

Transcript

Krystal Hobbs 0:04

Welcome to Beyond the Tools, the podcast that helps contractors attract more leads, grow their business, and finally get off the tools. In each episode, you'll discover marketing tactics that work. You'll get actionable insights from other successful contractors, and connect with experts to help you grow. I'm your host, Krystal Hobbs, owner of a social media agency that helps contractors attract and convert more leads. Get ready to take your business to the next level so you can finally enjoy the fruits of your hard labor. Ready, let's go!

Krystal Hobbs 0:46

Hey, contractors, welcome back to Beyond the Tools. I'm your host Krystal Hobbs and today, I am very excited to bring you an amazing guest with such a powerful and important message. Today I chat with Drew Cameron, who is the founder of Flow Odyssey, the president of Energy Design Systems, LLC, and EGIA, a contractor, university founder, faculty, and board member. He is North America's most sought-after sales and marketing strategy success adviser to companies in the trades and he's a renowned author, speaker, and coach consultant. Honestly, the list goes on and on. Drew is a very well-known name in this industry. And if you're someone who is struggling in your business, and you're not taking care of yourself the way that you should, you absolutely need to listen to this episode. This is the real-life stuff that is so much more important than the latest marketing tactic or hiring or financials or any of those things. Drew challenges us to take a deeper look at our businesses and know that you don't have to do it all alone. You can build your business by design. You can build a business with purpose. And more importantly, make sure that you don't work yourself into an early grave. I know many contractors have the fear that your work is literally going to kill you, which I know sounds dramatic, but this was almost a reality for Drew. And I think the lessons that he has to share from his story, and how he helps businesses to succeed now, without having these crazy effects on your health and your life is so important, so powerful, and I can't wait for you to hear it. So let's go and chat with Drew.

Krystal Hobbs 3:13

I am super excited to introduce today's guest, Drew Cameron. Drew, welcome to the show. So excited to have you here.

Drew Cameron 3:22

Hey, Crystal, thanks for having me. Great to be here.

Krystal Hobbs 3:25

Amazing. So, Drew, I think you have such a powerful story. I know it's something that you've shared a lot, but I think it really has a big impact on those that hear about it. So can you tell us a little bit about how your experience in the industry and your work ethic really kind of led to some scary health consequences?

Drew Cameron 3:48

I grew up in the industry. So I got 45 years in the game since I'm 57 years old. I started at the age of 12 coming home from swim team practice and working in the family business. Summers and weekends and Christmas break all the way through high school and through college. And then when I got into college, dove 100% full time into the business and in 1989 prided myself on that work ethic that my father had instilled into me and I thought that was a gift. I still think it's a gift. And, you worked harder than anybody else. And of course, since the family name was on the business, this was John H. Cameron and their sons. You took pride in that. And we had a lot of struggles and we had a lot of success. But we finished with a lot of success and we ended up selling the business and I worked for a publicly traded company for about 18 months, jumping on planes and traveling every week. And so that pushed my work ethic even harder because I was away I leave on Monday and I fly home Friday night. Work on stuff once on the weekends and then go back at it you know the following week. After about 18 months of that I jumped out on my own and since I still had a five year five state non compete with the utility company that bought my company, my family business, I found myself continuing to be on the road. But now not only was I on the road pretty much, five days a week, I was now working nights and weekends on my clients projects. And so I continued that grind. Say no one was not gonna hustle me or outwork me all the way up until just about three years ago this week when I went on vacation and took a little bit of downtime with my girlfriend and my son, his friend, and went to Myrtle Beach and had a heart attack and sudden cardiac arrest and flatline on vacation. And I had no idea. I was somewhat fit, but I wasn't healthy on the inside. I didn't know it, because I hadn't stayed up with doctors and just kept traveling and working hard and just doing the grind. And, that was a major wake-up call, and I'm not proud to say that. I'm not saying it's something that anybody should aspire to. But it told me that what's important. And number one, my health. Health is wealth. And so focusing on that, and the

relationships that are closest to me, and what I put my girlfriend through who saved my life that day. She put my heart on for 20 minutes until the paramedics got there.

