

86. Our Story of Success – Knowing When to Outsource – Episode Transcript

Leah: Welcome to Her Story of Success, a podcast featuring stories from influential women trailblazers and business leaders who have defined & pursued their own versions of success and fulfillment. I'm your host, Leah Glover Hayes, CEO and podcast host of Her Story of Success Women's Business Collective.

At Her Story of Success, we believe that there is power in stories. We believe that hearing stories of success, failures, lessons learned and celebrations is a beautiful form of mentorship. We believe it can inspire you on your own journey, and we are so honored to share this experience with you. If you've been with us since the beginning, then you've probably heard Her Story of Success evolve over the last few years, but that desire to give women space and a platform to tell their stories and share them with you has stayed the same.

In today's episode, we'll be sharing part two of a special series where I'm giving you an inside look at Our Story of Success, and introducing you to some of the amazing people who have come alongside me to help me grow this dream into an actual business. If you haven't listened to part one of this series, I encourage you to go back and listen to that first. I talked with some of my early partners and team members about the inspiration behind this company, and what it was like to start it, and give advice for finding the right business partner for those of you looking. In part two, I'll be sharing more about the process of building up my team, advice for hiring contractors, and an honest look at some of the mistakes I've made and lessons I've learned along the way. Whether you're a long-time business owner or someone who hopes to one day start a company, my hope is that you'll gain some beneficial tips and inspiration for your own entrepreneurial journey. This is Our Story of Success, and we're so grateful to have you along on our journey.

Once Melissa and I had ironed out the details of our partnership, we were so excited to start taking Her Story of Success to the next level. And in order to do that, we knew we needed to start building our own team and developing some processes and systems that would be sustainable for us as we grew. Up until that point, we had been working with Relationary Marketing solely to produce our podcast. And while we loved their team and were so grateful for their help, they were really focused on working with agencies rather than producing podcasts for individuals like. So a lot of their processes just didn't work for me and my preferences. I knew I wanted to build

my own production team where we could work in a way that made sense for me and for what I was trying to do with Her Story of Success, but I didn't want to burn any bridges or be disrespectful to Chuck and Clark, who I really valued and appreciated so much. So I actually had met two people on their team who I loved working with and wanted to hire, but I wanted to ask Clark and Chuck's permission first because they were their employees. So I went to the guys and was honest about where I was and that I really wanted to build my own team. I let them know that I was looking for a producer and writer and asked if I could approach a couple people from their team that I had enjoyed working with.

I had met Claire when she recorded some of our sessions with Relationary as a production intern. I remember talking to her about how she liked working on the HSS sessions, because like me, she was inspired by hearing the conversations of successful women. She was an audio engineer but also had an interest in taking on more of an executive producer role, which I was looking for, so it was really fun for her to join the team and to see her start building some processes and standards for the podcast that we definitely needed immediately, but also that would serve us as we continued to grow in the future. Claire was also an amazing person to bring on, because she really believed in the mission of Her Story of Success, and that passion for what we were doing just really took her work to the next level.

Claire: From the beginning, I really enjoyed listening to the podcast, even though I was editing it and I had to listen to it, it was kind of a nice perk that I liked the content. I'm a huge advocate for women's rights and female empowerment, so that mixed with my career of being a freelance podcast producer and sound designer, Her Story of Success seem like an awesome thing to dive into and to be more involved in.

Leah: While I was working with Relationary, I'd also met Bronte as she'd started writing some of our blog posts and show notes for the podcast. Now some podcast hosts don't hire writers right away, because they are fine with doing that piece themselves, but I know that writing is not my strong suit and was not something I was interested in spending my time and energy on. So it made sense for me to hire someone else to take on that responsibility. And as I got to know Bronte and saw her skillset in action, I just asked if she would be interested in helping me write scripts for the podcast and events, because I knew that that would help me level up my speaking and hosting abilities.

Bronte: When Leah found out that I was a writer, she started having me do like show notes and then kept adding things, so eventually I was writing some scripts for her.

Her Story of Success had always been one of my favorite podcasts to work on for Relationary, just because I really loved the mission behind it, and I loved all of the conversations. I felt like I was learning so much just from being in that room and hearing the conversations live. So when she asked me to kind of come back and be a part of it in a bigger way, I was really excited about that.

Leah: I think what Bronte said there is really crucial for any business owner to keep in mind while hiring. This is the good stuff, you know? You start a business because you are passionate and you believe in something. And people are motivated by a lot of things, whether it's money or affirmation or doing the work they enjoy. And I believe there's something really powerful when you bring people onto the team who genuinely believe in what you're doing and are excited to be a part of it. I'm telling you, it's the most fun and amazing thing. They'll be more invested in your business and also more willing to grow and learn as they're working with you. And as a leader there is absolutely nothing more rewarding than being a part of someone else's career and skill set growth, especially when that growth is what helps you succeed. It is a beautiful, beautiful thing.

