



BRINGING BUSINESS TO RETAIL PODCAST
EPISODE TRANSCRIPTION



Salena: Hey there and welcome to this week's episode of The bringing business to retail podcast. In order to stand out from the crowd, you need to really know who you are and what it is that makes you different. So I brought Alissa onto the show to help us work out exactly how you can do that and use it to sell more products and get more customers. So welcome to the show.

Alissa: Well thank you so much for having me. I'm excited to be here.

Salena: You lived a very very varied and broad life. Haven't you?

Alissa: I have and it just makes me a richer and richer you know broader human being. I guess.

Salena: Let's talk a little bit about it because it's some interesting stories in there.

Alissa: Yeah. So my very first career was as a registered dietitian so went through four years at university. I worked as a registered dietitian in the clinical setting in the hospital setting for about eight years. I decided I wanted to be closer to the patient care and went back and got my nursing degree. And so that was wonderful and I loved being a nurse but there was something still just a little bit missing. And then in the midst of that, I found myself going through a divorce which is one of the scariest things I think that somebody can go through. And I thought what I need a Plan B, I need a Plan B. And so I started a direct sales company as a consultant direct sales company rather. And I thought well let's give this a crack. And after four years of being in that, I had already quit nursing to do that full time and I was frustrated by sort of the hobbyists that were all around me in the same company. And I really wanted to learn how to run a business not just a hobby, not just you know; let me share this thing with you I really wanted to learn how to be a business owner. And so delve into what really could be a whole nother degree of you know business conferences and business books and all of these other things to help me understand

that. And when push came to shove I had this realization that I didn't want to recruit people into my dream. I wanted to recruit them into their own. And so I moved on from that business launched my coaching practice and here I am four years later as a success coach serving people who are entrepreneurs really trying to get their feet underneath them and off the ground.

Salena: And you forgot the other part that you are a gymnast.

Alissa: Yes I was a gymnast turned up last year I walked on stage as a bodybuilder for the first time. And so that was really exciting I'm going to be walking on the stage again this fall as a bodybuilder as well. So yes I do the strengths finder profile that's how I start lunch all of my clients out. And so apparently the strength thing is very very important to me it's at the at the core of my core right now.

Salena: And tell me then about the strength finder. I know what you're talking about are quite a bit of people that are out there who are listening and going, what does that just mean. Does it mean that I go to the gym and pick up some weights with you just talking about being a gymnast and a bodybuilder and now we're talking strengths but it's not, is it?

Alissa: No no. So the strengths finder profile was something that Dr. Donna Clifton he was this sociologist researcher began researching back in 1960. And so over 40 years he and his team researched all of the things that you know you wanted to see how people tick like in a positive way. And so up to that point, psychology was much looking at the bad parts of people, not the good parts and he's like well, why don't we look at the positive stuff.

Salena: Because we like positive.

Alissa: Yeah exactly and what they found was that when you actually grow the good parts of you, you're gonna be much more successful with a lot less energy put into it. So efficiency and productivity like all those things are very very good. And what really drew me to strengths finder was not only the 40 years of research but that it's an actual psychometric tool. So that means it's repeatable, it's reliable, it's statistically relevant, doesn't matter if you're in a good mood or bad

mood. It's not a personality profile, it truly is a psychometric tool. And so you can kind of rely on it. And the reason that that was, that left brain stuff was so important to me is that I had such a deeply ingrained belief that everything was wrong with me that that tool had enough sort of hard evidence proof behind it that it was able to start chipping away at that limiting belief that I wasn't enough. And so it's not the place I stop and it's not the place I would encourage anybody to stop. But it was the thing that helped me to go, maybe, maybe there's something there and I could actually see myself as this amazing person. And and it was the thing that started that cascade of chipping away at that limiting belief and really opening me up to what else is possible. What else am I great a?. How else am I great and what does this mean for my life.

Salena: Anyone who listens knows that I love psychological testing all that kind of stuff especially when it comes to hiring and building yourself up. But let's just jump back a little bit there because you said something along the lines of, and I'm paraphrasing here. This concept that you continually thought of that you were not enough, that you were I'm not using the word failure. But I kind of have that impression. So you've done a lot of things, what in the world would make you think that you weren't enough?