And that's when I flatlined five different times, they did shock me back to life five different times between the hotel the ambulance to the emergency room. And then they went in and did some surgery and cleaned out some blocked arteries and a couple of stents. And miraculously, based on the doctors, two days later I was on the beach. And so now I put my health first. I put my relationships first. I'm a little selfish because we should be. And so when I look back on my life that was kind of I saw how I got that moment. It was a bunch of other little moments, a bunch of lessons that I took from watching people in this industry really work the grind and really punishing themselves and their health and their relationships. And my father had his heart attack a few years earlier. He's still with us but unfortunately, before my heart attacks a year before that, I lost my older brother who was in the family business with us. I lost my younger brother 13 years before that, both related to heart issues. And so experiencing my own situation, reflecting, and projecting forward, I said, "Okay, I don't want to do life this way. I don't want to do business this way. And I don't think the contractor should do life and business that way." So that's kind of what got me to where we are today.

Krystal Hobbs 7:41

So now in the work that you're doing with Flow Odyssey in particular, like, are a lot of contractors coming to you for that reason, because they do feel like their business is their life and they're starting to see the negative effects of that?

Drew Cameron 7:59

I think so. We changed the name to Flow Odyssey a year ago, and we rebranded from HVAC Sellutions, really being focused just specifically on HVAC, and really being specifically focused on sales in the business. And as we change the name, when we start to tell the story, I think it is resonating more with people. They're seeing that their business is struggling, but they're also seeing that their life and relationship is struggling. And they're asking at least asking those questions. I don't know if they're really coming yet knocking on the doors specifically for the personal thing because that's a tough thing to admit.

Krystal Hobbs 8:33

That makes sense. And I do have to ask, I guess for you, obviously, something like that is so harrowing, and also, your family seeing them go through it. But for you, was it like

a quick flip of a switch in terms of how you approach things or was it a little bit harder to kind of get out of those old habits of working like crazy?

Drew Cameron 9:01

Great question. I think the mindset flipped pretty quickly, that some changes need to be made. But like you said, breaking the habits has been a little tougher. I mean, it's been three years this week, it was the 20th. So breaking the work habits and saying, getting to a place where I say no. I told myself this story that if this is what my clients wanted, this is what my clients need, this is what my clients expect, and the funny thing is when I actually have started to say no and I tell clients full time I will work; what time I'll start, what time I'll finish, and what I'm doing; they're all very good with it. They're very cool with it and then we can actually start to have an open dialogue and they start to ask me questions about how I call it a life ethic now and a love ethic. Right? So I think I was lacking both of those because I had the work ethic in spades. And so now I don't want to call and I don't know what to call balance. Its harmony and integration. I make it work. If I'm working hard during the day, or I have to work at night on a project, sometimes I have a deadline that I make sure to take the time the next day, and I don't get caught in the story of what I believe, what will get done will get done when it gets done. And I'll honor my commitments and deadlines, but otherwise, it's all good.

Krystal Hobbs 10:24

Make sense. I think sometimes I can kind of, personally just laugh at myself. And like, why do I think I'm so important that everybody needs me right now?

Drew Cameron 10:34

But that gives us as entrepreneurs, right, that gives us a feeling of the significance of importance. And so again, we tell ourselves a story as the E-Myth, right? If it's going to be it's up to me, it's gonna get done, right? I'm the one who has to do it. I gotta teach you I have to be the answer person.

Krystal Hobbs 10:51

Makes sense. So I know, when you talk about businesses, you often say that they're created by default and not design. So what do you mean by that?

Drew Cameron 11:04

I learned it first in our family business when I came into college, and we went to ACCA quality college back in 1990. And they started talking about, some things I learned in college, which were about vision, mission, purpose, core values, organizational structure, operational structure, and financial structure. And what I found is we didn't

have any of that in our business. And we've been in business since 1991, since 1964. And we didn't have that stuff documented. I guess my father had talked about it with his team. As I was growing up in the business, I was out in the field and in the warehouse and doing other things. So I certainly wasn't a party to that. And what I realized is exactly that we were in business by default, not by design. And by that I mean, we didn't know what we were trying to accomplish. We didn't know how we were trying to accomplish it. We didn't know why we were trying to accomplish it. We had no guiding principles to say this is how we, this is who we are and how we interact with each other, but also how we interact with the world, which would be the core values, right? And we started to implement those into our business. And like, I want to say overnight, but almost overnight, we shifted from being an I want to say unprofitable because we were profitable, they were small profit. And we were on the brink of bankruptcy because the union was trying to organize this. And so it really strained our business.

