bullet these things or to structure things so that it makes it easier for me to look at. I'm definitely not. pasting. Are there sentences that I'm like, oh, that's good, and I just grab it? Yeah, sure. But you have to read through and make sure. So I would just encourage people to be careful with that stuff. That's my opening take.

Jen: Okay.

Todd: all I got. All right. Let's talk about, let's move into, let's talk about owners ownership. What's that? Look what that looks, blah. What that looks like over time. What, what did our roles look like when we opened Verse, what do they look like now? And I think we, your opening take kind of got a little bit to it,

Jen: Well, I mean.

Yeah, I would agree. Yes. I think they looked different than they do now. I think we were,

Todd: Way, way different.

Jen: yeah, in the beginning. I mean, there's a lot of things happening and [00:53:00] you're, you're kind of trying to figure out where your strengths and weaknesses are and how you can balance each other out. Right. I think we knew a little bit of those things with,, Todd taking on social media, website stuff, things that I don't, at the time, I don't think he really enjoyed doing, but he, he's good at it and he can do it and was able to take that on.

Fairly easily, I'll say what that grew into today is completely different than from where it started. And I think a lot of times fear keeps people from starting stuff, but you gotta just start, you just gotta do it. And then now the way our Instagram looks or how you do use social media for certain things it has a mission to it and a vision.

And there's, there's a cohesiveness that maybe just wasn't there in the beginning. I knew from the beginning I'd be doing the education portion just 'cause it's. Just something that is in my,

Todd: literally have done your

Jen: yeah, it's just in my wheelhouse. What,

Todd: 25

Jen: yeah,

Todd: Me, I've been

Jen: yeah.

Todd: at this point for, well, I got my license when we opened, so [00:54:00] Well, we'll just say five

Jen: Yeah. And I've educated since I pretty much started.

Todd: when we opened, I had been doing hair for just in

Jen: Right, right. And what that looked like in the beginning to where it is today is extremely different.

We knew it had to evolve. I was, Todd was like, I, the way he learns things like, Jen, I need a manual. I need you to write stuff down. And I'm like, I, that's not how my brain works.

I just couldn't get all the words and I couldn't really see my vision for education. But,, again, you just start and we needed to grow a team, so I started educating with them and to where it is today, it's very different. I, I definitely could write a manual on it today pretty quickly, and would be able to pick a few people on our staff that could take that and help build our team.

But that took time.

Todd: is, which is what we're working

Jen: Yeah, which is exactly what we're working on. We had a vision, we had a vision to have an education team. Again, the path to it, we, it wasn't clear to me, but over time and, and putting in the amount of education I did with each of the individuals that are now still [00:55:00] with us at, opened up a door to find two people that wanted to start teaching under Hello.

Todd: I want, I want to touch on something that I think is that could really help people, and it's because you just brought up staff. You can't go from to a hundred on your own.

Jen: No.

Todd: Whatever those markers are, zero to a million, zero to a billion. I don't care. our first team, maybe they took us from zero to one, then we sort of had another team and maybe they took us from one to 10. now this team took us from 10 to a hundred, the first team was not really. Into our long-term vision? I don't think

Jen: Agreed.

Todd: There was a lot of micromanaging, there was a lot of, Hey, why didn't you do this? Hey, why did you miss this? Hey, what, what's going on here? As an owner, it's your responsibility, but you also need to be surrounded by the right people, and that's your responsibility too.

So we had to go through several [00:56:00] iterations, I guess, of what

Jen: Yes.

Understanding New Generations [28:00]

Todd: Should look like at Hello. And now we have, now that we have a team that buys into our vision and sort of understands it, we don't have that like, Hey, why did you miss this? Or, now I'm not saying it's constantly perfect. The other day when I was in before vacation, was kind of a mess out on the floor. And so I went into the back room and I said, is this somebody's stuff? Then some of 'em spoke up and they were like, it's mine. I'm so sorry, I just needed to sit for a second. And I said, no, it's fine. I just don't wanna clean up if you are using it. It was like color bowls and stuff. And then I said, I'll, I'll grab it. And then she got up and said, no, I have to reigh the bowls, blah, blah, blah. So she could have easily sat there and said, yeah, Todd clean 'em up for me.

