

Sink Handle Episode 9

Hello, everyone, and welcome to episode nine. Today, I want to talk about something that is so important. No matter what kind of business you have, no matter what stage of business you're at, this is one of my favorite things to talk about. I can't believe I got to episode nine without talking about it. But everyone out there could be in different stages of business, right? Some people have worked from home during the pandemic, and they're like, this is awesome. I don't want to go back to doing what I used to do. I'm going to start my own business. And then I think there's other people on the other end of the spectrum that have had their business for a while they know what they're doing right. So I think that although there is varied people out there, you guys are all different, you're doing different things, this doesn't matter. This is going to help every single one of you. It's important, every single one of you.

I want to ask you guys a couple questions before I start, just to get your thoughts going on this? Is your business totally dependent on one person? Now, maybe that's just you, because you are the only person in the business. Or maybe you have that right hand person that is always there and knows how to fix everything and knows how to do anything and you wouldn't know what you would do without them. You also feel like maybe all of the knowledge you have is in your head. A lot of times that's us, right? When we're when it's just us by ourselves. We do everything, and we know everything. And the whole business is based on that. And then you feel like you can't delegate to anyone because it's all in your head.

As an owner, do you feel like you can never take time off? Oh, right. Just want to go on vacation. In corporate, you could just take two weeks, I'm out of here and not care at all for that two weeks until you came back, right? You're like, whatever. But now, how do I take a vacation?

If you're growing quickly, you've got a good thing going. It's growing quickly. Do you feel like you're prepared for that? Do you feel like you can scale? Do you feel like you can onboard new people and train them well? If you grow, are you the bottleneck? Because all that knowledge is in your head? Are you the reason that things slow down? Because you're the everything? You're the one who does everything?

If there's more than one person in your business, is the work always consistent? So if one person does it, is it really good and another person does it, maybe? All these things are really important, right? And I think that we all come to a place where we want to grow, we want to make more money, we want to change things. We want to go on vacation and we can't, because we're not prepared. And the thing that we need is systems. Systems change everything. Once the knowledge is out of your head and written down, once there are training processes, so you can bring on people quickly, once all of the information is out and written down, other people can then learn how to do it quickly. You get so much freedom, the business can run without your every waking word in there.

How am I ever going to train someone. I don't have time to do the work myself? How am I going to have time to train someone? How do I do that? That's crazy. But it's the only way forward. You've already tapped out all your time. So you either get way more efficient, or you get more efficient at training other people to do the work to help you. You doing it slowly without processes and systems is no way to grow. It will be very, very painful.

So I mean systems is, I'm sure someone's listening to this. They're going to give me a hard time about definitions. But I don't want to get to be a stickler here. I just want to talk about basically like this is the ecosystem, your business, how all the systems work together. software you have, SOPs which are your standard operating procedures (they are like the the directions in the box), all of those, how do all of these systems work together to make your business more efficient, and well run.

Every time we do anything at the Reynolds OBM, there is an SOP for it. Every time we work in a client's business, we create SOPs. So that, number one, I always want a client to feel like they can leave me, which is a crazy crazy thing. But I want their business to be so well run that they are not dependent on me personally. Now, I want them to stay because I do a great job. But I want them to know that all of the things that I do are written down. And they are explained so that someone else could come in and pick that up and go with it. They're not beholden to me. I don't ever want to feel like someone's beholden to me. Because that's a crappy place to have to work. It's a crappy relationship. We create SOPs. We create systems, we create templates, all of these things to make everything repeatable, easy to understand, the consistency of the work stays at a high level. It is imperative whenever a person in my position like an ops person comes in and wants to make everything run better systems or the way. In our regular Director of Operations / OBM work we do this all the time. It's part of it. Every time anyone's doing something, learning something, creating a process, we write it down. That way, the next person knows how to do it.