And when we reinvented ourselves as a service and replacement, indoor air quality business, and we put all this in place. Almost overnight we shifted the entire business, and the profits just took off and hockey stick to 23% to where we're able to sell the company. But the culture had gotten a lot better, the attitudes of people got up and we've gotten a lot more productive and a lot more focused. We knew who we were, and we knew what we were trying to accomplish. And we knew how to interact with each other. We knew who to hire and not and who to get rid of actually as well, which was some tough decisions. And it defined everything that we did. And so going forward, when I went to work for the publicly traded company, traveling around the country, I was going into broken businesses that they had acquired and fixing them. And the way I started was those foundational elements in place to design, the direction of where we were going to design our future, vision, mission, purpose, and core values. And then, of course, all the structural business things that we know we learn more in classes now and realize that instead of being a contractor whose business I want you to be basically in the business of contracting, right, I want you to be a business person who happens to do contracting.

Krystal Hobbs 13:36

Right. So I know a lot of contractors in business like they tend to focus on the tactical stuff, right? Like the numbers, the sales and marketing, and financials. But I know that's not where you necessarily start at Flow Odyssey or what makes the biggest impact. So when you're starting to work with a contractor, what are some of the things that you look at to make a big impact?

Drew Cameron 14:05

Certainly all those things. That's what gets me into business and having the conversation and helping them see some of the things that they're probably lacking. I've visited a business just last week. And again, they did not have the vision, mission, purpose, and core values in their business. They had developed them, they had followed a book template, but they weren't really into the business. They weren't activated. They weren't on every wall of the business. I mean, it should be on every wall, every office of the business, every room of the business, including the restrooms in the break room, in the warehouse. They weren't on the dashboards of the truck. They weren't being discussed at company meetings, and the company was somewhat floundering with the direction that it was going. But it was also due to a lack of leadership too. And so, working with this company, they started looking at all these operational and financial and structural things and organizational charts as well. And that's what got the conversation rolling.

But finally, I had to have the tough conversation, because typically what you find is the fish stinks from the head down. And so looking at the owner, I just said, what role do you think that you play have played in this? And again, I'm not looking to a fault and blame you, or guilt and shame you. But let's take ownership and responsibility of what's been going on and what got us here. Great, applaud you, you've had some measure of success. But obviously, it's also led to this place of struggle. So the skills that got you here will not take you to the next level to where you want to go. So what role do you play in that? What have you taught or tolerated from your people? Because that's what happens. We teach or tolerate things. And if you tolerate things then you and they endure, right? So bad behaviors, bad habits, bad processes, people who are executing the poor level, their attitude and behaviors. And then when it endures, you actually are tacitly endorsing that behavior, those results.

And so getting an owner in the leadership team, but usually, it's at the top and small, closely held businesses, like I typically see under \$10 million, it's usually the owner, and getting them to look in the mirror and be, and honestly be critical, but just take ownership. It's all good, right? I mean, there's no right or wrong or good or bad. It's just, that this is what happened. And you did what you did based on what you know. And when you are knowledgeable, you can do more, but I'm not gonna fault you for what you've done. Because it's based on what you know, and you can only give me your company, the community, your people, the customers, that which you know, what you're willing to execute upon. And then when I start to ask them about their lives, talking

about, you know, as they get to know these people are intimately personally as well, I hear about your relationship struggles with their significant other, or their kids or health issues, weight issues, smoking, drinking, gambling, all of that.

And just say, Well, the good, do you think that's not showing up in your business anywhere else? And so when they see that, and you get to realize that we are all a mirror of each other to some extent. And the results are completely a reflection of us. Then once they take ownership of that, that's where we get the biggest gains. And I literally will have people coming to the owner. I'm not looking for them to come to me, I never do anything, I don't take responsibility for anything as far as the success because I show them a path and give them some tools and mindsets to follow. And if they follow them, at least 80% of the way, they're never gonna follow me 100%. But they don't take away. But if they take about 80% of the advice, they get those results. And people will come to me, So what did you do to him or her? Like I did nothing? Right? I just made them see what they needed to see, just like someone made me see what I needed to see. Just like someone has made my father see what he needed to see, which was actually myself and the team that made my father look hard at the business. And when my father actually realized he didn't have to do it at all, the business took off, because people want to help people. I mean, they're part of it. And if they're part of what's struggling, can you imagine what they would do for something that was like functioning and giving them, you know, fulfillment?