Jen: Right.

Todd: she was like bought into, no, we reigh the bowls, so I'll get up and do it. She wasn't trying to be lazy, it was just something that happened and I wasn't mad or anything.

I was just like, whose me? Is this because. Let's get it cleaned up because I, one part of what we like is just a clean salon [00:57:00] that's organized. There really shouldn't be a mess with people walking out back. just part of it, part of it. And our initial team was not bought into that at all. And that's on, again, that's on us.

None of them are bad people or anything like that.

Jen: It goes back to the leadership, right?

Todd: yeah, it's something that's important for leaders to, to learn, I guess.

Jen: Yeah, I, I see it on Facebook all the time. How do you get your staff to clean? No one wants to clean. No one cleans the sinks. My first salon, no one cleaned the sinks. It was always an issue. This salon that is rare, if anything is not cleaned at that sink. We have a way to communicate so that the other staff members know if the sinks been clean or not.

These are just systems we put in place so that. It's the way we communicate without being like, I cleaned that. Like you don't need that to be heard 10 times in a day, which actually would be way more than that. So we use the neck rests for the clients and when you're done, you spray it down, you wipe it down, then you take the neck rest off, that tells the next person that's going to use a sink.

It's been sanitized. Something we implemented. It's not hard to [00:58:00] do. And if you don't have. Staff that's buying into that, then you either need to come up with maybe a different system that works easier for them or lead them differently, or maybe they're just not the right fit. I remember in the beginning we were talking about cleanliness and sanitizing.

And I feel like I've said this before and I had to admit like, I'm not even really sure how I sanitize anything like this sounds awful because I've been doing here At that point, I think. 20 years. Oh. And I also said if we're gonna, if I'm gonna lead from a position of cleaning and cleaning, not like everything and, and anything, there needs to be a really easy, systematic way to do that.

And then Todd and I, I brought Todd in and we went through this thing and he is like, what if we had these bins on the station? What if we have this cleaning set up this way in the back? And I'm like, this is. Simple, flawless. No one even bats an eye on it at it, and everybody does it. It's not even a question. There's never even anything to say about it. Like things just get cleaned. But we led from a place like what's the system and how do we make it super easy that it's not bogging you down on time.

Todd: I think that's a, [00:59:00] a huge part of it too, is just the simplicity. So when you're creating your systems, you don't want something that's gonna confuse people or that they constantly have to go check a handbook.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: What you wanna do is have it just easy. So it's almost intuitive. They don't have to think. It's the same thing when you're having, when you're looking into like your booking software, for example.

I want it frictionless. I want it as few clicks as possible that somebody can book an appointment, they can see the pricing, book an appointment. what we want. the second part is my 2 cents is your staff, your employees. They need to understand the why. Why is this important? And if they buy into what you are doing and they buy into why it's important and you make it easy, there's really no reason. Why would they not do it? You're taking that thinking out of it for them. So now that they can go and just be creative and have fun with their clients.

Jen: I totally agree. I, we say all the time when we are in one-on-ones or whatever. If we're implementing something new or just going over the stuff that we already do, and I always say, let me explain the [01:00:00] why. To some of you, you may care to some, you may not. You just are. There's people that will just do whatever you tell them.

Totally cool. But there are people that are way more inspired by understanding the why. So we explain the why to every single person in our salon. Some are gonna use that to, like I said. Be excited about it. Some are gonna be like, cool, thanks for telling me, but I was gonna do it either way. I, in that case, treat them the same because at some point they might come to a different level where the why gets them still doing it, right?

