

SHERRIE STOROR

Ep. 20 | How a business growth plan can generate massive growth with Hayley Van De Ven.

Show Guests:

Hayley Van De Ven –RE/MAX Results, Brisbane & Mackay

Overview:

Are you ready to take your business to the next level, but don't know where to start?
Wondering what strategies and systems to implement to promote massive growth?

Today I'm sitting down with Hayley Van De Ven, CEO of RE/MAX Results in Brisbane and Mackay! Hayley has grown her business exponentially over the past 6 months and just last week were named the #1 RE/MAX in Australia for 2020 YTD at the RE/MAX Awards last week!

Hot Gossip:

My 51-Point Checklist: This is a step-by-step 51-point checklist that takes you through going from off-market to on market to exchange to settled to sold. Get my step-by-step process to follow from social media, managing your CRM, working your pipeline sellers, letterbox drop emails to text messages and videos to send. This will help you build your stock list even in this challenging time. You can download it for free from [here](#).

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Sherrie:

Hi, and welcome to episode 20 (twenty) of the build your best life video podcast series. I'm your host, Sherry Storor.

Let's get into today's episode and I'd love to introduce you to Hayley Van De Ven, who is one of my one-on-one agency clients. And I work with her in terms of the increasing, the revenue and the growth in her business. Now her agency, Remax Results has offices, both in Brisbane and also in Mackay. And it's consistently ranked as the top three in the Remax network here in Australia. On top of all of that, she consistently has agents that are appearing in the top 10, and she has been a successful agent since the age of 18. She is passionate about building a rent roll and she lives in Seven Hills with her husband, Dan and her two children, Jordy and Cooper who are under the age of six.

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Sherrie:

So, Hayley, welcome to the Build Your Best Life podcast.

Hayley:

Thank you so much for having me, I'm really pumped to be here.

Sherrie:

Well, I say this every time I always get so excited with my clients when they're a part of the podcast series. And I think it's because, I fall in love with everybody and getting to know themselves and their personal journeys and you are no different because I absolutely love working with you. And I'm so invested in what it is that you have built, what you're building. And of course, you as an individual, but I was trying to remember how we even first originally met. Do you recall? I do remember that you've been along to a number of my breakfast as part of the women in real estate series and yeah.

Hayley:

Yeah.

Sherrie:

And you've also purchased some of my letter packs and my toolkits and I think then just essentially, we started reaching out. I think we became social media friends maybe. And then, from there you asked to do some coaching and it was quite interesting because when you first initially started, I think you were all a bit nervous and a bit scared about getting on board and you're like, Sherrie, would you just see me once a month? Do you remember? Thanks so much for tuning in.

Hayley:

Yeah, I do. And it's really weird because, because of social media and I find this as well, sometimes I feel like I know people far better than I actually do. And I remember when we met, finally, I actually do remember this now. And we kind of looked at each other, like, is this the first time we're meeting? Because we were like, this is really, really cool at your event to finally meet you face to face.

And we did have a really funny moment, but I guess I didn't really have an expectation when I first came to you for coaching. I just knew that I wanted to grow my business exponentially. And because I kind of got to this place, well this point on my own, I would say, I guess, I didn't know how to take it to the next level or how to level up our business to use your phrase, because like how do what you don't know right?

Sherrie:

Well, I must admit, I've loved seeing you level up in your business and initially you, I agreed that yes, I would see you once a month. And after we did that first session, you were like, I'm all in Sherrie, sign me up!

And it's been about eight months now, ever since, but I think when I have a look at where you have been where you are today and where you are growing, it's been an amazing journey. And really these changes that you have made mindset wise, but also that you've implemented into your business are pretty impressive. And I just want to take a moment to truly acknowledge that, but look, let's, let's hit the rewind button and let's talk about your career and your journey, because that's a lot about what these podcasts are all around. And I wanted to, I guess, ask you, how did you get into the industry? Did you fall into it or was this a conscious decision?

Hayley

I wasn't supposed to be in Australia still. My plan was, because I grew up in New Zealand and my plan when I was 17, was to come over here, turn 18, have a gap year, go to Europe and then go home to New Zealand to go to uni. And I came here, I started as a sales secretary on an internship or traineeship as they used to call it with the REIQ, back in 2003, yeah, it was the end of 2002, the start of 2003 and I never left.

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Sherrie:

So tell us, because you were actually selling for quite some time, a lot of people know you as a business owner. They also know that you're very passionate about property management, but you actually were a salesperson. And in fact, you used to sell on Bribie Island, correct?

Hayley:

Yeah!

Sherrie:

So you did this for quite some time. Tell us about your time as a sales agent?

Hayley:

Well, the first office that I went to was in Bribie and it was an amazing little office, such beautiful business owners, so nurturing and sweet. They were really like my parents because I was 18 and I was living away from home. I worked there for six years in the office and sold predominantly on the Island, but also like lots of people know the Sandstone Point Hotel now because it's cool, it never used to be, but there was always 1200 homes up there that I really worked in as kind of my FMA or my patch, my core area. And I just worked away at that but I was there for 10 years in total, and even now I still get people that ring me that I sold houses to all of that time ago and say, hey, we are moving, can you sell a house? No, but I know who can.

Sherrie:

I love that. And for those that are listening, who don't know what Bribie Island is or where it's located, it's essentially this beautiful seaside community in between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. So how was it that you essentially came to leave there and work at RE/MAX?