Krystal Hobbs 18:27

Absolutely. So when you identify something like that, so you're talking with a business owner, maybe they have relationship troubles or vices or whatever that are going on, like, where does that begin? Like, how do you work on that?

Drew Cameron 18:48

Well, some of it, I will do myself. I'm not a certified life coach, but I've been through enough. You know, training and coaching and consultants myself, and continue to do so. Books and groups and classes that I've taken that, I know enough to be dangerous to have that conversation that I'm connected and network well enough to where I will provide resources. It's funny, though, when you do what I do, the way that I do it, how many people will say they'll take advantage, maybe one or two of the outside resources, but then they'll come back to me and they say, "You know all of me, and you're not working on just part of me, you're working on this other piece. And these people that you're giving me, well, helpful and appreciative. They can't do what you do. And of course, I'm not seeing them as much as I see you. I'm not talking to them as much as I

talk to you. And if you're willing to do it, would you help me in that capacity?" And so, again, directing them outside while we can get our hands dirty into the business, I get coach them here and there, give them a little bit along the way, but they go out and do a little bit outside work. They come back and they're like, you know what, now they got bit by the bug like I got bitten by that bug and they want more. They want to say, how do you do it? How do you do this? How do you do that? How can I do this? How can I do this for my kids? I can do this for my significant other, how can I do this for my people? And, and I get people who literally call me, they'll say, hey, Drew, I mean, some of that coaching, not the business coach, I need that other stuff.

Krystal Hobbs 20:20

That's amazing that you're able to work with them and have that kind of impact.

Drew Cameron 20:25

And that, for me is amazing, right? Because I know what it did for myself, right? And I see how it lights them up. And then I see how their life evolves. They're doing the work and they're having success, but then I see either the relationship improves, or they get out of an unhealthy relationship. And I'm not the person who directs them to do that. They make all their own choices. Whether they get a house or they get a car, they reach some lifetime goal, some monetary materialistic stuff as well achieved. But for me, it's seeing who they become in the process. Those things, the achievements of the business, the achievements of personal successes and whatnot, are a reflection of who they have become. Because at the end of the day, that's where we're human beings, not human doings. And we get that being operating, it's a beacon that really sparks others.

Krystal Hobbs 21:25

Amazing. So once you've done that, or the business owner has done that tough work, how does that then trickle down to the team?

Drew Cameron 21:38

Just like it did in my business, you realize who needs to be a part of the team. You bring them in. You let them know how much you care about them, and their families, and what's important to them. It may even be a tough conversation where you apologize for having neglected them and what they've contributed up to this point, and allows for some tough conversations to happen. But boy, these people have been so loyal, and they've stuck through with you through all of this. So they get reinvigorated and reactivated into the business, and the business starts to take on a new life. And then you also realize you have to have some tough conversations with some people. You

realize they've been there, but they have a job. And they're just doing a job and they're not doing it well. They're doing it somewhat begrudgingly. You've tolerated what they've done, and you just got to realize you got to let them go. They're not a reflection, because the other day, we talked about the beginning, and all of those foundational elements are what design the culture of the business. And if the culture is sick, the business is sick. And the culture is a reflection of leadership. So, what happens is people just start taking off. The business starts taking off. It can go into any new direction that it wants. Typically, what will happen when you see them in some businesses is we end up rebranding the businesses. We don't necessarily change the name, but we rebrand. And to me, that's more symbolic than anything. Because it just reflects a new attitude, a new direction, new energy, a new mindset. And it's incredible, these businesses that I've worked with, some of them have been clients for, I think the longest during client that we have active right now is back to 2008. And, that says something for the impact that not that we have, but for the energy exchange that just as ongoing the fuels both them as well as us, because it for us, it drives us as well to reinvent ourselves every day, to become the best version of ourselves for ourselves first, but also that we're always thinking about our clients business, there's like, well, I might not be working all the time, I'm always thinking about my clients. I can be watching a movie or television show, and it will trigger a tagline or a marketing idea or something like that.