But it's something we just talk about all the time. This is why we're implementing this, this is why we're doing this this way. This is what we're expecting out of it. Do you understand? Do you have any questions? Is there something you don't understand?

Todd: Yeah, and we use, so we, one of the things we do is we use Slack for our employee communication, right? So everything that happens in the salon. Generally it's not a hundred percent 'cause nothing's a hundred percent. But what people will do is if they have something to share or say, or a complaint or anything, they'll send it to me and Jen so that we both did.

I say we use

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: Okay. So that's a platform we use. You can use [01:01:00] whatever you want. There's a ton of amount there. We actually use the free version because think it gives you 90 days and there's really nothing that

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: to be. If something needs to be said over and over again, we're not just gonna pin it, we're gonna say it over and over again.

Jen: Because it clearly needs to be heard.

Todd: right? It's, it's just something that needs to be said. So where was I going with that? Oh, I think just having clear communication with your employees also helps too.

Jen: Absolutely.

Todd: yeah. Let's talk about meetings because you brought those up. So we do beginning of the year meetings. Then I, I'd like to do 'em in the fall,

Jen: was gonna say probably right around coming up to where it would be next.

Todd: back

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: maybe ish. And so we do, we call 'em one-on-ones,

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: ones. 'cause there's two owners, right? There's Jen and I and those are, those are usually really great. I think in the last meet, in the last round of meetings, 20, 25, January, February, we finished them up, I [01:02:00] believe. I think there was like one or two, like minor complaints.

I'll put it in the complaint bucket and they were things that we could handle. I think we mostly handled it within those meetings.

Jen: Yeah, everything was, it was good.

Todd: So yeah, things just get smoothed out. But so having regular meetings, and by regular, I don't mean every week, I don't mean like at a, at a restaurant, having a pre meal every single day. It doesn't even have to be every quarter. you are in your salon, I would highly recommend if you are somebody that's more looking to build an autonomous business, I would have a management layer that's doing more regular meetings and then can meet with them

Jen: Yes, I'm in the salon

Todd: are

Jen: three to four times a week, so it's very easy for me to have touch points with everybody. You know, and Todd's always like, how are things going so we don't have to do these. Kind of annoying meetings all the time. And then the big ones, we have it. It just brings it all together. I will say what [01:03:00] you do different than what I used to do is these meetings are not just a bitch fest and not for them to be staff led.

So Todd comes in, we. Create like an agenda. Last time was certain questions, certain things. The biggest thing we were challenged with, which is kind of silly, but very normal, was cleaning. You know, not everybody felt everybody was cleaning enough, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. So Todd even would ask each person, like, rate yourself on cleaning.

And then all of a sudden,, they're, they're the same ones that are complaining about cleaning. They're like, well, on a good day I might be a five. And on a bad day, probably a one. Oh, I'm part of the problem of cleaning. I'm complaining about and I'm not cleaning, and it was a great way to laugh and it didn't have to be this super stressful thing.

What I do see over time, newer members to the team, when we talk about having meetings, they have a freaking panic attack. Like they almost come in in tears 'cause they're so afraid of getting in trouble or they're so afraid of this negative experience. The longer they're with us, the attitude changes and they're so excited for their meeting.

They're so excited to have one-on-one time with Todd and I and they can't wait to just. [01:04:00] Have like a, a meeting of the minds and hear where we're coming from and add in whatever they need to. So it's always fun to develop the stylists and as they're longer with us, have them look forward to those and they can't wait for them.

But again, you have to have an agenda and you have to make sure you're getting to where you wanna be and not have it be a waste of time.

Todd: I was muted there. I think that's part of leadership is, is inspiring people like that. So you, have people that, let's use the cleaning thing 'cause I see that a ton

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: On Facebook groups and stuff, people are like, how do you get people to clean? if you get them to realize on their own they

Jen: Mm-hmm. Yes.

