

Small But Mighty Agency Podcast

Episode 90: How I Created a Track Record of Tripling Growth for Agencies With This Strategic System

Speakers: Audrey Joy Kwan

Audrey Joy Kwan

What is the approach that has helped me build a track record for tripling growth for agency owners?

Let's start with what it's not – it's not about quick fixes or one-size-fits-all solutions.

It's about a strategic system that has taken me years to distill into a lens (like a magnifying glass) you can use today.

Like many experts, I had the expert's curse, which means it's hard for me to step outside my brain to see how to simplify my complex knowledge into more straightforward, more accessible concepts for you to use without losing the depth.

But a magical thing happened when I went from sharing words to turning it into a resource that shows you the connections.

I bridged the gap so you can see the system as a whole and use it to identify patterns in your agency and get to the solutions faster.

Get to know the strategic system that has helped me build a track record for tripling growth for agencies and learn how you can use it, too.

Don't miss this one.

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 podcast; we're in a series all about how to grow the leaders that move your agency forward, and that includes you if you're the agency owner.

The most powerful thing a leader can do is know how to identify gaps and solve problems quickly. That's what I do as a consultant and coach; I know how to look and where to look.

Imagine if you or your leaders were given that same strategic system that helped me create a track record of tripling growth for agency owners. Powerful right?

That's what I'm here to do today. And before we dig in, I'd like to invite you to share this episode with another agency owner or leader if you find value in this episode because while this podcast episode is minutes, I have spent 10 years perfecting this framework and 2 years distilling it into a strategic system and lens for you to use.

Now, do you know that big red easy button made popular by Staples?

It's no surprise that the popularity of the red button took off as a toy you can buy for your desk because who doesn't want a magical button that solves your challenge with a press?

Is my strategic system an easy button?

The easy button is a great marketing concept, and you see that concept across different industries today. Different companies and different people are trying to sell you the easy button.

I'm not selling you an easy button; I want to give you a lens that will help you save time and money.

Usually, the easy button that service-based business owners like agency owners get sold into are things like 'buy this template' or 'buy this cookie-cookie playbook', and it will solve your challenge, whether that's marketing, systems or team development.

Sometimes, the smartest of us get caught in this trap because why wouldn't we want it to be that easy? But growing a business, agency or not, is not cookie-cutter.

I think of cookie-cutter solutions like a fad diet; you try it for seven days before you realize it's a one-size-fits-all and you are not one-size-fits-all. The fad diet didn't consider the realities of you.

For example, if you're an agency owner, no cookie-cutter playbook can account for the nuances between agencies with different service niches, like plumbing vs. dental vs. technology. I'm speaking from experience because I coach and consult with many niche-specific agencies, and those are three examples of niche agencies I support (and they are not cookie-cutter).

The most effective coaches and consultants are not the ones who are cookie-cutter installing an old playbook into your business just because it worked years ago, especially in an agency business, because that would mean you literally are not innovating.

The most effective coaches and consultants help you think differently and make better strategic decisions for you and your business based on knowing how to evaluate the situation.

This is also why I know having a niche is necessary. My niche knowledge in agencies means I'm stealthy at knowing where to look, untangling the complex and navigating challenges.

My clients consistently tell me that I see gaps quickly and connect the dots quickly, or in other words, I think fast and don't waste time.

So, for over two years, I've been trying to download how my brain quickly and accurately evaluates agency challenges into a framework. The goal is to give you a powerful tool, not a template or somebody else's playbook, but a framework to guide you to see the patterns and solutions that have become second nature to me working with agencies for 10 years.

Like many experts, I had the expert's curse, which means it's hard for me to step outside my brain to see how to simplify my complex knowledge into more straightforward, more accessible concepts for you to use without losing the depth.

The magical thing happened when we decided to turn it into a visual resource that is the Hey Achievers Framework. If you go to the show notes in your app, you can get the Hey Achievers Framework.

The visual resource bridged the abstract into a concept that can be understood at a glance.