Alissa: Yeah. You know so therapy always helps you to relax. But you know it was; in our society right. We are often praised for what we accomplish. And so there's this underlying insidious thing that goes out and it really is a virus that says, you are what you achieve. And if you fail, then you are less than. And for people with really solid self-worth they can go, whatever. Like a duck just have the failures roll off them. Again this is just a part of success. And for the rest of us, we're like oh this must indicate something about my value as a human. And so here I thought that this feeling that I was not enough, that I was a big screw up, that there was everything that was wrong with me was unique to me. And when I finally began talking about it, what I found was that just about every single person that I've ever spoken to is like oh yeah you know if it's not a daily thing for them it's at least they've had major times in their lives when they are like, I just am not enough. And I'm striving always for more so that I can prove to myself and to others that I am enough. And it's very woo woo and it's very feeling oriented. So you know...

Salena: That is so true it's so true.

Alissa: It is so true. And it's; now I'm a mom so I've got two kids, one eleven one 12, two daughters and watching them grow up and seeing, no matter how much praise, and you know you are enough. And separating their behavior for who they are as a human. It still reaches them right where they're just like oh if I could only do more if I could only achieve this, if I could win this gymnastics meet. They're both gymnasts of course you know. Then I would be enough. And you can see it even coming through no matter how hard I've tried to really help them understand that their worth is as a human. And their uniqueness and they're perfect lopsidedness I'd like to call it. It's just so hard to combat in this society.

Salena: Which is just a terrible terrible thing that we have isn't it? Because it I think it fuels us in directions that maybe we wouldn't have taken if we were more, well I don't know the right word but more reliant on ourselves or more. We have more belief in ourselves and I think what you're saying about everybody having this problem. Even the strongest people have them. I have this problem all the time. You know you do something and you run an event and you... some people don't show up and you're like what happened why didn't they turn up? All the time. you are constantly thinking you know I just need to go that little bit more. And one of the things that I try and teach was people which is exactly what you're saying is, it's not necessarily about being perfect, in fact, it isn't about being perfect. It isn't about being the best, it's about living the life that you want to live and seeing the things you want to say and feeling the things that you want to feel like that's. And yes you need to make money in the process. Guys

Salena: Like we're not trying to go where we're doing what you love and even if it means you are poor.

Alissa: Under a bridge.

Salena: You can do really good things if you have money in the world. So it's not about that at all. Let's jump back to strengths finder. And it is a psychometric profile. Tell us just a couple of the profiles that might come out if you do, it's just a test that you can do online.

Alissa: Yes. Yeah. So you can go to the Gallup's Website and we can put that in the show notes page and you can get it for 20 bucks and you can get your top five. There are 34 identified strength themes. And so your combination is really specific to you, in fact, this is another thing I love about the strengths finders, doesn't put you in a box. Your top five to have the same top five. And this is not even six through 34 in the same order as somebody else one in 33 million. So you are unique and you get to really embrace that uniqueness. So that's one of the things that I truly love it takes 30 minutes to complete the profile. Each question is timed so you answer with your gut and not with your head which allows us to actually answer the questions as to how we are, not how we wish we were. Again kind of going back to that whole scientific approach to the results so you can really truly appreciate and embrace the results as they are. So that's another thing that I really love and it tells you how you best operate. And this is the thing that I think is super key is people think that by taking the strengths profile that it will tell them what their skills are. Where are my strengths? What am I good at? And the strengths kind of profile will tell you how you're good at things not what you're good at. Your skills and your education will give you what you do. Your strengths finder profile will give you how you go about doing whatever it is that you're interested in doing. And then, of course, your values and your life experiences and such will give you why you're doing it. And all three of those components are vital to keep that stool, sort of the legs on the stool upright. Right. So that's what I really love about the strengths test. It tells me how am I going to do this so that it's going to give me energy and you know help me to thrive.

Salena: Ok so now you need to give us an example, it can be your example. That's fine. But patient going OK I kind of get it. Give us an example.

Alissa: So I'll give you a personal example. So in my top five I have a strength called WOO which is the only acronym and all of the strengths. So it stands for winning others over. Now when I first saw this profile theme I thought oh my goodness because in overused it can be sort of frivolous and you know very surface oriented etc But one of the gifts of Woo is that I can make connection with people almost instantaneously. So back when I was in college long before I knew anything about the strength brand a profile I waited tables to get through college and

people would sit at my tables and five minutes into you know serving them and they bring in their drinks and I just feel like I've known you for years. Go I know you? And because Woo has this ability to really make people feel at ease and like we're just good old friends right. So we all have to go out and meet new people. Right. But WOO is my how I connect with brand new people versus something like a relater which is another relationship building theme. It likes to only connect with people on certain things it likes to find something that they can relate to. But it tends to be more of an introverted theme versus WOO tends to be more extroverted and not that any of these two themes are either or you can actually be an introverted WOO extroverted. But the way that you connect with people is different. So relater would be behooved to ask a lot of questions to find that one thing that you can relate to them about and then you can connect them on that. So I hope that makes a little bit of sense because of course, we all have to relate to people we all have to connect with people. But your strengths themes will give you the how you go about doing that.