But we also have just systems packages. So we have a package that we come in and basically document everything in the business because what if the only person who knows how to do all of your accounting or all of your sales, your invoicing, they go on maternity leave, nothing's written down. Does your whole business go under because someone is going to have a baby? That should be a wonderful experience, not something that instills terror. I've seen so many businesses that they took a huge dive when one person left, one person who was handling all of this work. Instead of delegated, they had abdicated their knowledge and everything else to this person, that person was handling their whole business. And that person left maybe they got sick, they got into a car accident, it doesn't have to be malicious. But all of a sudden, that business, all that knowledge, all that time spent, all of it is lost. And now you have to try to recreate it. While not getting all your clients mad at you, not having bad reviews on whatever you have a bad reputation for falling down because all of a sudden you can't get any of the work you promised done. And it was really important work. That is the thing that can kill a business.

To stop that. We are going to write things down and people are like, I don't have time for this. You know what, though? You do, you do have time for it. And it's important. It's important stuff. It's like taxes filling out your taxes like I don't have time for that, of course you do. You have to the government will come get you, I want you to understand this is such an important basic thing that you need in your business. So if you're just starting out, and you are so excited, you figured out how to work something and some

new software that you have, write it down. Even if you don't have a formal thing yet, write it down. Put it in one folder, put all the things you write down in one folder, and then the next time you're like, Oh my god, how do I do that again? You go there, you pull out the directions. Now you know how to do it again. Start slow. If you are a bigger business, then start chipping away at it. Chip away and try to start documenting what you do. And I think the funny thing is when you start going through and you start documenting all this kind of stuff, you go, why don't we do it this way. And there's so many times you're like, Huh, now that I see that in print, that seems like the silliest way to do that. Why don't we cut these three steps out, it would be way better. Then you just save yourself some time. You think you don't have time for this, but this is essential, and it will save you time. Because the alternative is losing time and money in the future. It costs a ton to reinvent the wheel every time. If you have to go teach yourself how to do something every time, disaster. It takes forever, and it's not right and it's not the same way you did it last time. It also costs a ton to hire the wrong person, then badly train them, then have to go look for another person. You lose money, you lose time. I just read a statistic yesterday that was 15 times a person's like salary is the cost of a bad hire. That's insanity.

And having systems to train people means that you do not have to stand there training them. You can have an entire training manual. This is how to do this. This is how to log into here. This is how to where all our stuff is. This is in last pass. This is where all of our systems are. They can read that. This can be in video form, whatever is easier for you be creative, but having something that you can hand to a new hire and see like here, here's how we work. Here's all our systems. They're going to learn how you do everything. And then all the work will get consistently done the right way. Instead of everyone being like, I have no idea what I'm doing, I'm just going to try to scrape this together. And then the client going "This isn't how we did it last time." Being consistent, having systems that makes all of that so much easier.

So you're saying to me, yeah, so I don't have time for this. I don't even know how to do this and I can't really afford to bring someone in. Okay. So the first thing I want you to start doing is you're going to make a folder somewhere I have everything in Drive. We have an SOP folder, we have training manuals, we have an ops manual, all those kind of things but start small. Pick a place Dropbox, Drive, whatever, make a folder that says like SOPs or training or whatever it is. And then as you go through your business, let's say you want to create an invoice for clients, that is something you can totally delegate out, you are not the only one who can do things. Remember we talked, we talked about how there's lots of people out there could probably do a lot of things better than you can. So you just want to give them the knowledge to be able to go do it better. Let's say you want to write down how to do an invoice, right? Like you have a specific way of things you want a certain description and the thing, there is a software called Loom, it's free, it comes up as a Chrome extension. And as you go to do an invoice for someone, you record your screen. You can even block out the thing where like the little circle on the right where it has your face. If you're working in your pajamas, you can just make that your headshot or whatever you put on there. Don't even have to be on the screen, but it records you and you can walk through creating that invoice. Go here, do this, whatever and they're seeing what you're doing and you can talk through it. Just like if you were sitting next to someone. And then you can take that and either 1) put it, save the link or save the video or however you want to do it in that folder, 2) you can give it to someone else. And then they can take that video and create an SOP for it. So that the next time, everyone knows how to do it. And if you want to be really crazy, you can take that video and say this is

how to do invoicing here, it's now your job. They can watch the video, create the SOP, and then say, Oh, I have a question. You answer that question. And they're like, Okay, I got it. I'm going to do this from now on. One thing off your plate. And that is how you're slowly going to move to being able to hire people or get help in some way. Because this thing is this whole business thing is crazy. And it can be really hard to get all the things done, especially when you've done one thing that if you've come from corporate and on one thing and now you have to do all the things and it's massively overwhelming.