Hayley:

Well, in between my time there my husband was working away up in Mackay. And since during that time I thought, okay, well, it's really hard to be married to someone that's fly in fly out, that and I thought, okay, I think it's going to be better if I move up from Brisbane to Mackay. So, I moved up to Mackay for a couple of years and wasn't better unfortunately, but again, I had an amazing opportunity, which kind of led me down a really unexpected path. People always say to me now, why do you have an office in Mackay? and it was kind of the best accident ever.

Sherrie:

When you moved to Mackay were you sort of working as the BDM for RE/MAX? So your job was to really work in corporate and to go out there and parrot businesses that were a part of the Remax corporation, but also to help bring people on board and convince them that Remax was the right franchise for them? Correct?

Hayley:

Funnily enough, it wasn't. I moved up there and kind of left a really, really stable ten-year business and spend another two years in Mackay selling real estate. So, into a brand-new marketplace where I'd never, ever been before. I didn't know anybody. It was incredible, like starting over and over again, but I just transferred our brand up there. I wasn't that familiar with Remax back then. I kind of hadn't seen that opportunity yet and yeah, I just, I started, not knowing anybody spent two years there and one day, unfortunately right at the disillusion of my marriage, Keith who then was the owner of Re/Max Australia rang me and said, hey, what's it going to take, like it's time. And I'm like, what is it, I'll be there in three weeks, after obviously a long courting relationship, but he just got me on the right day at the right time. After a little bit of a long recruitment process, they just got me.

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Sherrie:

So what happened? So, tell us about when you made this transition. So you've gone from being a sales person and you've relocated and then you've decided to join the corporate world and you obviously know about a lot about selling real estate, but now you're working in quite a different capacity within the industry. Tell us about what it was like in your, in your role and what you learnt during this time?

Hayley:

Well, that transition from salesperson to corporate just opened my eyes in a totally different fashion. So, I just fell in love with the brand in so many different aspects. So many high performing agents, that was a real moment of OMG! And I actually remember when Keith did my figures for me that over that 12 years of being an intensive salesperson. If I had been a Remax agent, as opposed to the other two businesses, that I'd been a part of what kind of money I would have walked away with not selling a different, just with a different commission structure and a different game plan or a different business plan for myself.

And I remember crying and thinking I wouldn't have any mortgages, and let's be honest, I would have had mortgages I just probably would have had more things. But the reality was for me, like seeing it down on paper was a really awakening moment like Oh my God, what have I been doing with my life? I'm 30 years old, I need to grow up. So, I, I did make that change and it was really, it was really fascinating and it showed me and introduced me to the most amazing business owners throughout Queensland, because I wasn't just sitting down with RE/MAX brokers who, by the way, opened my eyes to another level and made really excited in building this business. But it also led me to sit down with entrepreneurs and business owners across all of the networks and talk to them about the pain points in their businesses and how they've built their businesses and how they've grown and whether or not it was someone in Rockhampton or someone in Bardon,

I got so many amazing things from that experience that I've implemented in my business as we've gone. I'm like, Oh, remember when what Vince from Rockhampton said about this and about scaling in property management, or remember about the marketing one of the guys Martin mentioned, and one of the points of difference in the scale of permissions and all of these things that I'd kind of like tucked away in my back brain. And sometimes I'll just come to the forefront. I actually, when we started doing our 90 day plans with you, I remember in my very first menu, I've got like just pages and pages and pages of like projects and to do's and all that kind of stuff. And I still have that manual in my cupboard here. And I'll literally like go through it and be like, okay, cross that one off, cross that one off. We've implemented that now, which was awesome for the blank pages in that book.

Sherrie

Wonderful, and we're going to be talking a lot more about implementation a little bit later on, so we will come back to them. But you have now been the business owner of **RE/MAX Results** and you have two offices, one in Brisbane and of course, one of Mackay for the last four years, but **RE/MAX Results** is not a new business. In fact, it's one that's been operating for over 20 years and you purchased the business from Deborah Evans who still works in the business today.

Hayley:

What was really funny when I was purchasing the business, I had quite a few people say that's never going to work you can't have the old business owner there, they aren't going to respect you, they are still going to always go to Deb. And one of the funny conversations that I have with a lot of people that now are purchasing a business or are part of a succession plan that will come to me and say, how did that work? Like you never complain about it. And I have nothing to complain about. I mean, I guess there's two things, Deb, obviously this was her baby and she really lived and breathed this business, In fact, it's been 23 years that she has been here this last month. And she's just such a nurturing figure, but it's always been her baby. So, she's just really happy and excited that I've brought new energy into the business and she's super respectful of the fact that she's also always there for me, if I, if I do need

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advice and, and to be honest at the start, I probably went to her a lot and now occasionally she'll come in and be like, yes, you're doing a great job, which is so, so lovely.

Sherrie:

Well, that is really wonderful. And look, **RE/MAX Results** is even a business that I worked in. I remember there used to be a number of offices underneath this brand. This is way back when, in the early two thousand now. And so, I have actually worked in the business that you now are in, but when you originally purchased the business it wasn't just yourself and you also had a business partner. So, tell us a little bit about business partnership and the pitfalls, the positives and what you took out of this experience.

Hayley:

Yeah. look, business partnership probably was never for me, but I didn't know until I was at it, I think looking back it's been the biggest opportunity. It was a massive challenge. Unfortunately I had a really strong kind of mindset around the business that I wanted, the culture I wanted to build the type of people that we would attract to the business having elite performance instead of just a bum on seats mentality was something that was really, really important to me. So, we used to clash on things like that quite often. Culture being such a strong value in our business was something else that we used to clash on. And when I look back now, I think thank God because I probably wouldn't have got into the business without a business partner.