Bronte: So I was still in college when I started working with Her Story of Success, and I was a journalism major. I knew I wanted to write, but I didn't really know what I wanted that to look like. I still don't totally know. And so Her Story of Success has been really cool, because it's just exposed me to such a wide variety of women's stories. And it's been a really good reminder just that whatever direction I want to take my career in one day is fine. Like, it doesn't need to be linear. I think so many Her Story of Success guests start out doing one thing and then they start their own business or they grow in a company that isn't where they expected to end up. And I think that's been really encouraging for me to see that I can do whatever I decide I want to do. And I'm not defined by... any decisions I make right now aren't final for my career.

Leah: Since Her Story of Success is all about empowering women in their careers, it's really important to me that I do that for the people that I hire as well. But I think that applies no matter what kind of business you run. When you're building a team, you really get the value that you put in. My goal for every person that I hire is that they become better at their craft through working with Her Story of Success. Of course this benefits my business, but it also benefits theirs, and that's how you build loyalty with your team.

Sponsor: This podcast is sponsored in part by Piccolo Marketing, providing outsourced marketing professionals for business owners. Piccolo Marketing was

started by fellow woman entrepreneur, Anna-Vija McClain, and they have become our go-to resource when it comes to comprehensive marketing strategies and execution. So Anna-Vija created Piccolo Marketing Mentor for people like me, as the outsourced VP of marketing to chief marketing officer, depending on the size and needs of your company. How we use them is more like a VP of marketing, and the thing I struggled with is the processes and checklists, the project management of marketing. I felt like I was wearing a lot of hats and juggling a lot of things, so she helps us with the both long and short term marketing strategies, and then providing my team a roadmap and insights that we can go and execute on. Piccolo Marketing Mentor has helped thousands of business owners just like you and me develop our strategies to improve our marketing machine, which is how we get qualified leads and make sales. So to learn more about Piccolo Marketing Mentor, you can visit them online at piccolomarketing.com

Leah: If you're like me and mostly work with contractors, I think one of the best ways to do this is by giving referrals. I'm so proud of the fact that I have brought at least one new client to almost every person who works with me, because really that's my job as their leader. As much as I want this business to succeed, I also want to lift up the people on my team so that they can find their own success on their career journey.

Claire: It's been so great having Her Story of Success as an outlet while I'm growing in my own career and also developing my own company, specifically for female empowerment within the music industry, and building that out, along with having this outlet to give me the advice I need or a little pick me up that day or some inspiration, it's so important to have an outlet where you can feel empowered to hear advice when you need it, or a little pick me up on a down day or for some inspiration. And not only has Her Story of Success brought that, but Leah is also so encouraging of my endeavors within and outside of Her Story of Success and I'm really thankful for that.

Bronte: I have gained so much from working with Her Story of Success. So first, really practically, Leah has introduced me to a couple of new clients, which has been so awesome. She's not someone who is possessive about my time. Like, I feel like a lot of bosses maybe wouldn't want you to get too many new opportunities because then you would not work for them as much. And she's not that way at all. She is constantly connecting me with people as potential mentors or people who need someone who does what I do, and so that's been really incredible. And then I've also just gotten the opportunity to try out a lot of different skills that weren't necessarily either things that

I'd done professionally before or things that I knew I enjoyed. Because Her Story of Success is still relatively small and growing and changing so quickly, I've been able to do more marketing and social media, and I didn't expect to be writing scripts when I first started out. And that's really what I love to do. And once Leah learned that that was something I was interested in and was good at, she started giving me that opportunity. And so it's just been really cool to have my role kind of evolve. And I've definitely seen myself grow through that experience, and I've learned a lot.

Leah: Whether you're working with contractors or full-time employees, I believe it's really important to give people the space to step out of their comfort zones and try new things. Everyone on my team knows that we're building this business together, and that means sometimes parts of the vision will change along the way. Claire's role at Her Story of Success is a great example of this. I've talked a lot about how I want this to become a TV show someday, and so I thought it was really important to start adding video to some of our content. At that point, I couldn't really afford to hire a dedicated video person, so I asked some of the girls on my team for help. I found that Claire was actually interested in learning more about video anyway, and so it worked out perfectly because we got to learn together while we're building this platform.

Claire: I have learned and have grown a lot since joining Her Story of Success, not only did it open doors for me to take on more responsibility in terms of podcast production, But also Leah wanted to add video aspects to the company, and I had never done video before, but I really wanted to learn, and Leah was willing to give me the platform to pursue that.

Leah: I brought on Claire and Bronte at the beginning of 2020, and that was really the start of a new phase for Her Story of Success, where I was looking to build a full team to help this business grow. I learned so many lessons throughout that process, but I think some of the biggest takeaways had to do with outsourcing.