Todd: the same with education. Like how do you feel like you did with education this year? And then define it. Don't just leave it for them to guess because they're gonna be like, oh, I took that, a lot of YouTube videos. Like or whatever. And maybe that's not what you're into. Maybe you're talking about classes or maybe you're a salon that I see a lot of people looking for like retreat stuff and whatever. [01:05:00] my boat but, or not my cup of tea or whatever, but to each their own. Unless you define something, your staff has no clue what you're talking about. You cannot run a business on assumptions.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: think they think they think they think you're both off. So that's a, that's a cool point that you brought up, Jen. Like when we go through our meetings, it's,, rate yourself on this. And it's not just about our staff. We close out those meetings with where have we let you down this

Jen: Yep.

Todd: Where have we failed? we're blunt, like I'm blunt when I ask the questions.

We, Jen and I do not feel like we hit a hundred percent of things. Because we're human beings.

Jen: And they usually are telling us how great we are. And then I, this last one I was like, so this is where I failed you and this is how I failed and this is what I'm gonna do this year, and this is what now I commit to doing this year. And they're all like, well, I just think you're amazing and I appreciate that. Thanks. But let's be real. This is what I could have done better.

Todd: right. Yeah. That's cute.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: you don't, [01:06:00] again, they don't know where your mindset, they don't know what's in your mind. So they, just like, I'm just happy to work here because my friends are all miserable at the

Jen: Yep. Yeah, so, and it's, I, it's, I, I don't have a problem pointing out the things that I did not do well. And I think by pointing them out, it allows them, now I'm giving them permission, like if there's anything else you need to add here, like, we're already, this is the things that I wanna do better. And, and I mean, generally that's about where it sits, but sometimes it's explaining to 'em what you feel didn't go well for yourself or your business or whoever leading your team and what you're gonna do about that.

Todd: I the, one of the things I wanted to talk about too, Jen, was sort of delegation. We don't have a management layer because there's two of us and we really don't need it because we're in there. You are in there. I'm in there, and it just sort of works.

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: So we don't have, like, we don't even have a front desk person, which probably would blow some people's minds.

But part of what we wanted to do with [01:07:00] Hello was to blur the lines on what a commission salon could look like. so. Not having those things gives a little more power and a little more freedom and a little more flexibility to our hair pros. And so moving forward with when, when you build a moving forward.

I don't know why you why I said that at all. I should edit that out, but I'll probably leave it in 'cause it's funny. So when you build a business, you wanna start to get rid of or delegate tasks as soon as possible. In the beginning, you are gonna be cleaning everything. That doesn't always have to be the, the way you can hire a cleaner for us, we were fortunate enough to present the opportunity to somebody on our team.

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: the person that we have that cleans our salon literally cares more than any cleaner

Jen: Right.

Todd: could hire. 'cause it's her work environment and she takes incredible pride in it

Jen: And she gets another source of income.

Todd: and yes, and it, and it helps us [01:08:00] create an opportunity for her where we can give her some money to clean. instead of that money going out, it's staying with

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: So stuff like that is again though, now we had to create a system for the cleaning. You are not just

Jen: Yes.

Todd: clean the salon and then hope that people know what that looks like. to guide them through it. And then by doing that though, it frees you up for to do so many other things. Then you can delegate. All sorts of stuff for us this year, we're working on education. Jen does 99 point 99% of the education. Next year she won't. Maybe it's 80%, maybe it's even 75%. Maybe it's even lower.

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: We have a really capable, really strong team that we've curated. is interested in educating, wants to educate, and it's perfect because we've talked about it a bunch.

They buy into our mission and vision and they buy into what we're doing. So why would they [01:09:00] not want to educate for us? Why would they go educate for a brand, say, not that there's anything wrong with that. Jen educates for a brand. If they wanted to educate for a brand, we would get them in touch with whoever they needed.

We would help them, right? But they are bought into what we're doing. They understand what we're doing and so they don't have to like really relearn anything. They just have to now learn how to educate because

Jen: Right.