So, I could have been sitting in a very different seat maybe still at corporate, I don't know. But at the same time, it's just enabled me to, to evolve so much as a person, but evolved so much as a businessperson. If I still had a business partner, I wouldn't know anything about the numbers. I wouldn't be involved in a lot of the day to day financials. I wouldn't have gone to business school, I wouldn't have done any of those things because that, wasn't my role in our partnership., my role was culture and growth, but at the same time, yeah, if I look back now and see, this is where we would be in two years' time, you just wouldn't believe it. It's incredible.

Sherrie:

Well, you are now the Sole Director, and there are currently 21 agents in your business across those two offices. And they are writing fees anywhere from \$200,000 to North of \$2 million. And there are the green agents that are newer into the, into the industry or their career agents or high performing agents. And I want to get into a little bit about how you manage these agents and what their requirements are and how it is that you actually help them build their best careers and their best lives. So how do you do that Hayley?

Hayley:

I mean, it's a really large question, but at the same time, I guess my relationship with these guys is kind of different. I don't look at any of them as employees. Our relationship is really business to business because I'm there to help them facilitate the growth in their business. And we build our plans and we execute and implement an action item constantly. But my goal because I'm non-selling in our business is literally there to support these guys with whatever their career plan is. So whether or not it is to build a business that is a million dollar plus business, whether or not it's to go beyond that, whether or not they really sit at \$500,000 and happily we invest that in different avenues, everybody like anybody, everybody has a different plan.

And rather than a kind of cookie cutter type system, we really have like, we've got a process for everything. Don't get me wrong. We have all the support and services and the agent services team to support everybody in whatever they're wanting to do. But whether or not there are \$200,000 agent who's just starting out and needs that structure, or they're an experienced agent that just needs a hug sometimes when it hits the fan, then, then that's okay. Like some of our agents I speak to every day, some of them will just check in when they have a problem, and, and that's okay because everybody's different. And we really do run our business that way, we tailor it to our clients and my clients are our agents.

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Sherrie:

Well, I really have seen this kind of more personalised approach instead of trying to fit everybody into this concept or this, this notion of what it should be or what it looks like, and I think that is obviously evident and what's working in your business, but I have also seen that you have a real focus on training and one also on culture and a big part of this is I know every single person who joins your business or who's in your business takes and, and becomes one of the build your best life coaching clients. And they get one of the success manuals and you have them branded **RE/MAX** and it's all a very nice kind of process. I think on top of all of that this is really a strict 90-day process in terms of bringing it on board, keeping them on track and making sure that they're having a career changing 90 days, every 90 days, so to speak. So, what is it about this program that you think has really helped the agents to level up their own internal businesses combined with you?

Hayley:

What, there's so many things. Probably one of my favorite parts about the manual is that it's Holistic and it's not just about selling and it does have the program in there, which is wonderful, but I love the goal setting process at the start cause we're looking at fun, we're looking at friends, we're looking at finances, we're looking at all of those things that are really about building a better life for the agents. And at the end of the day one of my key jobs in our business is to have retention of our team, which I think I've done a sensational job in the last couple of years, particularly in the more tumultuous times, because if they're not happy, they're not going to stay and they're not going to be long term agents. And I'm there to make sure that although they can have their ups and downs, overall, we can ride through those experiences for them and help them by having a better life.

Well it's interesting that you sort of talk about this because in addition to the manual, I think it's this accountability part that I see you work quite successfully because I think it's one thing to have, have the manual and to work a 90 day program. But I think the second thing is really you sitting down and having these one on one meetings with, with your agents and understanding that not every single agent in your business is somebody that you would sit down once a week. It might be at different timeframes. But I do see that this is a common mistake that a lot of principals and a lot of lead agents actually make when they're the team leaders and that is not spending the time with those that are part of their team to help them grow and to understand, okay, well, where are we heading? What's our direction? What are we actually working on even this week? So, let's talk about those one on one meeting. And what is it that you, I mean, number one, how important are these meetings, do you feel to the success of your business and what is it that you actually discuss in them?

Hayley:

Look, depending on the agent with some of our larger, more high performing teams often we can go in with an agenda and we end up with something else. But the outcome that, that often we're having is we're sitting down talking about their overall goals. And sometimes with those guys, I'm having conversations about how they can have conversations with their team and get that pipeline moving and other times it is a really direct sales pipeline conversation. One of our agents who I really didn't think wanted those direct conversations or required those direct conversations kind of came to me last week. And he was like ok Hayley I think that when we have a one on one, I want to go back to the basics, like take me right back to the basics.

And this is a highly experienced, he's like, I need this right now, are we good? And I'm like, yes, we are good. Absolutely let's do this. But was funny for me to have that for someone that's been in the industry for over 15 years to be like, all right, Hayley, let's go, we need to pump it up again. And I want to start back with the basics, we want to talk about the pipeline, our listing levels, how are we going to move the stock group? I just need to bounce it off someone. And I'm like, awesome. I'm your girl.

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Sherrie:

Well, I think this is really valuable. And I think this is why the manual works so well because you just bring it into the meeting. It's like, there's the stock list, There's the calls, there's your pipelines, there's your hot buyers, there's the, on the markets. And in these meetings, it is really great to process that kind of stock. And it's very easy to say, okay, well, I haven't been making any sales or I haven't been getting any listings. And then you can look at the activities that have occurred and, quite often what I find and what people want when they're wanting to work with me as a coach is they want accountability. And so, I'm sure you're finding that as a principal and as a team leader too. Correct?

