

BUSINESS MADE EASY[!]



Episode 70

Pick Up The Phone

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Good day. Good day and welcome to The Business Made Easy podcast where we make business easy. Jason Skinner, your host here for another week of the podcast that is all about growing your business, growing your bank balance and giving you a better life as a result. Thank you so much for joining me. I hope you're well out there. This is the Christmas edition of the podcast episode seventy. That's right, Christmas 2018 and I am just absolutely stoked that we have landed at Christmas. It's one of the most favorite times of the year. I love everything that goes with it. The food, friends and family and just kicking back and relaxing.

I'm gonna have a three-week, vacation this year which I'm really looking forward to. It's been a big slog these last six months because, just had so much going on and uh, coupled with the fact that I have this strange problem that I always seem to uh, see the end, see the end insight and in my mind, thinks and acts like I've already arrived there which is a real problem because it's started doing about two weeks -- I started relaxing about two weeks before I actually should and it just makes it all that bit hard to get across the finishing line.

But anyway, that's my problem and uh, and then [Inaudible] and then I, I work on that continually but yeah, just uh, have this strange thing that I do. But anyway, today's episode, we got a great episode before I get into it, I just want to thank everybody who has been leaving reviews on iTunes for me. Thank you so much. I appreciate you doing that. I do read every single one of them, uh, and, and I really lo-love uh, reading your feedback and hearing your feedback. So thanks so much for doing that. I really appreciate it.

An actual fact, I've got a notification the other day that we were number one I think it was in South Korea for business and management. So that was a, that

was a bit of a surprise. I got this email come through. So the listeners of South of Korea, thank you very much. I really appreciate you listening in and giving the uh, giving me, the show your support as well.

If you haven't already done so, feel free to uh, join our Facebook community. It's over there at businessmadeeasy.com/community and there's a free Facebook group that you can join. And um, and yeah, join uh, other business owners all sharing ideas and wins and um, tips and tricks and whatever else they're, uh, they're up to as well. I'm over there as well. Over there helping you uh, with your business should you need it already so that's business made easy podcast dot com slash community. Now, got an interesting episode today in the sense that -- well, I think it's interesting because it's a topic that I feel very, very passionate about. And I might share a couple of little stories to lead you into this, uh, into this topic. Have you ever had one of those situations in business, where a customer or someone will email you uh, -- it doesn't have to be customer -- anyone, someone will email you and you respond, with the email and then they come back with a further question and then you respond with another email. And you get into this email ping pong going on. Basically, the questions might uh, get longer. Uh, your responses might get longer but you can also misinterpret a lot of what is being said in those email, in that email volley as well. So, I don't know about you, I get this uh -- well, I used to -- get this all the time uh, because people tend to just flock to email as the first port of contact these days.

This is something like -- I mean I read the statistic, every worker, office worker will send about a hundred and twenty one emails per day. So you look at how many people are working out there and um, they're all sending out a hundred and twenty one emails a day. That's a lot of email going around, uh, around the web and my big thing with this is that, email is great. Email, um, serves a purpose.

It's a very efficient and fast way to communicate with somebody and share communication with a customer and then you can move on to your next task. And if you go to the to do list, anything like the size of mine, you know, sending an email to get things done or responding to questions, really is an attractive proposition because you can just send that email off and the customer gets a response instantly. There's no lag time between the response.

I remember back in the day when I first started in business in the accounting space in business, you know, customer would send in a letter or a fax and, basically, no one expected to response for a couple days because you had to read the letter consider your advice then you type up your advice and or the response to the letter and then you'd post it out. So we had typing pools of people just sitting there typing letters for us all day. and we don't tend to have that so much anymore because we've just so attuned now to just sending an email. there's no need to post it and posts are just expensive anyway. But what's happened with that people's expectations have also reason., that back in the day, people were happy to wait two or three days for a considered response to an actual question that they may have had. But nowadays if someone sends you an email, it's almost this expectation that you're sitting there waiting to have that email and answer it. Like you've just been sitting hoping that person would email you so that you could respond. And that's almost how it's getting and my thing is that, when we're doing email like that and we're sending email communication back and forth all the time particularly with customers and prospective customers, my big thing with this is that, we are not building relationships and rapport with those customers, and potential customers. Yes, we need to send emails. Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying, we should be an email and get back to writing letters" or anything like that. But what I am suggesting is that, we really need to look at and gauge when it's appropriate to

send an email, to a question and when it's not. When it's more beneficial to actually have a phone conversation. Pick up the phone and have conversation with that customer or better still, a Skype or Zoom call where we can have a face to face communication.