I talked in the last episode about how, when I first started Her Story of Success, I believed it was important to invest my money into paying people to help with parts of the business that weren't my strong suit or my interest. At first, that meant paying Relationary to produce the podcast, but as we continued to grow, I saw more opportunities to outsource so that I could focus on being the best CEO and podcast host possible. One area I knew I wanted to outsource was marketing. For Her Story of Success to be a successful company, we needed to build our social media and email presence while also establishing a strong brand. So I did hire a few people to make

that happen, and it freed me up to spend more time on building the broader strategy, having amazing conversations with women, and really envisioning what this company could and should become in the future. I'm also really proud that I was able to hire many of them in the middle of this pandemic, where some of them had lost their jobs or lost some clients if they were contractors. It's been so exciting to be working with a full team of women who believe in the mission of Her Story of Success.

Claire: Working with everyone on the Her Story of Success team has been awesome, because it not only gives me the outlet to have a community, but it also gives me people to learn from. So it brings me a lot of joy because sometimes freelancing can get a little lonely, and the people that Leah has picked to join the team have just been awesome. And even though everyone has their own individual skill set, we still come together really well. And it's been really cool to see how everyone on the team has come together to foster growth for Her Story of Success, each other and as a team.

Leah: Though there were definitely some success stories with amazing contractors I hired, I think as a business owner, there's always a second voice that you hear reminding you of all the things you've done wrong and the ways you could have grown more, done more, made different decisions — like the mistakes you made. One of those mistakes that I made was hiring a consultant that I wasn't ready for. In order to outsource something, you really need to be in a place of understanding exactly where you are, what you are trying to accomplish, and what piece is missing. I didn't have that foundation with this contractor, and so I lost thousands of dollars and we both wasted our time. I thought I was hiring her to perform a service, but later I realized I was actually just looking for clarity about what my business was becoming and what we were selling. Through that process, I learned the one thing you can never outsource is clarity. As a business owner, you're the only one who can set the vision and trajectory for your company, and if you're not sure what that is yet, you need to figure that out before bringing more people on board. It's OK if your vision changes, especially in a year like 2020 where so many things are unknown and have completely changed course. But you do need to have at least some understanding of what you're looking for when you're building a team. My most successful hires have happened when I was able to tell people, "Here's where I'm trying to go and what I'm trying to do. I don't know exactly how to do it, but do you think you could help me figure out this piece?"

Bronte: If you're looking to hire a contractor or freelancer, it's really important to know what you want from them before you go into it and to be really clear about what you're looking for.

Claire: It's really important for them to not only know their mission and know how to communicate that to the people that they're going to hire, but they also need to make sure that their potential hires also fully believe in the mission. Because if they don't then they might not be able to foster growth in the way that others might. You really want to know what you're looking for and what your business needs.

Bronte: And it's okay if that changes. Like, I think Leah was a great example of this. She came to me and she said, "Here are the services I need now, but also here's where I want to go." And so I think it's totally okay if your business is going to evolve or your needs are going to evolve with a contractor, but just be clear about that upfront, because I think at the end of the day, we really want to prioritize you as much as possible and make every client feel valued.

Leah: Having that foundation of clarity isn't just important for hiring, it's also an essential part of attracting new clients. Our first podcast sponsor was Insperity, the company that I'd been working at when I first started Her Story of Success. They said yes to working with us early on because they knew me and believed in what I was building, but that didn't necessarily mean that I was ready to go out and sell that same type of partnership to other companies. If, as a business owner, you don't fully understand what you're selling, then no one else is going to understand it either. Before I could start pitching and creating proposals, I needed to figure out who I was and what I had to offer. Otherwise, I'd be getting myself into partnerships and agreements that didn't actually align with me or my business values. We're finally at a point now where we have started to venture out into new partnerships, like with Piccolo and a few other companies coming, but it's because I did the work of figuring out who I was, what I wanted and what we have to offer. So, I am excited to say we have started offering white label events and podcasts for companies and organizations that align with our values of doing work that inspires and empowers others to succeed.

I'm so proud of how far Her Story of Success, my team and I have come since we began, but it's still hard not to focus on the things I'm lacking or beat myself up for how far I'm not yet. And I'm working on becoming more confident in the value I bring to the world and celebrating my own success along the way. But I believe that's true for a lot of us women. And at the end of the day, Her Story of Success is helping

women, truly all over the world, find inspiration and mentorship, and that's exactly what we set out to do. And I've been able to pay nine amazing women, invest in them and their careers, even during a pandemic.

I'm proud of who and what this company is becoming, and I'm so grateful to have you along the journey with me. This podcast truly would not exist without you, your support and your engagement, and I'm grateful that you've chosen to be a part of this journey. If you want to further support and be a part of our mission and vision of Her Story of Success, one of the best ways to do that is by sharing this podcast with another woman in your life that's looking for mentorship and inspiration. You can also follow us on social media to stay engaged with all of the events and opportunities we are creating each month. And I would really appreciate, a follow, a subscribe and review on iTunes, Spotify or wherever you listen to my podcast. Your support truly means so much to me and my team.

Thank you for joining us today, and I'll talk to you again next week!