Todd: different skillset doing hair. I always talk about this, doing hair and running a business are two different skill sets. Doing hair and teaching hair are two different skillset sets. What else do we want to talk about?

Jen: I had on my list 'cause I think this is something we've done it since the beginning. And I do see this a lot on some Facebook posts about people that are needing to expand their salon when there are other options of utilizing either space in your salon that you're not aware of. Or what we do is we're open seven days a week, so utilizing other days that most salons are closed and then we [01:10:00] don't.

Not every stylist, no one has their own station. So I think the word is called stations sharing. I don't, you can call it whatever you want. But basically if you're not working the next shift, you move your stuff. So this was a way for us to grow the business, have a fairly big staff, but when we're working each day, having it feel on the smaller side.

It also gives I guess peace of mind where if someone does need to leave, someone else is usually willing to either pick up a shift or they want that shift. And it's not as devastating on your business when one or two, or even a few more maybe leave at one time or trickle out. Kind of in a time period.

But it is a great way to make sure that the each station is being used every day that you're open for most of the hours. It was something I wanted to implement in my last salon but I was too scared and I was. Too much pushback from my staff. So I never did it. And when we opened here, we just knew it was a way the space is a bit bigger, a lot of overhead.

And we knew in order to survive that's how we needed to do it and just [01:11:00] hired from that 0.1.

And we were actually lucky enough that we have a staff that thinks it's so cool that we had a room in our salon that we called the Dexter room because it. It just was a hot mess express. And our Christmas gift the end of last year was some of the staff stayed overnights and they cleared out that room and they basically reinvented it.

And it's amazing and it's a room now for ev all of us to put our supplies in when we're not working at our station. So it almost became this other part of a gift which is really cool, but it's worked really well for us. It also. Helps with, I guess, a level of drama. 'cause you don't have people working together all the time. There's always, always working with someone different and you don't have someone sitting in the same chair. So clients get a new perspective of the salon all the time, if not every other day, every time they come in, it doesn't matter. But it's created this really amazing I guess culture in our salon and that is something I would suggest.

And it's a way to grow your team without expanding, without it costing [01:12:00] you more money. But just building your business.

Todd: Yeah, I, I love that part of our business. So I, people are creatures of habit, so you're always gonna have people that. towards the same spot, fine. But our staff understands and appreciates that. Oh, the reasons we do it. So if somebody has their station and they come in and they're like that, that's my station.

Final Thoughts [35:00]

I always use that station. They know it's not their station. They understand that it's Hello Harris Station, and at the end of the day they get over it pretty quick. I know early on some of our, so, iteration one team. Didn't really grasp it. Again, they weren't really bought in. It was a tough time too, so I don't blame them a hundred percent.

I blame myself for not being able to convey why it was so important to us. But I remember sometimes where people were like, well, this person's newer, so they should have to not work on their end. They should work in the middle. And I'm like, what?

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: is happening? This is so petty of stuff, but that's the more, that's more [01:13:00] common for people working in salons to like think about little

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: like that.

For whatever reason, it's because how, that's what you've learned because that's how a lot of salons are. And like I said in the beginning, hard to unlearn things. So when you're like, this is just how it is in salons, then that's how it's gonna be.

Jen: Yeah, you're not gonna change anything.

Todd: Let's talk a little bit about. Different generations

Jen: Okay.

Todd: this is something that I think we handle really well at. Hello. And I think a lot of people drop the ball on it. And I think a, a lot of people out there would benefit from like learning about younger generations, like actually having conversations with

Jen: treating them like human beings.

Todd: makes them, Treating them like human beings, god forbid. Right. But actually learning what they want. What are they looking for, not just at the salon. What do they want

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: Where are their struggles? What have you come across in your life that you may be able to provide them some guidance or, or [01:14:00] something on? Do you want to jump in with that?