Hayley:

Yeah. And one of the other things that I found in that process is sometimes it's not even when you're not selling, sometimes it's when you are selling and you're getting too busy and you're forgetting some of the basic things or you're skipping parts of your process, or you're only following 25 points of the 51 point checklist. Those types of times when they're like, I need to pull back, I need to reassess. I need someone to kind of look at this, It's not in my business. And just pull me up on stuff and look, everybody is different, if you ask our agents what my process is for each of them, it probably is different because it is personalised, but we just keep going back to the manual that the bones of that meeting to make sure that we've got some structure there.

One of the conversations this week, actually it was yesterday. It was like okay, let's look at our Buyer and Seller list, let's go through our open home register. And let's just check who is who's got a property to sell. Like you've got all of these buyers at the moment because the market's running red hot on a Saturday with open homes and you're struggling for listings. Let's just fall back into that open home register and see who has something to sell and they've got a listing today from that, they've been out and had the listing presentation at two o'clock.

Sherrie:

Well, I think this is such an important conversation actually and a very powerful one, because quite often I see agents fail at focusing on what it's going to take to actually bring the business in and they get so caught up on listing and marketing properties that they actually stop taking the time to actually process the stock and looking at, okay, well, do we need to reset the strategy on this? Do we need to have a critical conversation with the price? Do we need to change the marketing? Do we need to reinvigorate the ads? What is that we need to do? Where are the hot buys coming from? So, I love the fact that you're talking around this because it is something that it's a basic, but it's a fundamental platform in our business and we don't actually get paid unless we sell something. We've got to make sure that we are processing and helping our sellers actually sell their properties so that they can move on to their next property venture.

So, you do operate two offices. Once is, as we've talked about is in Morningside in Brisbane and the other one is in Mackay, now, logistically there is some distance between them. So, there's a couple of hundred kilometers. How does it actually work for you, being able to do these one on one meetings and actually being physically located in Brisbane when you also have an awesome team in Mackay?

Hayley:

Yeah, look, to be honest, and I know people say it, but I'm one of those people that's truly blessed with the fact that in Mackay, we have these really talented and ultra-experienced agents, they are the agents that call me when they need a hug and most of them have been business owners before. So, the beauty of that is they appreciate that business to business relationship. And that's probably the only way it could have worked initially I think we've evolved now as a business and we've obviously grown, and we've also attracted some really

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great new agents to the business which have made a big difference but from a management point of view, it's just an it's honestly, I think it's just the way that we approach it. People that work for us, are the business.

Sherrie:

it's interesting that you talk about this, because I think all too often we sort of glaze over the, we've got the right agents in the business, but evidently you are a match for them and they are a match for you and you do have some great agents in Mackay. You've got **Stacey Arlott** and you've also got **Mike Althaus**, and as you talked about recently, **Leanne Druery** has also joined you.

So, this is really interesting to me because onboarding an agent I think is a very difficult thing to do, let alone somebody who actually is already doing great, great business. And especially when you are in a completely different town and city. So,,a) how much do you value this onboarding process and what do you actually do to ensure that you gain momentum or the agent gains momentum through this period instead of dropping it off?

Hayley:

Oh, this is a crucial moment in any recruitment process. I think the nearest example of that has been Leanne moving to our business last month. She did 87 transactions last year. So, by all measures and balances is an absolute powerhouse and obviously from our perspective it was really, really important in her transaction to make sure that that was seamless.

From a transition point of view, there is nothing more fearful, and I know this from my time in franchising, but also when I made the change from Raywhite and LJ Hooker years and years ago, I know that it took me about three months, it costs me probably three months in my business. And as a business owner, I looked at this as a prime opportunity to up my game and my offering for agents that were joining us in the sense that we could offer them a transition process that could be well thought out well planned and seamlessly executed. And as a result, I think Leanne had seven contracts in her first month with us and it's got another six on the board ready for September settlements. So, she's obviously rolled over very quickly, but with all the support, resources and services that she needed so that she really didn't skip a beat.

Sherrie:

Well, I know this is one of the areas that we've really spent a lot of time on because we have been working a lot on the business sort of side and our time together, but, it really is a testament because I think that that is something that's quite difficult, but it does seem that there has been a real mindset shift in the office to understand, hey, listen, this has to be a priority to make sure that the agent keeps moving forward and that they don't lose any of that momentum and that they continue in on their business. And in actual fact it gains traction, which is, which is what has occurred here. So, besides sales agents, I mean, you are a massive advocate for property management. Why is this a fundamental part of your business, especially when a lot of others right now are sort of thinking our property management's too hard. Why do you value it the way that you do?

Hayley:

Honestly, I don't know. I don't know why it took me so long to find that value in it. I guess, as a salesperson for so many years, I always probably didn't really put any thought into a property management business, but growing my business holistically, I really got a fascination in the level of service that was currently being kind of given to landlords. And I was like, why is it so poor? That's just not okay. Like, why can't we approach this of the gold standard level of service that you would give to your vendors and your buyers? Why would we not be approaching that from a landlord perspective? So we saw that as an amazing opportunity, and as a result in Mackay, we obviously started with no property management and here we bought a hundred right at the start, and look, we've had some really awesome growth in the last couple of years. I think, a light just went off in my mind that thought what a great

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opportunity. This is just such an under-serviced underappreciated side of the business and let's give it a red-hot crack.

Sherrie:

Well, I think it is great to give that level of service to people as well, which is a fundamental sort of ethos that you have, but it's also really great for your business because obviously we go through interesting times and we've just had one this year in 2020, but you want to have that sort of business foundation because you just never know when you're going to have a month of great sales and a month of not great sales. And so, it is a really nice trampoline to know that you have got, non-negotiable this kind of income that's coming in month after month. And on top of all of that, you've got a great asset. So, I know that this is a big focus for you in terms of wanting to grow the rent roll in addition to the overall growth, the business. why do you think that you have chosen to focus because really, you've got some gun BDMs in your business and some gun PMs, but also too you've been quite attached to this particular division? And, I had to really convince you almost kind of tear you away from that. So, we're going to talk about your CEO mindset shortly, but do you think that these key component on the growth of the rent roll, do you believe that it's the people that work in those businesses and in those divisions?

