

# Small But Mighty Agency Podcast

## Episode 63: The Hidden Cost of DIY versus Delegation

### Speakers: Audrey Joy Kwan

#### Audrey Joy Kwan

What keeps you from growing your marketing, consulting or creative business with a lean team? Maybe you've been burned by making a bad hire or dislike the idea of managing others. Maybe you don't know how it can be profitable, or you might believe that nobody can do it better than you. I've heard these all before - there's a way through- and today, we're going to dig into the hidden cost of letting these fears keep you from growing an agency. Tune in...

#### Audrey Joy Kwan

Welcome to the Small But Mighty Agency Podcast. If you're a marketer or consultant, or a creative on a journey of growth from solopreneur to agency owner, follow along because I pull back the curtains on the realities of growing and running a scalable, service-based business and building lean team. I'm your host, Audrey Joy Kwan, I know what it takes to build an agency, whether it's from solo to three, five or twenty. I've done it, including supporting an agency owner to sell and exit. I've coached and consulted over 120 marketers, creatives, and consultants. And I've been behind the scenes of seven figure businesses. I also have a master's degree in communications specializing in organizational development. All this to say, I know what it takes to grow lead and operate a multiple six, and seven figure small but mighty agency. And here on this podcast is where we'll dive right in.

#### Audrey Joy Kwan

Hey friends, welcome back to the Small But Mighty Agency Podcast. Today I want to cover the hidden cost of thinking that its easier for you to do everything in your business because you've either been burned by making a bad hire, dislike the idea of managing others, don't know how it can be profitable or have this underlying belief that nobody can do it better than you.

After coaching and consulting one-on-one with over 120 service providers who are marketers, consultants and creatives, I know that entrepreneurs have an incredible capacity to take on a lot, but everybody has a breaking point.

The challenge with business owners, and I'm speaking from being a coach and consultant and having experienced this myself, is that we get close to the edge of burnout and then try to avoid falling over the cliff. The better path is to stay as far from that cliff as possible, so we don't have to worry about falling over.

And that's why I've always advocated investing in getting client delivery off your plate because that's how you grow your business sustainably and avoid falling over the cliff and landing in burnout.

I get it – most people address pain when they are in pain. When you are in pain, you look for a pain reliever. Most people are less likely to look for the thing that helps them avoid pain. That's why it's easier to sell Advil than a vitamin.

An Advil is reactive, and a vitamin is proactive. The vitamin is the right team structure, clear processes, effective communication, and leadership.

This is a vitamin episode. It's an episode about being proactive instead of reactive. If you don't have growing pains in your business yet, lean in – this is your vitamin. And if you are experiencing growing pains, turn up the volume - this is your Advil.

What if you could see ahead and put in the structure to build a marketing, consulting or creative business that has more freedom and joy and less regret for a life you wish you were living?

That's what inspired this episode.

All of this was inspired by my trip to Toronto in March. I live in Vancouver, and I have family in Toronto. My family trip reminded me of the hidden cost of believing that it's easier for you to do everything in your business.

Life is a lot shorter than we think it is. My uncle owned a business for 30 years and worked his entire life to grow the business.

Last year he was diagnosed with lung cancer, and he never smoked a day in his life. Sitting across from him at his favourite dim-sum restaurant in Toronto, I know he's fighting. I know he hasn't given up yet. During that 7-hour day together, he said over and over again: "I wish I didn't spend so much time at work when I was younger."

He reminded me of why I started my business. I lost my mom to pancreatic cancer. Losing my mom three weeks after finding out she had cancer lit a fire under me to create a different future for myself and build the business I own today.

My business is built on what I know I am here on earth to do, to help courageous business owners gain more time and freedom by helping you pivot and create delivery systems that a lean team can support. I started my business because I missed out on moments I would never get back. I want our impact at my company to create a different reality for people brave enough to have a business.

If the years have shown me one common denominator is this —so many creatives, consultants and marketers start their businesses for more opportunities and freedom. So many of you feel stuck in the business you created.

My parents and uncle immigrated to Canada and came to this country with very little.

Until the day he sold the business, my uncle was involved in all of the day-to-day because he was afraid to invest in the help needed.

He kept doing the same thing over and over, and he never took the step to invest in someone to show him how to get out of the day-to-day.

In hindsight, he's been thinking about how much of time he could have gotten back but the truth is he doesn't have the luxury of hindsight. He's making every day count now.

Not investing in the proper support means you stay stuck in the do-it-all-yourself trap.

And when you're really close to the work, it can be hard to see your client delivery system as something a team can deliver in full. And you might feel that nobody can do it better than you.

Truth: Nobody will be 100% like you, but that doesn't mean their quality of work is any less; it's different and different isn't negative.

And yes, processes and Standard Operating Procedures are essential to any marketing, consultant or creative service-based business, but processes also require the right team structure, effective communication, and leadership.

If you ever wrote an SOP and expected it to solve your growth challenges, you know what I am talking about. It's not a one-trick pony. One trick doesn't solve the big picture.

Growth requires processes, structure, communication, and leadership, and that's what we help leaders do to grow from one to a team.

If you want more freedom in your business, you must invest in things that will pay itself back repeatedly — getting your delivery system structured and client delivery off your plate with a lean team is one of those investments.

I want for you the things that give you joy and life. Life is just too short.

So, here's the summary: if you're bumping up against capacity, it's time to look at how to strategically get client delivery off your plate and keep it off your plate.

Like most business owners with exceptional bandwidth, you're holding onto more than you need to. You can tell yourself it's okay, but did you build your business so you can be OK or thrive in your genius fully?

Let's thrive fully.

That's it for this episode friends I'll see you on the next one. And if you want to continue the conversation about growing, leading and operating a marketing, consultant, or creative business with a lean team, join us at our free strategic connections roundtable, where we continue the conversation. It happens once a month; go to [audreyjoykwan.com/roundtable](https://audreyjoykwan.com/roundtable) for the details or click the link in the show notes. See you there.

### **Audrey Joy Kwan**

Hey, there. Thanks for hanging out with me at the small but mighty agency podcast. If you enjoyed this episode, it would mean the world to me if you hit the follow or subscribe button in your podcast app and share it with a friend and I'll see you in the next one.