Krystal Hobbs 24:02

I think everything you're saying is reminding me of times in my business, and I mean, we all have ups and downs where there are certainly times where you're just going through the motions and you're kind of disconnected from what's going on. So it's interesting to hear about, how you approach that and work with a person to make sure that things in their life are in order, and then how do you reflect that into the business and make sure that you have the culture and you have the brand and all those pieces are really working so you can get out of that sort of rot.

Drew Cameron 24:47

When you through that sticky ugliness of what they may even be might even be ashamed of or have some guilt about and you make it all okay, you help them realize it's all good, it's all okay, right? Because how would you know hot if you didn't know cold? How would you know big if you didn't know small, right? And so understanding the downside, and what you want to call the ugliness is not just that, you know, is that ugliness, it's just a degree of the spectrum. Because see if you know big and small, you

know, size. If you know the hot and cold, temperature. So it's not the duality of things, it's really helping them to see the duality, but doesn't have to be black or white. It has to be that entire spectrum of the singularity, which unites the black and the white, the big and the small, the hot and the cold and you're just on the spectrum. If you understand that you're on the spectrum, then you can basically shift, right? And it's not usually as tough as they think, right? It may have taken you 25 years to get to where you are, and you struggle, right, but it's not going to take you 25 years to get out of it. But you gotta give yourself permission to take a little bit of time to do so.

Krystal Hobbs 26:03

So when you are working with business owners in the trades, what does that look like? Is this something that takes weeks, months, years?

Drew Cameron 26:15

Well, depends on the business, right? It all depends on what they're looking to us for. But let's call it a broken business, quote, unquote, right? That is struggling financially, struggling structurally, growth wise, they're not going anywhere, there's somewhat staggered because 20% 30% growth is nothing. I mean, we get that in price increases, year over year. So maybe they've got the personnel and operational issues, and this is not productive or profitable. It takes about a year. It takes a very brief time. I mean, in a day, I can do an assessment of a business and tell you where it's broken. And so we do a one-day diagnostic, and then we build a plan over the course of a year. We hit them with a fire hose as it is, but to try and make it not as much of a deluge of a fire hose. But we basically can make a commitment for a year. Most of our clients will re-up. There's no expectation for them to order that do they need to because it's not like Well, you got to get the next chapter you got to keep paying us. We give them all the tools and teach them all the tools and the training and the processes. And we help them do it. And while we're working with and it's not like we're just consultants, we get our hands in there. And we're either on site or on zoom in the phone working with them remotely, and on-site. And that can be a combination of operational, administrative, financial, sales, and marketing, type things. But we always start with these foundational elements, even if they're in place, I want to see what they are. I want to see how the owners and leaders are buying into them.

But I also want to see how the personnel is buying into the vision, mission, purpose, and core values. And then from there, we get an organized organizational structure, and roles and responsibilities. And then we go to financial structure and pricing, and then operations, and then marketing. And then sales. Sales are actually the one thing that

every contractor thinks is the answer to getting profitability, right? But it's actually the last thing that they should work on. And because if you have a bad product, right, why should you be marketing in selling it? If you're pricing correctly, you can basically start to bleed out and hemorrhage by selling more of it at the wrong price. And that's what happens to most of these contractors, that I find that they pick an hourly rate, by default, they have no rhyme or reason. They don't know not recouping their overhead. And they don't understand that. And so we have to teach them pricing methodologies for service maintenance and replacement. Most of them are using a markup multiplier divisor method that you have to achieve. They say 50% gross profit. But the problem is you don't get to spend gross profit, you only get the net profit. And if you don't build your price based on the net profit objective, which is incorporating your overhead, as soon as your cost exists in your business, most of these companies are bleeding out. They don't realize that a job that basically is \$1,000 worth of material and 500 hours worth of labor cannot be treated the same as a job it's fiber loaded with material and \$1,000 with the labor, both of those jobs have a 15 of our cost of goods. But if you sell those both for the same price, you're losing money on the job. It's a high-labor job.

Krystal Hobbs 29:32

Absolutely. So I think that's such an important point. I love that actually because I do hear it all the time we need more sales. But it's interesting that you look at those foundational pieces first before you move to Okay, let's improve sail. So I really love that.