Hayley:

100% like anything in our business, my business is just people my business is not selling. I know that many people think, Oh, that would be great to not have to compete with your principal, in the marketplace, but I've never really viewed it that way. I've really viewed our businesses and opportunity to just offer to our agents. But in our business in particular also offer to our property managers. And the only way that I could support the property managers was by actually understanding it. So as a sales agent, only when I first came into business, I really had no idea. And if I'm being brutally honest about it, I used to think to myself, these people, why do they hate their lives? Like, why are they like, so torn off about such small things.

Like it's so small, like, don't worry about it, just move on. And I couldn't understand why they would often vent to each other in excess about small things that would happen within their day. And I remember when we waited for our now property manager, I was the property manager for six weeks. And can I tell you, I now understand. Honestly, like nothing gives you a rude shock or like a baptism of fire then being in that hot seat. And after only six weeks, I pretty much kissed the ground that the property manager walks on, I'm like Holidays? really? yes, ok go away, get a massage, whatever you need. Because genuinely, I think it's just given me a huge appreciation for the day to day stuff, but it also pointed out a really awesome opportunity for us as business owners, to professionally and personally develop our property Managers to, I think from a training perspective, we spend so much money training the sales team and adapting their skillset.

And often property management is the poor cousin and it's just like, our senior property manager in Mackay and our senior property manager here, he just started studying in NLP. And typically, that would be really sales orientated activity and they are enjoying it and their relationships with their clients has improved measurably because of the learnings that they've had with NLP, not only that they've started listening to really awesome podcasts. And, um, we also did a corporate challenge where they earned points for meditation and holistic, things like exercising and moving and eating well. And, and typically that's not something that property managers would often get involved with, because it's, seen as a little bit salesy, but can I tell you, they just eat that up and has really, really changed the businesses.

Sherrie:

Well, it's interesting that you talk about this and I love the fact that you invest so much into your property management division and you truly do understand it and it's, as you say, because you've been immersed in it yourself, but really BDMs are salespeople, whether you are listing properties for re for lease or for sale, it is exactly the same.

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If anything, it's a longer-term relationship than those, 14, 90 days or 120 days, whatever it might be and in actual fact, I talk about this a lot that property managers are in fact, fund managers and their wealth creation managers. And we need to sort of see that within the industry, ourselves. So I love the fact that you're talking about this Hayley, I love that you're ripping it all back, but we should be investing in our property management divisions and particularly our agents and our BDMs and why this is so important is it's not just about the process and it's not just about the compliance, but it's actually about growing an asset and you can't grow an asset, if these guys don't know how to close.

Hayley:

We do a lot of its education across the board for our property management and our sales team so that when they sit down, they're actually talking from a point of education. I think in our market place these days; you can't pull the wool over people's eyes anymore. It's important to be able to walk the talk and I don't know about most people's marketplaces, but I certainly know in our Morningside marketplaces, we are dealing pretty much a hundred percent of the time with professionals. Whether or not they be families with professionals or professional investors or whatever it may be they know they know a lot of the stuff that you're confirming for them, and sometimes they just need it to be confirmed by a professional and you need to be that professional that has an opinion, but it needs to be an educated and well enforced opinion.

Sherrie:

I could not agree anymore. I love what we're talking about here. But look, let's just let's switch focus a little bit and I would really love to have a chat with you about, what the last 18 months has been like for you personally. And I know you've had a very tough personal time. We' will try not to cry, which I've done pretty well through this whole podcast series, because I think it's really important that we talk about life and its positives as much as its negatives and it's not all sunshine and rainbows. And I just want to talk about what has really happened over the last two years and what that has been like for you personally.

Hayley:

Yeah. I have had an incredibly tough last 2 years, my mum passed away last year of cancer and that journey was horrendous. And obviously as the sole director and business owner, as many small business owners would know, you are the business and although we have some incredible people in our business that supported me through the whole thing, and if we didn't I probably wouldn't have a business. I also had two young kids, so whilst I'm running the business and, spending time with my mum, who was going through chemo and deteriorating really quickly and that whole process and that whole time was just horrendous. I'm just incredibly, I'm incredibly grateful and I know that's such an overused term, but the reality is had I've not had a great team that I built around us and didn't have the support of the right administrators and the great people on the ground, we wouldn't have had a business.

Sherrie:

Well, look, it's really interesting that you sort of talk about this because we do have a lot of times in life where everything is great, but very rarely do we acknowledge it when things aren't always going so great. And as a business owner, I think this old style of leadership where just pretending like everything is wonderful when everyone can feel and see that it's not wonderful and just keep powering on. And I think it takes a lot of courage to show the vulnerability and to ask for help, even in your team members, through this period of time. And, when we first started working together, I saw this amazing kickass, remarkable woman in front of me, but I also have seen you go on a journey to really level that up for another, another phrase.

But I also did see that there was still this coming back and this person who had been kind of essentially batted down was really just coming back in into her own. And even in the business, I think you really saw yourself in that BDM and in the property management division instead of the owner or of the business and the CEO of the business. And I know as I mentioned earlier, I had to really convince you to kind of drag you out of that kind of hidey

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hole and let the others in your, in your team who are remarkable your property managers and your BDMs kind of stand up and you really take the reigns as the CEO of the business and, really kind of have these mindset shifts around it. I mean, how do you feel now looking back at even eight months ago when we first started to where you are today, like I just see a huge shift and as I said, you were super cool and a kickass powerhouse woman, but how do you feel today compared to that time?