Jen: Sure. The first thing that we started doing to understand what. The next generation of hair Pros it was gonna look like, was interviewing a lot of people coming outta school asking questions and then using that to kind of. I guess guide us to how we can meet the needs of them while protecting the business and meeting the needs of the business.

The business needs have to be met first, right? But how can we make this kind of a, a really nice marriage? That also means that we continually interview people coming out of school because. The generation that came out last year and this year may want different things. Currently I'm not seeing a huge change in that, but it will change.

So we need to always be interviewing and we're upfront, we're not hiring right now. It's a future thing, but if you still wanna meet, we'd love to meet with you. And it also gives us future relationships. When things do change, if we have an opportunity, we've met someone in the past that we can offer them something.

And it's not a blind offer but it keeps us on our toes always innovating and making sure that we are operating in the year that we are operating in. That [01:15:00] sounds silly, but I think there's a lot of salons out there that 10 years ago put something into place and haven't changed it. Then it just lets us know, like what Todd said, like what are their needs inside and outside and then, and what do they need from us?

Currently,, I, I see a lot of people coming out of hair school that I guess a generation of a lot of anxiety. It's just where they're at. So how do we meet those needs and how do we make sure they're taking care

of themselves? Sometimes it's drink some water. Sometimes I'm like, have you eaten today?

And the cool part in ours.

Todd: point out real, I wanna point out real quick too. A lot of our interview process is nothing to do with hair.

Jen: Right.

Todd: It's really getting to know people, really getting to understand, like I'll ask people, where'd you grow up? Where do you come from? Where's your family life? Like Tell me about

Jen: Well, because we can, I can teach the hair. We wanna make sure we wanna work with them.

Todd: Yeah, that too. But also understanding them

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: Like, people will come in and they're ready to be like, well, I'm good at foliage [01:16:00] and I'm good at whatever. And I'm, I'm always like, I don't care what you're good at. I want to, and I, I see this a lot in Facebook groups too and all other places where people are like, I had someone come in and they were great, but they can't do a full foil and under X amount

Jen: Of course they can't.

Todd: that come, that comes with

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: That doesn't just, you don't, you don't just do things faster. You have to do things. More often, like more repetitions, speed comes with that.

Jen: Yeah,

Todd: the other way around.

Jen: you need to be able to teach them or someone in your salon needs to be able to teach them.

Todd: Or it's like, how do you feel about retail? How do you sell retail?

Like all the, and, and very little of our meeting, if anything at all, unless it pertains to the individual because our, our meetings are very individual, not to go back in time, but very little of that is like KPI. know, you worked X amount of hours and X amount was full and you sold X amount of retail product. I don't care. We can look at the numbers. Like [01:17:00] people, they, the staff already knows if they sell retail or not.

Jen: Right.

Todd: They, they don't

Jen: And the ones that want to and don't, and I don't.

Todd: Right,

Jen: both awesome. Doesn't matter.

Todd: that's the other thing, that's another thing that we found with the genera different generations is some of them like to sell products and recommend products.

Some of them don't. So we don't really push that.

Jen: Correct.

Todd: Because we didn't build our salon on retail. built it on doing

Jen: Right.

Todd: So you just have to understand where you are coming from too. As part of that, I think I cut you off,

Jen: That's okay. I think the biggest thing is treating. The next generation as a hair pro, they may be a baby hair pro, and they, they need a lot to learn, but they, they're, they're still a professional and they may need help with that too. So again, in that interview process, like what are you willing to help? Like, I am willing to help develop people professionally. On the education side, their skillset, all of those things. Some have a bigger leeway. If we're talking about professionally, the leeway is quite short. Like these are my expectations. You may [01:18:00] get one or two talking to, and that's about it. 'cause you're here to do hair and there's an expectation with that on the side, completely different.

I will be so patient and give you so many tries if I feel like you're developing, you're really trying. Those are just different things. But I understand that both need to be met and sometimes, like back to what I was saying is some of my staff just needs to be developed now into the point where they're getting busier than they were and I need to tell 'em to pack a lunch and make sure they're drinking water so that they can service each client back to back.