And then you do the thing and you figure it out and you don't write it down, then you go back. And now you have no idea what the hell you did last time. This is the way, this is the way, if you are a Mandalorian fan. I've married a nerd. So systems are the way that's going to help you to get your business going. If you all of a sudden, there's so many times where you like this new startup comes in, and you order from them and everything's a disaster, right? Like the customer service is a mess. And then the shipping is all messed up and they mess your order up because they grew so fast. And they had no systems in place or not enough systems. So they don't have these these processes so that the work is consistent. They know what's going on. Maybe they had to hire a whole bunch of people and they couldn't train them properly. Every time there's like a huge problem with pandemics all the sudden they have like a ton of people that they needed to shop in the grocery store for you. And they were not trained always very well because it was a mass hiring. And you end up with a whole bunch of things delivered that you did not order that happened.

We do not want to do everything ourselves for the rest of our lives. Or maybe you do, maybe you want to be the only person in your business about your life like you, that's cool. Like you want to stay small, great. But you want to be as efficient as possible. So you're not working 100 hours a week. So writing these things down getting more systems, and then you can move on. Look, this is the basic stuff here, I'm just showing you why you need these processes. And then you can start building things. You can have things automated, there are things like Dubsado, where someone could go to your website, look at your packages, buy right there, sign your contract and pay without you even being there. There are those kind of automations that can happen. And that's a little down the line. I think right now I want you to acknowledge that systems would be great. It's great that we could be prepared for things, things can be more efficient. And while you're making these systems, you're going to really look at like how your processes are now and if we really need to do any of these things, or why am I doing it this way? Or why is it take an hour to do this when it could take 12 minutes?

So, going through your systems, and do it little by little start thinking, especially if you're thinking that you want to bring on help start thinking, what can I easily see someone else helping me with? If I give them the information, can they create invoices? Can they send emails? Can they organize things? Like whatever the thing is? How do we do it? And how do we do it consistently? Obviously, you can see my enthusiasm today. This to me is the whole thing. It makes your business so much easier. So when it was just me in the beginning, it was just me doing one on one with clients. That meant that we went on vacation, and I was talking to clients, you know, something would come up and I didn't really have a lot of backup. It was just me. So I wanted to bring people to my team. So I had backup and I had help. Creating systems helped me with that. So whether you are by yourself, whether you're just starting out, whether you have a team, whether you're been in business for a while, systems make everything much more efficient.

They save you money. They definitely save you time. They enable you to bring on help, without having to reinvent the wheel every time. Being able to bring on someone and train them quickly to do whatever you have. So important So many of us want this business for freedom, right? We need to remember that. No one wants to work a billion hours a week, doing nothing, like busy work. You want to do the good stuff, the fun stuff, the things that get you excited. So if you can start writing down these things, getting them documented, you can start handing them off. So go into Loom, go in there and just start videotaping yourself doing things. You don't even have to be on camera. No one cares. They just want the knowledge. Start videotaping yourself. Even if you haven't hired someone, even if you don't really plan on hiring anyone. Just knowing that you can go back and look at that for reference and know what you're doing? Really, really, really helpful.

I want you to be prepared. I want you to be prepared for crazy growth, right? Like that's the big dream. Somebody, somewhere, Oprah says, Kelly Reynolds is the greatest thing that's ever happened. And then bam. 100 people are calling me. I am not ready for that. To be honest, I'm not because it's not where I've been. I haven't ever been ready for 100 people to call me right this second but I'm getting ready now. That was the difference between being only one on one. And then that first step to resilience was having a team and having training and having SOPs. We SOP everything now. Then the next step will be more building out of systems so that if you know Oprah thinks I'm awesome, then I'm ready.

Because if you have these big goals, you have to be ready for growth. Otherwise it's going to be a disaster.

Get into your business a little bit. Start taking care of yourself, write things down, get ready. You're going to be great. You I want you to be ready for like a crazy, crazy year. I mean, this year has already been crazy, but I mean, in a good way, not in a pandemic, the world's ending kind of way.

I know you can do this. It's gonna be great. I'll talk to you next week.