

EPISODE 171

# DISCOVER HOW PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAN HELP YOU RUN YOUR BUSINESS BETTER

*SYSB PODCAST WITH*

**ANDY KAUFMAN**



## DISCOVER HOW PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAN HELP YOU RUN YOUR BUSINESS BETTER WITH ANDY KAUFMAN

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Today's guest, Andy Kaufman is a recognized expert on leadership and project management, helping organizations around the world improve their ability to lead and deliver. He works with leaders at organizations such as the United Nations World Health Organization, NASA and other global clients, to improve their ability to deliver on their initiatives before becoming an internationally sought after speaker, Andrew. Andy started as a software developer and was promoted into management for all the wrong reasons. He started his small business in 2001, two weeks before nine 11, which provided all kinds of lessons about how to scale a business during difficult times. He's the author of three books and the host of the Acclaimed People and Projects podcast, which provides interviews and insights about leading and directing for his global listeners. Please welcome to the show, Andy Kaufman. How are you?

The biggest question that all of our listeners ask is how can a business owner use leadership and project management to improve their ability to operate their business?

It seems obvious in some ways according to Andy, but common sense isn't always done commonly. One common problem he's seen, even as he grew his own business, is self leadership. He would just try to do it all himself. How do we scale when we are running our businesses like this? Part of leadership is surrounding ourselves with people and a lot of leadership comes down to empowerment. You can't operate your business for very long just being on your own. Project management is ultimately how do we get stuff done and small business owners who just talk about things but don't deliver are called ex small business owners.

You can create a project around anything that has a due date. There are all kinds of formal definitions of what project management is or what a project is, but if it takes multiple steps to get there and there's a due date, it's probably a project. An example of this would be if a business owner is trying to come up with new product offerings. A quarter of project management is understanding of stakeholders and who is being impacted by these things. We think of project management for those who have a title "project manager", but the truth is we're all project managers. We all have to deliver stuff. Any part of the business where you've got deliverables and due dates, is a project.

Andy works with organizations as big as the UN and as small as some startups but whether you're as big as the UN or a small company his feedback is "a fool with a tool is still a fool". You can bring in any sort of business tool, but if you don't know how to use it, it's not going to help. Use tools that you and your team know how to use.

Business owners have an appreciation for theory, but they also have a strong desire for the practical. Andy shared something he's learned over the course of the 21 years he's been in businesses: "Ultimately, it doesn't matter if I think it's a good idea, it's do customers think it's a good idea?"

The place to start projects is often with pain points. Where is it that people are dissatisfied? It's difficult to get people to change or to take action if there's not some dissatisfaction with something. Where is it that there's pain? Find out what kind of problems you like to solve and go after those. Ask what can we do to make that pain go away? How can we deliver value against those pain points? What's the minimum we could deliver that would be of value?

We can maintain focus and keep projects on track by putting some stakes in the ground idea. This means having checkpoints with customers. Regular check-ins have the benefit of keeping us accountable, but are also an opportunity to get some feedback and then if we're off track we can make some adjustments.

You can look at your business like poker. Poker is one long game. When you've had a bad night, that doesn't define you. It's one long game. Your business is one long game. There can be a pandemic, maybe you have a bad quarter, or maybe that sales meeting you went to really sucked. The goal for us is how do we just keep scaling? Are we making progress? It's easy to think that everything rides on that meeting tomorrow, but it's just one long game. This perspective really helps take the pressure off a little bit.

A lot of people probably think project management is super boring, but as evidenced by this Scale Your Small Business podcast - it's amazing!

LEARN MORE ABOUT ANDY KAUFMAN HERE:

## SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

**LinkedIn:** <https://LinkedIn.com/in/BuildLeaders>

**Twitter:** [https://twitter.com/andy\\_kaufman](https://twitter.com/andy_kaufman)

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/andykaufmanpmp/>

## WEBSITE LINKS:

**Company:** <https://i-leadonline.com>

**Podcast:** [https://twitter.com/andy\\_kaufman](https://twitter.com/andy_kaufman)

**Andy's free LEAD52 newsletter:** <https://GetLEAD52.com>

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

A big part of leadership is surrounding ourselves with people and empowering them - something that small business owners often struggle with when trying to do everything themselves.

It is often difficult to get people to change or take action if they are not dissatisfied with something.

It is important to find out what kind of problems you like to solve and go after those.

Project management is about getting stuff done efficiently, understanding stakeholders (those who are being impacted by a project), setting deadlines, using tools effectively, etc.

Ask what can be done to make the pain go away and how value can be delivered against those pain points.

Having regular check-ins with customers helps keep everyone accountable and on track.

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Poker is one long game - think of your business as one long game too, and don't overreact when things don't go as planned.