Drew Cameron 29:54

I equate it to a tumor, right? I mean, growing a tumor would be the worst thing that you could do. And so if you have a tumor in your business and you grow it and sales is that tumor, meaning unprofitable sales. Growing it would actually possibly kill the patient. I call these owners the pilots of their business and they're in the cockpit and the only control that they have is the throttle. So bigger, faster. Maybe not just yet, let's fix some things. Let's put a tourniquet on the bleeding first, let's write some things and then we can grow. And that's usually about an A 90 to 180 days. And that window is where we kind of, if we get through the initial foray of fixing some things, and stopping the bleeding, and we get the train on the right track, then we can start to push the throttle, right?

Krystal Hobbs 30:47

And I did want to go back to what you were talking about in terms of having a sick culture, and how important getting your personnel on board with your values and your

mission. And all of those pieces are I think in every interview lately, we've talked about the labor shortage, and it's because it's really one of the number one issues on the minds of contractors. So in your experience, given some of these labor challenges, how do the culture and mission and values and all of those things, how does that play into retaining or even attracting new labor?

Drew Cameron 31:35

That's a great question. And we're really seeing a dynamic shift right now that a lot of these owners have the same mindset that I did. Work ethic. It's all about work ethic, and you work until the work is done, right? Six, seven o'clock, you're going to work 60 to 80 hours a week. You're gonna put in the overtime. If you're a technician, you got to be on call. I'm seeing clients through my business and through EGIA Contractor University, and posts online of people losing employees due to the fact that they're being expected to work on call. They don't want to anymore. This, I don't want to say it's this new generation of people, because it's not this new generation, it's this generation of the workforce, meaning everybody who is in the workforce right now, regardless of your age, and generational status, they're looking for quality of life, they're looking for quality of health, they're looking for quality of relationships. Heck, our kids have a better social life than we do. And so we need to be available to chaperone them around. And people are tired of missing games. And, their marriages may be struggling and failing. And so they're saying, "Hey, we only want to work literally 30 to 40 hours a week, we want three day weekends, because of the demands of our relationship, or the what we want to put into our relationship or because of our children." And so what we're seeing is that we're having a hard time bringing people into the industry, because they don't have to work at that level in these other businesses, in a lot of businesses, they can work from home, and they'd rather do that. And we're seeing a lot of people that are in the workforce, changing jobs, not for really more money, than in some cases, it's actually more money in fewer hours. Because business owners are finally realizing that we should charge for our value. And that it's not about customers getting a cheap price is that we are essential services, and we make life impacts in people's homes and businesses. And we are more valuable than accountants and attorneys and the people who are charging the rates that they charge. And we make all that pot. We've actually literally made all that possible is Plumbing, Heating, Cooling electrical contractors, solar contractors, as well, and pest control and all home services for that matter.

I find that it's hard to retain people, if you don't start to kind of look at the life of the people themselves and put the people first versus the work and realize that, hey, you

know what, maybe we only serve our surgery with customers after hours. Maybe there's a cut-off time up to 8 pm. And we're not rolling the trucks after that maybe we're not working seven days a week, unless we staggered our teams accordingly, start times and days of the week, and we're working a flexible schedule, maybe we're working 14-hour days, instead of five-eighths and giving people three day weekends and staggering the workforce accordingly. So we have to kind of look at how we, we staff and deploy our resources. And then I think we have a better story also to tell to the people that are considering college or the trades. Hey, come here. I mean, look at the life that you can have the impact that you can make in people's lives and the flexibility that you have to work the way that you want. And so I also don't think it's one size fits all. So if I have a technician that wants to come on board and literally only wants to work 30 hours a week because they have a motivation to be a volunteer for something. I'm gonna support that. I'll change my compensation according I have some people on performance base pay, and I have some people that are on wage. I'll pay you the better for either program. And so I think as owners, we have to get a little bit more flexible and get away from the rigidity that I think has been a barrier to entry but also drives people away from us.

Krystal Hobbs 35:30

That is such a valid point. And I think it's also about having the conversations with your team and even potential team members like, what is it that they're looking for? Because I think too often as you said, we're kind of stuck in this mode of this is how work works. And not really considering that mindsets around workers are changing.