However they're booked and they have food to eat to keep them going and keep their energy up.

Todd: you might. You might not have free time to run to the

Jen: Right, which they had six months ago, but now they don't have, and now they're so hungry, they're crashing. So I don't mind having those conversations. They don't bother me. I, I very much enjoy it. I don't mind if someone needs a mental health day, have it.

Enjoy it. Got you. But you best be going for a walk, drinking some water, having some good food, and taking care of yourself for the next day. If you can commit to that, I then great. Take your day off. Enjoy it. No hard feelings. [01:19:00] But this is what this generation needs. Who knows what the next one will.

And that just requires figuring that out and then having a plan.

Todd: Agreed. Yeah. I have some points to wrap up with

Jen: Okay.

Todd: you,

Jen: Sounds great.

Todd: else? So, first things first, if you're not on our email list, get on that. So if you want more business insights and little tips and stuff, I put out a weekly newsletter each week. I feel like it gets a little better each week.

We gain some audience and yeah, it seems like it's going pretty good. So jump in there. You can find that. notes or wherever. So like closing remarks. And Jen, you can jump in with anything. I just had a few things listed. These are all random, not, not necessarily in order, but you don't really need to have everything figured out to start.

Jen: Correct.

Todd: So if you're looking into opening a commission salon, and the reason we're harping on commission is because that's what we are. So if you haven't

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: to episode one, which is really episode 1 99. This little three, three part miniseries of how we run [01:20:00] our commission salon. Go back and listen to that, but you don't need to have everything figured out to start. The next thing I had was investing in your people will always be worth it because it's something that you see a lot

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: are like, well, I'm not gonna invest in these people. For them to just leave to run rent a

Jen: People will come and go. That's just where it's at, and it's up to them to create. It's up to you to create opportunity so that they see the value of why they would want to stay. It is what it is.

Todd: Exactly, and I would never want to not share knowledge with

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: because I'm scared they might leave. I want them to be the best they can be, whether they're here for one year

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: and that just is what it is. Your culture is built in your bad days, not your good days. those bad days, those little tests there, that's gonna show your staff, that's gonna show your, your hair pros, your employees, whatever you want to call them, that's gonna show them who you are, who you really are. So when your salon is flooding and there's no power and there's birds flying around [01:21:00] and there's just all the things and you are just like stressed and people can tell you're stressed, but you're

handling it in an organized fashion. Because that's how you have to run a

Jen: So true.

Todd: out, you're not screaming at people, losing

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: you're not acting like a moron, sorry, on, on the salon floor.

'cause I've

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: owners

Jen: You gotta keep it together.

Todd: like, yeah, that's wild to

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: But yeah, you have to keep your shit together. Really. No other way to say it there. So some stuff that I would leave you with to do is audit yourself. Audit your. Systems audit, whatever things you have in place that make your business run smoothly. Poke around in your booking software, poke around on your website. Do the links work. When's the last time you went on your own website and you started pushing buttons? I do that weekly. There's buttons that need to be fixed right now on our website, but I know about [01:22:00] them because I go through, I go through and I poke around. Walk into your salon or have somebody walk into your salon. Take a look. What do you see? What do you smell? What's the first thing? Is there like empty coffee cups everywhere? That's a no-no. At our salon were we look into your evolution as a leader.

Jen: Love that.

Todd: something that you just, you, you can't just set it and forget it with a business, it's not going to work. I wish you could, it would be a lot easier to just build it and then walk away, but it's not gonna it's not gonna work that way. That was really it. That's really all I had here.

Jen: Great.

Todd: Sign up for a newsletter, but I already did that part. What?

Jen: Sign up for the newsletter. It is good. You should sign up for it.

Todd: I was reading the notes.

Jen: Gotcha.

Todd: All right. Well, I guess thanks everyone

Jen: Yeah.