Salena: I feel like; I haven't done the test but I feel like I would be more of a relater. I definitely ask lots of questions. And then when I find the thing that we connect with, I jump into it. So yeah it's like that would probably be my strength more than the winning people over. I'm a polarizing person.

Alissa: And that's OK. Well, that's the beauty is that you know so I've got my top five. You got your top five even if you don't know them that wiring still exists. And that's really the beauty when we can begin to see ourselves as this, like wow I am perfectly lopsided and that means that I am not all of these other things. So this doesn't mean you ignore your weaknesses. In fact, it helps you to identify where your gaps are but not so you can fix them. It's so you can draw others in to say hey you have this gift, you have this strength. I need some of that and I've got this; I think I can contribute or offer it to you. Together we could be pretty amazing right.

Salena: Yeah so you can go; I was gonna say if you've ever come to one of my love events where my assistant Elizabeth is there. We've known each other for years and we have always said we are like two halves of the same brain but very very different. Like I am the tech and the

analytical and she is the creative but we think; like I will write something and sometimes I wonder did I write it or did she write it? We just work really really well together.

Alissa: Yes exactly. And you know in any business book like if you've ever read traction by Gina Wickman, for instance, he talks about the implementer and the visionary and almost never are those people found in the same person. Right. But. And that's OK. But you can imagine if an implementer was trying to be visionary or vice versa that it would suck that person dry first of all and just be really difficult. And chances are they're not going to be successful doing it. So why not own how you're wired and then appreciate and honor other people who are wired differently.

Salena: So tell me then if you are looking at your business and your business is not necessarily about you. So people who are listening who have a retail store or an e-commerce store they have maybe a brand that doesn't focus around them maybe they have a face maybe they aren't. So how can we take these strengths and actually build it into what their brand stands for?

Alissa: Yeah yeah. So I truly believe that that you can't just use the strengths brand to profile. I do love it but it is not a standalone. So again the strengths are gonna give you how you're gonna do that. So what the strengths profile will help you with is how am I going to pull in other people consultants or employees that might support my vision and maybe you are a visionary maybe you aren't. But you know you pull it, what is the vision for the company right? What is the one purpose for that retail store? Is it to sell organic products that are not going to fill our landfills and you know not be damaging to not give us cancer right. Whatever the case may be, whatever that is. What is that vision and then who do you then bring in around you? And then when it comes to telling the store's story that's where it will say what's your passion right. What are your life experiences what are your values that brought you to that? And you know what education do you have like why would people shop at your store versus anything anyone anyplace else? You know does it does it offer something special with regards to you know community workshops or something like that? What is it that about you bleeds out in the store that really sets it apart? So you know that the strength profile isn't going to necessarily give you your brand personality per se. But what it's going to do is it's going to help to focus that vision so you are actually going to be able to fulfill the vision of your business. Does that make sense?

Salena: It does. And let's be honest any independent retail store one of the key differentiators that you have between a chain store or a big box store is the fact that you started this store for a reason. You had a passion or you saw a need. Or there was a niche that nobody was filling. Big brands that are still because they want to get into a specific market and they do lots of market research but they don't usually have the passion. Yes, I think there are a few examples like Lululemon is usually one that comes to mind because they're very community focused. There are a few examples but generally speaking, to me this is one of the key differentiators that you have as an independent business is, that passion and the love and the why and the reason and who you're going to have as customers. You actually know that inside you. It's not just about bring as many people as possible in and let them go about their day.

Alissa: Right. And so often those stores come from the core of you. You created it because you saw a need probably for yourself first. Like this is something I want. And so who you are at your core and how you're wired is actually important because you're probably going to be attracting in people who are of similar mindset, who are of similar values, who are of similar strengths like I've got this big vision to do this or I've got you know whatever the strategic thing that is missing in how I raise my kids. And so I need a product that's going to help me with that or a whole store that has a variety of products that will help me be the best and most efficient mother I can be, whatever the case may be. So understanding who you are better and better will also help you to serve and draw in the people you are trying to serve, your target market, your Habitat.

Salena: We want to hang around people who are like us.

Alissa: Yeah do we just do because it doesn't take us much effort or energy to understand them. Now I'm all about you know with this perfect lopsidedness and finally interior yang and all of that, that there's there's such richness in all of us being different. But that being said, we typically serve the people best that we can easily most easily relate to. So it is it is really important.