You can see the connections and relationships that were not immediately apparent when I was trying to explain it verbally or written. You can see the system as a whole and use it to identify patterns and solutions, which leads to more clarity on how to grow past the challenge.

So speaking of challenge, let's see how my Framework can give you a strategic lens on how to look and where to look, helping you grow faster.

If you're an agency owner trying to remove yourself from client delivery, or you're at capacity and trying to figure out how to build your team, typically, three challenges present themselves: consistency, accountability and efficiency.

When one of these challenges pops up, you can use the Hey Achievers Framework to clarify which pillars need your attention.

In part three of this series, which was the last episode, we dug into the three pillars with more detail. You can return to that episode for more insight into the strategic pillars of structure, standards and habits. The link is in the show notes.

My goal is to give you an evaluation framework that saves you time. When there is a consistency, accountability or efficiency challenge, a marriage between two pillars isn't working together. Knowing where to look saves your time and money.

It's four easy steps to use the framework.

1. Name the challenge that is stalling movement forward
2. Identify whether the gap is consistency, efficiency or, accountability
3. See the Hey Achievers Framework to identify the two pillars
4. Analyze what is not in sync between the two pillars

Here are a few agency-specific examples:

Inconsistency can present itself

Like Inconsistent execution across different channels leads to disjointed client experience and missed opportunities for results, leaving you feeling like you are a broken record.

It can also show up as Different service levels provided to different clients without a clear reason leading to confusion among your team and clients.

Another example is Priorities, goals, or directives frequently change without clear communication, and cohesion is missing.

When you identify inconsistencies, the marriage between the standards and habit pillars is not working in sync, that suggests a misalignment between standards to set the expectations and habits to ensure consistent application.

Now let's look at Accountability:

Accountability can show up as

- The Team failing to communicate effectively about progress, challenges or changes to project scope leading to a breakdown in collaboration and trust
- A Lack of clear roles and responsibilities over who is accountable for what, resulting in tasks being overlooked or poorly executed.
- Or maybe Work requires significant revision, increasing the workload because additional time and resources need to be reallocated.

When you identify accountability challenges, the marriage between your standards and structure is not working together. This discrepancy indicates that while you may have high standards in place, the existing structure—comprising processes, systems, and roles—may not be adequately supporting or reinforcing these standards to ensure accountability.

Last but not least, let's look at Efficiency

- IT can show up as holding too many meetings, and the meetings lack focus and clear objectives
- Or maybe The team says they are busy, and you feel busy, but the right things are not being prioritized. There is a misallocation of effort and the less important tasks are at the expense of critical ones.
- It can also show up as your Approval process having too many layers and is slow causing bottlenecks in decision-making

When you have efficiency challenges, the relationship between your structure and habits is not working in sync. Structure and habits have to reinforce one another. The structure may not be supporting the most efficient habits, or the established habits may not be leveraging the structure effectively.

In Summary

As a leader, there is nothing more powerful than learning how to identify gaps and problem solve quickly.

You can ignore a big pink elephant in the room but that doesn't mean it's not there and in the way of progress.

I hope that showing you how to evaluate the gaps in your agency helps you arrive at the right solution faster and get rid of the big pink elephant in the room.

If you're experiencing a gap, whether it's in consistency, efficiency or accountability in your agency, there is no one-size-fits; you have to look at the marriage or the sync between your pillars. With the Hey Achievers Framework, you know how to look and where to look.

Again, here are the four steps to use the framework

5. Name the challenge that is stalling movement forward
6. Identify whether the gap is consistency, efficiency or, accountability
7. See the Hey Achievers Framework to identify the two pillars
8. Analyze what is not in sync between the two pillars

There you have it, our strategic system to help you clarify you gaps and focus on the right solutions so you can triple your growth and build a high-performing agency.

I'm here to help you grow your leadership and move your agency forward. Book a consult with me see how we can use our Hey Achievers Framework to help you grow a business that gives you back more freedom.

I'll see you on the next one.

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.