Hayley:

Oh, it's chalk and cheese, honestly, when we first kind of started working together in January, it seems like the other day, but it feels like we've always been together. I think, I was really lost when my mum died. I was kind of I've always had this dream for what I wanted in my life and really, really clear vision. And my mum had always been part of that. So I guess, I knew that I wanted to come back into the business in a big way and that, I'd had some amazing people kind of taking care of the sales side of the business for me, because as with 21 salespeople, you have to be, they have to be present. I'm really lucky that because we have so many experienced salespeople, they probably gave me a bit of a break and didn't lean on me as much as they could have, or they, they would, and, and I'm forever grateful for that. But, yeah, I was at a loss, I remember I was sitting down at our first kind of due diligence meeting and you were kind of just looking at me and I was like, I don't know about this. I don't know about that. I know about this. This is what I want for the business, but I don't know how to get there, like help me out. And your kind of just took me by the hand and went, yeah. Okay, cool. Let's do it. And, but that meant the world to me because like, like I said before, you don't know what you don't know. And for me to, double the sales volume of the business meant that I needed to be present and I needed to come back in a big way and I needed to not be Dan's wife in the rentals, and although, I remember telling you about that phrase and I think I just allowed myself to spend time fixing those problems in the property management department, because that was safe and warm and stepping outside of your comfort zone and going back and kind of regaining that power and, coming back into your own, I kind of laugh and be like, Oh yeah, when Heather got her groove back! because that's what kind of 2020, despite its ups and downs, that's what it has been for me.

Sherrie:

Yeah. Well, look, I've certainly seen that. And what we're relating today is your husband, Daniel, who also works in the business as a, as a lead agent. But you do operate as the CEO, but people just didn't see you in that role. And, your mindset, even though you own the business was probably in property management and I remember even just going to the Remax office. And, it'd been a long time since I'd been there. And I don't think it had been renovated since, but, out of all the offices, I think the one that you had was one that was, it certainly had no windows, it was very dark. I don't think, did it even have a door? It was very small and, in your mindset, you're thinking, well, everybody else can have the big offices. I'm not really that important. Whereas I think you now understand that your role in the business is holding it all together and kind of conducting it as you would, if you were conducting an orchestra. But now, you've just recently renovated that office which has been a really amazing process. And I was lucky enough to come and check it out this week, but you have now given yourself an office and I want to talk about this mindset about where the office that you had and the office that you now have. And, I know I was trying to convince you why this was important and that it wasn't just about you, that it was about everybody else in the business, but also suppliers in the business and also recruiting in the business. How do you view this fabulous office that you now officially have, which has got light and windows and armchairs and decorations, but is a boss, CEO office how important do you think that is? Not only to your mindset, but to the other agents in the business?

Hayley:

I don't think I ever had a problem with it until you pointed it out to me. And then I kind of started looking at it and being like, Oh yeah, it's kind of annoying that when somebody wants to have a private conversation with me, we have to book the meeting room and kind of annoying that, when we have a one-on-one, we have to go across to the coffee shop and it's kind of annoying. So, there were all of these things that I started seeing as like, oh yeah, that

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is annoying. And look, we did, you and I kind of disagreed on this and I kind of fought you on it. And you were like, Hayley drop the rope. But I've got to tell you like having this space enables me to kind of spend a lot more time on the business instead of in the business and having that focus has been fantastic, but it really has changed my mindset. I love that it's so clean and crisp and it feels so amazing. And when you walk into my office, it smells good. And like all of these little things that just give you so much more pride and so much more enjoyment about being here and even our salespeople that have got their executive offices that they've decorated, our teams and our high performers that have, have earned those spots, they love that they've been able to custom their offices and kind of do all sorts of things in there to suit their teams. And I think it's really building with a sense of pride and what they deserve it because they work bloody hard.

Sherrie:

Exactly. Right. And so do you, and I think this is why the office was so important because to me it was really very symbolic of this kind of transformation because of where you had been because of the, what had occurred in your personal life to you getting your groove back as you call it. And me basically saying, let's shatter this glass ceiling and it's really about this CEO mentality, not, the Dan's wife who works in rentals and really for seeing it as that. So I can see that this has come such a far way in, in eight months, but it's also interesting you talk about this and just to digress for a moment about the other agents having offices, because they do have, for those that are operating EBU's, they do have their own offices. And I know that we set some sort of ideals around these offices and having space for new people who might choose to come in and join the business or those that are in the business that might move from a workstation into a full office with its door for, for an EBU. So just share with us a little bit about the renovation and that concept behind the offices.

Hayley:

Well, I think, 2020 probably changed the way that lots of people knew their workspaces when they started to work from home. Some of them preferred it, but a lot of the agents came back to the office and plugged in on hot desks or plugged in, in there, and their workstations. And some of them that were wanting to build their businesses, really relish the challenge to say, if you get to X then guess what this beautiful new shiny office belongs to you. And, one in particular is super funny in our one on ones. He's like, okay, so how many sales am I away from my office? and it's really cool because he's really using that as the fire. He's picked this office; he's already decided which one it is. He even had a sign up there for a little while saying that it was his office and that, and he's not obviously working from there yet because that is kind of the reward, but at the same time it's given him a really cool goal when, as somebody that's been in the business for a long time, not a lot of other things where that motivating for him, it wasn't about finances. It wasn't about reaching a certain comfort level in his life because he already was a stealth established gentleman. but at the same time, it was a really, really cool thing that motivated him. He'd be like, yeah, I want to sit in the executive office and put my legs back up on the, on the desk. So yeah, that was really, really cool. And I'm excited to be able to offer that to him.