Salena: So tell me then you have this thing called the four steps to break in awesomeness don't get close enough.

Alissa: Yeah. Close enough. A freaking awesome process I call it. So there are four steps right. Yes. So we've got you know the four things that make that go into Step 1 and that's the four things that we already talked about; your life experience, your education, your values, and your strengths finder profile. And those four things go into step 1 which is know thyself you must know thyself before you can venture out and really make that impact that you're looking to make. Step two is creating a plan. And I know that sounds super simple but we create a plan in the six inches between our ears and we don't often write it down. Right. So those great ideas can remain wishes instead of plans. So really creating a plan and sometimes you need some help with that and that's okay. Reach out get a coach get a strategic coach and help you create that plan. Step three is carrying out the plan which you...(cross-talking)

Salena: You're probably, people who are listening and been listening for a while. I swear they must have heard them say, do you have a plan to make money in the back of their head? Because I hear them say that over time it's like you can't just open a shop and think you're going to sell stuff. You have to have a plan to make money.

Alissa: Yeah yeah. You remember Field of Dreams where like if you build a car. No. That's just not how it works, unfortunately. It would be wonderful if it worked that way but it just doesn't. So you know step three is really carrying out that plan. So what accountability you have in place. How are you tracking? I myself hate tracking it like it is the least sexy least fun thing to me. But I know if I don't track my progress I will fall off and I'll get distracted and be like oh this shiny object over here. Great. So that tracking is vital. So what processes can I put in place to make that easy for someone who is wired like me?

Salena: I'm wired like you people again people listening who know I talk about this with my bookkeeping every month. But I could literally give my bookkeeper access to that. All I have to do is download full bank statements payphone, my...my bank account my credit card. It takes me about six minutes you know but it's just one of those things and he every month he's like you could just send them like Just get me a login to do it. I'm like No no no this is all I have to be a

good steward of money. And part of that is making myself download. It's the one small thing I do to make myself be accountable for my money.

Alissa: Do you reward yourself after you've done that?

Salena: Probably not because what happens is when I hired this bookkeeper I said to him you'll probably need to email me at least three times to get me to do the paperwork.

And so I build that into your pricing because you need to remind me over and over again. And then I get to the point where he's like you know this is the last reminder if you don't get it to me by today I won't have time to submit it for you on time. Blah-blah-blah So then I usually am like okay down to the wire to take you six minutes. And every time I do it I think why is this such a pain. Because it's such as fractions like it. I can boil the kettle in the amount of time that it takes.

Alissa: Mm hmm. That is a very interesting habit loop that you've created for yourself.

Salena: Okay. So let's just jump in there. So we've got to be the only person. Right.

Alissa: So the habit loop and I'm gonna do another book recommendation. I talked about traction by Gina Wickman. The power of habit by Charles Duhigg, Phenomenal book. So he talks about the habit loop. It's three parts. It's really super simple. We have a trigger. We have a behavior and we have a reward. Right.

And so you know right now your trigger is that third e-mail which is enough guilt for you to feel like okay the behavior is the procrastination. And then you finally get the stuff downloaded right. And then the reward is oh, I'm done for one last time. It's easiest to retrain a habit than to create a new one. And so if you just you know change the trigger right or change the reward the behavior is pretty simple/ Like the behavior that you need to do is to download the statements right. And so you know what positive reward could you give yourself if you did it on the first time? Or is there you know a Google reminder with you know whatever happens to be engaging for you whether that's you know I'm gonna to sit down and give myself 30 minutes to read my favorite book just for fun you know. Whatever the case may be giving yourself that reward. And then once you experience that you can lock in that oh man I did it on the first reminder that felt really

good or I did it before he ever sent the first like. I and you'll feel like a queen of the world. Right. And so just kind of looking at what; so the first time you have to just be aware of how it goes without trying to change it. Just notice oh this is when I actually step in to do this behavior and then when I get done this why do I wait so long. Right so. So just noticing the pathway of that habit is the first thing. And without trying to change it. And then you can go. All right. And I try to just change this one tiny thing so changes in micro behavior can make these big impactful changes in your long term habits. But it takes time and it takes patience and it takes self-compassion.

Salena: All right. I will do that I promise. I will do that because as we record this it's coming out. I know that the dates are coming up when I have to do it. So I will do that. But let's get back to that was a little digression guys.

Alissa: Yes. I'm sorry but that was an important digression.

Salena: It was an important digression and it was something that really can help you to grow as a person and as a business. So four step freaking awesome process. Know thyself. Create a plan, carry out the plan...