Drew Cameron 35:58

And unfortunately, fortunately, and unfortunately, I should say, there's these online groups or these best practices groups and, and so they all have their ideas, and everybody wants to try and follow the influencer, the guru who's online now. And they're attending these meetings with this bombastic message, TEDx this, do that and look at me. And the problem is they don't realize in many cases, how some of those people got there. They were bootstrapped with money to fund the startup of the business. They were given a seed capital that you don't have, you've worked to get to where you got, they got money behind them, they got venture capital, they got somebody being an investor, an angel investor, or something of that nature. And all you're seeing is their successes, you don't see a whole story. And instead of basically just saying, Okay, who should we be? And how are we going to Texas? Yes, you can get a lot of lessons, including it even at EGIA Contractor University. We teach you a way we just say it's not the only way and it's not the best way. But here's a way, and we've had a lot of success.

But who's going to work for you? Yes, go get the lessons from some people. But, take it and make it your own. Because how I might do something here in Philadelphia is different than what I would do for my client in Virginia or St. Louis, Texas or California, Washington State, or Florida and for various reasons. So, I think that's a little bit of a challenge as well as this comparison society is looking around and saying, "Oh, I want that. I want that. I want that." And unfortunately, they're grasping at things and are not really getting anything that's truly serving them. Because they don't see how, again, if they had vision, mission, purpose, and core values, they would look at the lessons that they're learning and say, "This one, yes, but that one no."

Krystal Hobbs 37:55

That's such a valid point. And I think when you're looking at these, as entrepreneurs, we're always looking ahead and how we can grow and get to that next step but you often don't know the challenges or the other issues behind the scenes with those big companies that you admire, either. So, Drew, I know that we covered a lot here today. And I feel like this is such impactful stuff. Is there any last thought that you want to leave our listeners with?

Drew Cameron 38:32

This is a people-driven business. We have people on our team. They are our most important asset, and our customers, our people are our most important assets. So, the first thing I want you to do is to check in with yourself in the morning. Take some time for yourself, and just make sure that you're in the best place that you can be for yourself. You're working on the things that you want to work on the way you want to work. So check in with yourself first. And then make sure you're checking with your people, as people before you check in with them on their roles. How are they doing with their health and their relationship and their family and their kids and maybe their finances? And, as you said a little bit earlier what are their aspirations and what did they want for them in their lives? And more often than not, we're always checking in with the role and when especially when things aren't going right. But sometimes, when things aren't going right. More often than not, again, that's a reflection of something that's going on in someone's personal life. And if you just help your people truly see that you care. And I know all that's the cool thing about working with all these entrepreneurs, they care so much there are some of the most caring, hardworking people out there. They want to really help others and make an impact in others' lives. And they'll do anything for their people. Why don't you check in with your people as people first? If we did that with

everybody in society that we encounter, man, life would be awesome. Life is awesome. So I mean, just let's just check in with people.

Krystal Hobbs 39:55

I love that. Thank you. Drew, I know that everyone's going to want to learn a little bit more about you and what you're up to with Flow Odyssey and EGIA Contractor University, what's the best way for them to learn more or connect with you?

Drew Cameron 40:13

My websites, I have two companies that I run, one is Flow Odyssey you mentioned, which is flowodyssey.us. That's the website where you can get to learn a little bit more about myself and my business partner, and what we're doing there. And then EGIA, which is My Contractor University, spent a lot of time invested in that's where we get to make a bigger impact to a larger audience. And so that's been a lot of fun. I own a small software company and just had the anniversary of the gentleman who started that. He passed away, back in 2014. But we do load calculations, energy audits, and we have a price book coming out there. And that's eds.tech. If you need some of those types of tools. All my contact information is on there.

Krystal Hobbs 40:59

Amazing and we'll put all those links in the show notes as well. So if you're listening, feel free to go beyondthetoolspodcast.com. And you can grab all those links there. Drew, thank you so much for being on the show. I loved every minute of this conversation.

Drew Cameron 41:17

Thanks for having me. I actually truly enjoyed and appreciate the deep probing questions about topics that we don't tend to talk about in the HVAC and home services industry.

Krystal Hobbs 41:27

Absolutely. Thank you.

Krystal Hobbs 41:34

Hey, guys! If you love this episode, if you've learned something here from Beyond the Tools, you can actually head to our website at beyondthetoolspodcast.com and you can sign up to get updates whenever we have a new episode. So go to beyondthetoolspodcast.com, you'll see the option there to sign up and we'll send you the new episodes as soon as they're released.