Sherrie:

Well, I think that's a really nice thing to talk about. So thanks for sharing it with us, but I think going back to this concept about for you personally and making these mindset shifts and being that boss sort of bad boss CR in a really good way I remember there was one thing that you said to me one day and we had this massive session and you just said to me, I don't know if you remember this, you said to me, I just still see myself as this little New Zealand kid who's from like a working, family. And I just need to see myself in a completely different way. How did you do that? How did you transform your thoughts of who you are yesterday to who you are today?

Hayley:

Do you remember all this stuff? look, I grew up in country, New Zealand in just a really working-class family in the sense that they beautiful, wholesome, hardworking parents, and

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really, they worked to give us a better life. Um, and sometimes your upbringing can be the thing that holds you back because like, a lot of my thought process was, Oh yeah, this is good. This is good. But when we started working together, you really challenged me. And, I remember you saying to me, and if you stop thinking like a poor little Haley kid, highly, like, after I'd said that to you, you kind of repeated it to me a few times, which was a bit of a trigger really. Cause I was like, oh yeah, I really do need to stop. Um, I do need to stop limiting my beliefs and our business name is limitless property. Right. So, I've always had this ambition to be limitless. I think it's only been this year that we've really started to crank, in my mindset and I guess, and the opportunities that we have for the business that we're, that we haven't yet realised. So, does that answer your question?

Sherrie:

It sure does. And I think there's nothing wrong by the way, with being from New Zealand, you're in New Zealand and growing up in that way, but you just, for the life that you want to lead today and the goals that you're setting, it was about smashing that and kind of acknowledging that that's the place in which you have been in sitting in and where we want to, where we want to move forward to, and, are really thank you for acknowledging that publicly, but also for working with me in, in terms of honestly, discussing it because it also gave me great insight as to how I've done it. And it gave me an opportunity to step back and look at my life, um, which I've done a lot of actually in this last year. And I know I've shared a lot of it with, with you guys on, on social media. So, thank you for, for that, because it was really, really awesome for me, but let's, let's talk a bit more about your husband, because as you said, you are married and, and you are a mum and he is a lead agent in the business, but when you go home at night, what's it like, do you guys talk all about shop or is it like, do you have boundaries? Do you have rules? How does it work?

Hayley:

To be honest? And this is so funny, I just had this with Dan's PA she's like, do where Dan is? He's not answering his phone, I'm like, I don't know where he is, he's not my problem, he's your problem! And, then we kind of had a big laugh because genuinely, um, I remember like we rewind the clock maybe three or four years ago. I remember we were in the kitchen one day and Dan and I must've liked just snuck a sneaky little Peck on the cheek and our receptionist walked in and she was horrified and I kind of looked at her and she looked at me and she was like, and I said, Oh, this is Cooper's dad, right? Like, this is my husband, we're engaged. And she had no idea because at work we're really not, we're not married.

He does his business. and I look after the business and, and lots of people will probably never know unless they stalked me on Facebook or, whatever it may be because you really can't tell most of the time, don't get me wrong. He definitely gives me lots of, well-meaning digs during the day. But at the same time, he's busy out doing his thing and I'm obviously busy on the business. So, we really don't see each other. And sometimes, at night it's a great opportunity to download different things. And God forbid, I give him too much advice. But at the same time, we're two little kids, like most working parents, you don't really have a lot of time for each other. Like one of the things that I say you made me do, just cause I'm like a goodie to shoes and do my homework, but it was like lock some date nights in and they have been really awesome in the sense that when we do get to go out on date nights, sometimes like this sounds really bad, but we'll do like our 90 day plan on our date night.

Sherrie:

I don't think there's anything wrong with doing that on a date night. I like that, I like that idea.

So, as we have discussed, you are in fact a mum, in fact, you're a mum of two boys, both of which are under six. So, Jordy and Cooper, and you are a working parent and you're a business owner and you're a wife. How do you fit it all in? Do you feel like you've got it all figured out?

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Hayley:

Oh my God No. I haven't got it all figured out and you can talk to any working parent, and I'm sure that if they're really honest with you, that they tell you that their life is complete chaos and look, it works. I don't know how it works. But there's days when you are just like, shake your head and think, what am I doing? And then there's days that you feel like you've got it totally nailed it.

Sherrie:

So well, tell me about yesterday. I know we were having a chat yesterday afternoon. You were saying you're dropping the kids off at school, can you just share with us?

Hayley:

Thanks for bringing that up. That was a great day yesterday. So, when I rang you Sherrie, I dropped my big boy off at school and I've walked in, in my work clothes. I'd rolled my ankle on a tree nut as I was walking in the pavement, I didn't fall over, thank God, but I almost fell over. And then I got there and realised he didn't have a jump up. So, this is like the morning routine, right? So, I've gone home grabbed the jumper, taken the other one to daycare. I was really frazzled. I had a sore ankle. I was thinking about netball tonight thinking oh God, this been not be sore for tomorrow. Have I got strapping tape? Do I need to do this? Do I need to do that? Like a thousand things running through my mind. And I'm just like super frazzled and starting to get a bit hot and a bit sweaty and like just, frustrated because my morning was not going well.