Now, not everyone can business international these days. I mean the world is a very connected and small place when it comes to where our customers are located. And particularly mine, I've got customers everywhere.

But we do now have the technology that we can still facilitate a meaningful face to face conversation via tools like Zoom and Skype -- which I put links to on a show notes -- but we can now have video conversations that are totally clear. you can read what's going on the other person's face and you can build relationship, build the relationship of trust and rapport with that customer as opposed to just sending an email. And I'll give you a classic example of something that happened to me recently. Somebody emailed me a question that concerned about something that they didn't fully understand. Yeah, but what they didn't tell me in the email was that they didn't understand it. What they told me in the email was that they weren't happy with it and they needed something. They needed they just weren't happy with that outcome. Now, my first response was to get back and start replying with an email and I started writing at out an email and it daunt to me that was the wrong thing to be doing. What I should be doing is picking up the phone and seeking for the clarification around what the concern was because that the email itself was so one-dimensional that it didn't express any emotion whatsoever. It had no -- it was quite short. So my first thing is that the person's angry, you know? We start to deduce all these ideas in our head that may or might not be correct. If someone writes you an email and says "Hi Jason, I'm not happy, I'm not happy with this." Well, yeah, you could assume that they're not happy but are they

angry not happy or they disappointed not happy? Are they concerned not happy? Like there's different types of not happy. Those words, "not happy" could mean a lot of different things.

And so we lose a lot of that in email and this is something I trained my team in all the time, is that we can't just keep going into volleys of emails to solve everything. It's almost like putting a band-aid over the problem and just hoping that it's going away so we can move on to the next task. That's just damaging our relationships with our customers and it's being reactive in our relationship with a customers. It's not being proactive with the relationship of our customer. And the proactive thing to do then which I did in this situation was pick up the phone and seek for the clarification. Ask deeper questions of that person to be able to get a full understanding of what the situation is before I answer the problem. Because if we just react by answering a question like an email like that, if we just response by email and answer that immediate question, I might be answering it wrong. I might not be addressing the full, concern. And I see this time and time again in business and you, I'm sure you've all seen it where you've thought something's dealt with and then the next thing is something started of quite innocently has this flared up into this unrecognizable mess because you know, people have not taken the time to clearly read the email understand it and get, get clarity around before responding. And particularly in today's society where we all answering emails on the fly you know? We've got email on our mobile phones so it's quick and easy to get, flick our response off. But are we really considering what the question is and the tone in which it's been, being communicated? And that is the downside of email. You don't get those tone; you don't get to understand the tone of the question or the conversation, the context. That it's, it's easy to get all that wrong and so my thing is this, that I want to be able to build a relationship. You wanna build relationship with your

customer. You wanna be able to communicate clearly with your customer. Then you have to pick up the phone and have a conversation.

And a lot of people don't like the phone, I know that a lot of people find it time consuming; a waste of time. But I tell you what? If that customer's valuable to you, then you need to be picking up the phone and building that relationship. Another great thing that you can do, even if it's not a question but actually send out -- and particularly if you are online business or most of your work is done online and over, over the email and messaging services -- a great thing is to do is reach out to some customers and actually say, "Hey, would you mind getting on a Zoom call with me and having a quick chat about XYZ or I just wanna hear how you're going or how you, you bought this office recently. I'd love to have your feedback or hear how you went with it. have you got five minutes to jump on a Zoom call with me? [Here's a link.](#)" And what this does is actually shows, I care but also to build that human to human relationship. To build your brand, to build you as someone who is caring and wants to reach out and get and have a relationship with that person and I think that's hugely valuable. And you know, I have so many instances of this situation happening where I'm -- and I know now, a lot of institutions, banks and all those sort of things are just flicking emails out now. we get uh, geez, I don't know how many emails a day we get, but you know, it's a ton of emails coming out all requesting stuff and it is easy to just want to just get rid of it and deal with it. I have this thing called inbox zero which, you know, I've, I've, as an OCD sufferer I've always got to have my inbox empty. So there is a real tendency to, to just wanna empty or answer the question and, and uh, and move on. But I tell you, we're not building relationships by doing that and that's, my message today is that, I want us to pick up the phone have a, have a chat., as I say if, if the phone is not appropriate, then Zoom which is even better

'cause it's face to face, using the camera. You know, so easy to do and so it builds that rapport and the relationship.