Alissa: And then reflect and this is a piece that nearly 100 percent of people forget to do. And what I want to encourage people to look at this reflection process as, is I never lose either win or I learn. If we look at it that way, now reflecting on what worked, what didn't work what did I learn about myself. What did I learn through failure right? So that I can go back to step one. It's a cyclic process. Go back to step one and go, okay, now what do I know about myself. And now what kind of plan can I create. And now what is the next you know what's an improved tracking process or an improved way that I can carry out this plan? And then the reflection process of now what did I learn. But in order to actually compete this process, you have to schedule it in because it does not come naturally. I literally have to put in my calendar that at the end of the week is reflection time. So Sunday nights are that weekly time for me. But I also encourage people to do it quarterly and certainly annually; to just sit and reflect. But I I will say I don't believe that annually is often enough because you get to the end of the year. Oh yeah, I; but 10

10 of the 12 months slip by and then I delve in at the end or I totally lost track of this or that. So if you can do it on a weekly basis, there's just a short window and it takes me like an hour to an hour and a half to just kind of like how to go. What went well, what didn't go well, why what got in my way? And in my in my book, I actually have an entire chapter of questions that people just to jog people's ideas, memories of what kind of questions they might ask themselves. So that they can actually propel themselves forward because what we find is this, I'm chasing my tail, chasing my tail in the rat race over and over and over again. And if we actually implement this freaking awesome process, you will spiral up. And instead of instead of spin your wheels.

Salena: It's funny because one of my clients was recently trying out for a TV show. And the same thing you know just really plodding along, I can see all the success that she's made but she sort of felt like she hadn't really achieved a lot. She did a lot of investing in the business, so you know the dollars wise; because she moved up to the next level. So there was lots of investment to move to the next level. When she went to apply to this TV show, she had to talk about all the things that you know the good things and the bad things. And so she did it and then I was like, What about this? What about this? And what about the fact that you got this award and what of it. And of course, she's forgotten so many of them. And when she sat down she's like, oh my God I'm pretty good aren't I? And it's very easy to think of all the things that you didn't do or that didn't work out. Yeah, I do not remember the things that were great. You're absolutely fabulous. And they don't have to be massive. Maybe that one thing was you know what, I managed to go to my kid's school assembly or just waiting at the award ceremony and normally I wouldn't be able to do it. That doesn't have to be you know I made five million dollars.

Alissa: Right. And we are so hypercritical of ourselves that we do forget our accomplishments especially if we're already just moving on to the next thing. i

And in business, that's what we do. Like entrepreneurs and business owners. We're always looking at the next thing moving forward moving forward. But what I also like to remind people is that you cannot read the label from inside the jar. So you do have to reach out to other people and say hey, what do you see? And in who you reach out to is important. Like you don't want to reach out to your critical mother who's never seen anything good in you. You want to reach out to people who love and want to see you succeed. Not to say that all mothers don't like that.

Hopefully not. But what is; you know who is somebody that you could trust who is willing to say the tough things but is also willing to say like you, wow look at what else you did. Do you realize what you mean to this person or that person or how this accomplished impacted all these people or you know all of those other things? It's like oh, wow! Sometimes you really do just need that outside view on who you are what you've accomplished. Because we tend to pooh-pooh the things that are our accomplishments because out of humility right we think it's out of humility. And we don't want to be arrogant or you know or what have you? But then we're not shining the light on that. And we think that by shining our light brighter it diminishes other people's light. But that is simply not true in fact what it does is it gives other people courage to shine brightly themselves.

Salena: Yes definitely. OK so all right I'm going to finish up there before I start the next topic because everybody who listens knows that I can talk to great people forever. And I had a look on your website and you've got a free download haven't you to help people with this?

Alissa: Yes. Yes, I do. So we've talked about those four things right that really set you apart. And I have a free E-workbook that will guide everybody through really figuring out what are those four things. So yes it's going to take you just a little bit of work but I promise you that the fruit of that short term labor will be so so helpful. So you can get that download right on my Web site daira2succeed.com and they can get that the four things e workbook right there so that they can truly know thyself and begin that magical freaking awesome process.

Salena: Thank you so much for sharing this. If you're watching the video I've been smiling the whole time because it just lights me up to know that there's information out there to help you work at your best and to focus on what you are. Freaking awesome, rather than oh my God, I have to work at all these things that I'm maybe not so great at. So I love it when we can embrace who we are and what we do well and use it to make the world a better place. Thank you so much for that.

Alissa: Thank you so much. Thank you.