And I'm like, I've power walked in with, a one year old on my hip and everything all altogether there. And then the elevator was taking forever. And I was like, oh my God, now I'm going to be late. This is great. By the time I've dropped, Cooper's jumper off to school, it's just going to be chaotic. Right. And so anyway, I kind of come up for air and as I was driving out of the driveway, maybe we spoke, and I just had a big download on you. Like, and then there were these mums outside and they looked perfect and they're all in a niche and like I just exploded, and you probably thought hmmm that's great. Oh, it does there's days like that, that you just think, why do I do this?

Sherrie:

I certainly don't have children, but I don't think anybody really has it figured out. And there's always those times where we look at other people and we are thinking why can't my life be more like that, why can't I have it all together, but is there any such thing of having it all together and maybe what we are seeing on the outside is not necessarily on the insight but yet we are still striving for this like impossible notion of perfection and being like the perfect parent when really all you can do is your best right?

Hayley:

Yeah, honestly, we can. And like I remember years and years ago, like I decided that I wanted to have it all actually when I was working at Re/Max corporate. And because back then I didn't have any kids and I had this wonderful lifestyle and I was living in New Farm and, like just having the life of my dreams, if I'm looking back, those were the golden years, now with two kids and living in the suburbs, like we're in seven Hills and we absolutely love it. It's been a really different life experience for us. And I read, a saying to Joel actually who's the managing direct at Re/Max Australia, I remember saying to him, oh no no, I will have it all! And he was just like, yeah. Okay. And it was only like last year that we had the conversation do you remember that time when you told me you were going to have it all? And I'm like, yes. And he's like, and you've got it all now. And I'm like, yeah, that's what it all feels like.

Sherrie:

I think all we can do really at any point in time is just your first ride, which is what we're talking about best life, because it's about making, making the best of every single moment and every opportunity and just driving for that, for that, what it could be for you. But what I look back and we've been talking a lot about your adventure. This, this year what's been happening throughout your career and through your property journey and so forth too.

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And business ownership journey, 2020 has been a big year for you. And we've talked a lot about you leveling up and these mindset changes and the implementations and the massive growth in your business, which we haven't sort of talked too much about, but really it has been massive, massive growth. What are you most proud of in 2020 so far?

Hayley:

Oh, well I'm most proud of the people that we have in our business because it didn't happen by accident. The people we've had, some people come and go along in the journey, like an ex business partner and people that particularly weren't a right fit. But one of the things that I really hang my head on is the retention of our team and the fact that we are just on and on. Like, I love coming in here. I love the feeling and the vibe and like you would have experienced it yesterday. Everybody's upbeat and it just feels good. I like, you've got this great environment. Um, and what's about agents. We'll talk about it as well. Cause I've never experienced that anywhere else. And sometimes I'll be singing in my office and we'll start the door and they weren't, that, that hasn't happened to me.

He's just a really nice vibe and that's the thing that I'm most proud of. I'm most proud of the fact that we've built a business that people actually like to come to work and that we are surrounded by some incredible people that are doing amazing business as well. We're not surrounded by awesome people that are just twiddling their thumbs. I just out there doing the business, but when they are here they're here for the right reasons.

Sherrie:

This is a good answer actually, because culture is something that you have done a really great job in terms of implementing into your business and nurturing. So, I love that answer. So, what do you think is next for your business? What do you think is next for Remax results?

Hayley:

Well, that we're going to continue to have that strong emphasis on the people and growing with the right people you and I had had back and forth conversations, bums on seats and intensity or growing with purpose. Um, and, and it's just continued growth. We're just kind of getting started. I'm uninformed, Oh, I'm only four years in. I got like, I got 20 years there, um, which is kind of exciting, and, and I just can't wait to see where we are in another 10 years and how big we are then, and the type of amazing people and the type of business that we have in that time. I mean that for us, there's no ceiling, we are limitless. I do like this limitless notion. I think this is one that you have now really embraced, and it's now your mantra.

Sherrie:

So, looking back, knowing what you now know, what would you recommend to anybody who is relatively new into their business, or even if they've been in their business for a few years, what would you tell them to go out and to do immediately?

Hayley:

Well, um, invest in yourself. I've always been a big believer in, um, in training and coaching and mentoring. Um, I've been coached, by lots of people over the years, but I think that we can't be can't stop learning. One of the big moments for me was, getting involved in business school, because that led me to exiting my partnership, because I learned about the numbers and about the business of the business. but you and I are really just getting started. Like, this is a real opportunity for me to view my business in another lot.

And I know that we've had personal branding on the agenda for forever and we haven't even got to it cause it's always something more important for us. But investing in people's personal brand, I wouldn't be doing it if I had to start again tomorrow as a new salesperson, I'll be investing in my personal brand and I've been investing in some quality coaching. Um, and I would implement the doing is the most important thing. There's no point in planning and

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planning and planning and planning and planning and just looking at it, just do it well, that is certainly one of the things that you do so incredibly well, you implement what is planned out in

front of you. And so that's why you've had the growth that you've had because every single month you've implemented and you've next level done.

Sherrie:

So, now taking a look back eight months later, it's really easy to see the progress, but that's because you've made these small sorts of incremental steps. I love that. I think that's great. And you should be incredibly proud of the business of where you've come and talking about celebrity brand. If people want to follow you, how will they find you?

Hayley:

Well, just on Instagram @HayleyVanDeVen and just Hayley Van De Ven and on Facebook, I'm a public profile, I love connecting with new people. You can learn so much from other people and I am a bit of a social butterfly on the social side as well.

Sherrie:

And I think this is what you do so incredibly well, and you do a beautiful offline and you do it wonderfully online. So, if you want to connect with Haley by all means, follow her journey to everyone who's out there listening.

Thank you so much for joining us today.

Hayley:

Thanks for having me here. It's been a blast.

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