So what I have implemented in our business and something that's I think making a difference and, and you can do this if you've got staff, if you've got a team of people, a rule that you could implement into your business is to, that if you have to go back more than once with an answer to something, then it's time to pick up the phone. So we have that rule in our company that basically, if somebody asks us a question and we answer it and they come back with a further question, it's time to pick up the phone. And the reason for that is that, we clearly haven't answer the, clearly haven't answered the, all their questions. And back to my case study where my life example where I had the person that wasn't happy, it actually turned out that it wasn't they weren't happy, they didn't understand the context of what it was that done for them. It was clearly a lack of understanding around what, what the, what the actual situation was. So if I had just gone back and said, "Oh I'm sorry, you're not happy. tough, there's not more I can do about it." But let's not gonna build rapport. but I picked up the phone and I was able to explain step by step by step and when I was able to ask questions and seek further clarity, I could hear in their voice whether there was any concerns. You could pick up a lot in a person's voice, when you're talking to them on the phone. You can hear whether or not there's doubt or there's, happiness or sadness or frustration or anger. You could hear all those things come through. You don't get that in an email and I said so it's really one-dimensional.

But as it was glad I did pick up the phone because I was able to clearly explain to the person exactly what had happened, why it was etcetera, etcetera. And as it turned out, there wasn't anything that we'd done wrong. There wasn't anything that was need to be concerned about. It was just seeking of further clarification,

you know? But the email didn't say that. So really, really, really important stuff I think if you are in a business that is dealing with customers, dealing with which we all are, really because if we're in business we got customers -- if you are dealing with people in that regard, you need to pick up the phone and think about that rule if I've got to go back more than once with an answer, it's time to pick up the phone and jump on the call and get it resolved. And you'll be surprised what you learned and what comes out of that conversation. In a lot of cases you might find you even develop more business you know? It gives you an opportunity to ask further questions around their question and learned more about that customer. So I really love that concept. That's why I labeled, titled this week's episode, Pick Up the Phone. It really something, I think it's a lost skill lost art that it's not being practiced enough. And certainly, they want to go back to writing letters but and posting them or letters responses but certainly I would say pick up the phone and have that chat with your customers.

Alrighty, that's all I have for you this week. I hope you found that helpful and beneficial. Something to think about. I want you to think about, the relationships that you have with your customers and could they be improved with better communication? Could you pick up the phone and make some initial just to say, "Good day and how are you going or how did you go with this product? Or is everything to your liking? did everything meet your expectations? You know, that's great, if you are on a business or service type business that you're providing services or whatever to a customer. Always seek that and see that you're exceeding their expectations. Because that's what we need to do, people. We need to exceed our customer's expectations because we need to 'cause it's a competitive world out there you know? And we need to be delivering all the time. So that's my message for you this week. Pick up the phone, have a chat with your customers and I hope you get some great we get benefit out of doing

that. I'd love to hear your feedback. If you've got any feedback about this and whether not you've had any experience in this area where it's benefited you from doing so, drop me a line at Jason@businessmadeeasypodcast.com and yeah, share that with us or share it over in the Facebook group as well even better. Still at businessmadeeasypodcast.com/community.

Alrighty, thank you so much for joining me and I do wish you all safe and happy merry Christmas. I hope to get to have a bit of a break and lots of good food. I do wanna also thank you all for joining me each week on the podcast. I really do value you and appreciate you'd listening in. I love putting this show together and helping as many business owners as I can with the various tips and tricks. I also wanna thank my team for who show up every week and make sure this show goes out in the best possible quality and right on time every Friday morning, there to make sure the show comes out. And so, thank you, guys. I really appreciate you too and Mia, I'm going to also wish you a merry Christmas and hand you over the microphone to take us out. And until next week guys, here's to your success. Take us out, Mia. Merry Christmas everybody.

Mia: Thanks Jason. Merry Christmas everybody. Merry Christmas to you too, Jason and see you all in the new year. You've been listening to The Business Made Easy podcast where we make business easy, easy, easy.

Thank you for Tuning In

We hope you enjoyed this episode.

If you have any feedback or questions about the content in this episode please don't hesitate to drop me a line at jason@businessmadeeasypodcast.com I would love to hear from you.

Other things that you might like to help grow your business.

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Thank you again,
I appreciate you!

*Regards
Jason*