
Jaime Masters: Welcome to Eventual Millionaire. I am Jaime Masters, and I am so excited to have my good friend, Matt Shoup, back on the show. Now for some reason, I thought we already had him back on the show like two or three times just because I feel like I know him so much. You can check him out at mattshoup.com. He's a serial entrepreneur, has had six businesses that he's started and grown. Thank you so much for coming on the show today.

Matt Shoup: Thanks for having me back. It's good to see you again. It's been like four or five years, I think. It's been a while.

Jaime Masters: I only realized that I didn't have you back on when you told me. You're like, "No, you said I was gonna come back on, and you never invited me." I was like, "Oh, well then."

Matt Shoup: Yeah, we were on a random phone call about something else. I couldn't remember what it was. We were talking about kids' schools, I think is what it was, and we realized that, and then we got this set up pretty quick. No, it's an honor to be back on, so thank you.

Jaime Masters: No, I really appreciate it, especially from the trajectory of what you've been doing from before because you were doing M&E Painting. You were doing all sorts of different types of businesses than what you're doing right now. Now you're doing more leadership development. You have a jujitsu practice, and everybody knows that I love that. Can you sort of take me up to now?

Matt Shoup: Yeah, so from when we talked four or five years ago, I was in a really interesting transition. I had grown M&E Painting to a point where I realized I was the bottleneck. I was really great at the sales, really great at the marketing, but it all stopped right there. Actually I sucked. I was not good at developing people, and I had this huge revolving door of people coming out, and they'd stay a certain amount of time, and I didn't like how fast they were leaving. I said, "What is this? What's wrong with them?" and somebody was like, "Hey, do you ever think it might be your leadership, and it kind of stinks?"

When we talked, I was really just, I feel like, almost starting this journey of trying to figure out, and I realized that business is more than just the P&Ls and the numbers and the sales. Go back and watch our first interview; we talked about a lot of that, and I went back and looked at it, and I just was not focusing on the people.

There's so much more to business than the business side. You're touching people's lives. You're feeding families. I'm looking at just M&E Painting, at the ground level, how many families we influence on a daily basis and I said, "Man, if we want this to grow and sustain, A.) I need to invest in these people, and then B.) I am that ADD serial entrepreneur," and I had all these other little ventures popping up. I said, "To whatever degree and capacity I'm going to invest in the people in the painting company, the same thing needs to happen at 10 times the speed and impact that it had. It took me almost 15 years to figure out the painting company," so that's how all this stuff has been growing.

It's been a fun journey. I just pour into people every day and make their lives better and see what their dreams and their visions are. Obviously, yeah, we have work to do and business to close and jujitsu to teach and real estate to sell, but I just get to hang out with fun people all day.

Jaime Masters: It's really impressive that you didn't just say, "Oh, it's the industry I'm in," for the painting industry because normally when you look at the workers, that's what everybody goes to. They're like, "Well, that's just the way it is." Instead, you took responsibility instead. How did you actually improve that? Normally culture is like for big companies, right? When I talk about culture, they're like, "I only have a really small team. How does this work for me?" So what would you say to that?

Matt Shoup: You hear culture a lot, and it can be kind of a buzzword if you really don't look into what it is. I remember a good friend of mine, he runs a competing painting company in another market, but he said years ago, "You are in the driver's seat of the culture of your company." If it's just you, you have a culture at your company. If you're a solopreneur, the way that that company presents itself to your vendors, to your client base, and then you start growing a team, the way that that team interacts and just shows up to life, that's your culture.

The core values that your company has, those flow through and run through your company. It's not just for these big 1,000-employee that have these campuses. And it's also not one of these things where you're sitting around bouncing up and down on the beanbag chairs and the bouncy ball chairs all day.

Jaime Masters: Right? I know. "And we have extras. That's what makes culture. It's awesome." No, no.

Matt Shoup: Yeah, we have the snack machine and the bouncy ball chairs. But it really is any leader of any organization, business, nonprofit, whatever the cause is, it really is in the driver's seat of the leader to develop that culture and attract people that fit with that and then help people exit that aren't a good fit, help them realize that not everybody is gonna fit your culture, and that's okay. Don't be offended or rubbed wrong by that.

Jaime Masters: I love that you said that too. Let's get into some of the nitty gritty. Because it's called leadership jujitsu, how do you go from a white belt to a black belt? Especially if you're like, "Oh, I'm not great at this. Thanks, Matt. I just realized you're right. It might be a me problem more than an everybody else problem."

Matt Shoup: I just read a book, *The Big Leap*, by Gay Hendricks.

Jaime Masters: I just had Gay on. He's coming out shortly after yours. That's funny.

Matt Shoup: I loved the book and loved his stuff. But you look at four buckets or levels that he talked about. In any martial art, anybody that's watching this that studies a martial art, you come in for your first jujitsu, judo, karate, whatever it is that you're studying, you did some MMA at that white belt beginner level, you don't know what you don't know. You don't know anything. You're completely incompetent. But at least you know that you're incompetent. You know, so you're gonna have this trajectory of, wow; I went from knowing nothing to having a pretty good foundation. That's just the journey.

In my leadership, I said, "I'm good at the business, but I'm not good at the people, developing the relationships." For me, it was taking somebody's personal life apart from the business and saying, "How does this business, and your role within this business, really affect you personally, and how does this hit on your bigger visions for your family and your future?" But yeah, the white belt to black belt is you just get out there and spend 10,000 hours.

I've spent 12 years practicing jujitsu myself. I'm a brown belt. I've been a brown belt for a couple of years. I'm not even a black belt. But I feel like the people I speak to that get to that point where they've really got it hitting on all cylinders, and they've gone from incompetence to competence and then that level of excellent when you can just do it free flowing, there's still that level that's, I feel

like, 100 lightyears past that. I feel like I've just got a handle on it, and now you just practice and refine every day.

For me, a lot of it was dropping the pride. Right? As entrepreneurs, and obviously I'm in combat sports, so we get prideful. We don't want to fail. We don't want to embarrass ourselves. But just being able to say, "Yeah, I screwed that one up, and that was my bad," that was a big thing for me. It took me a while to just be okay with saying that.

Jaime Masters: Okay, so there's so many things that you just said that I want to highlight. One, that it took 12 years to be a brown belt, and I don't think – in business, we want it in three months. Three to six months is my trajectory to get better at this, right? And for the people that are white belts in leadership and are barely recognizing that right now – we used to joke at our dojo that the white belts were the most dangerous, right? Because they had no control, and you'd get more hurt from a white belt than you would from somebody that actually knew what they were doing, right?

Matt Shoup: Yes.

Jaime Masters: And so I feel like business owners are like that too, where they're like, "Oh, I have a team, and this is just the way I am," and they don't even know what they don't know, so they can cause chaos in their team without even realizing it. What are some of those things that they can do to do damage control and admit, I guess like you said, get rid of that pride and admit that they might be doing something that might not be good?

Matt Shoup: When I was at that level in business, and I remember being the crazy white belt in jujitsu hurting myself and others unintendedly – you just don't know. Having people in my life that were able to have a position to speak in my life say, "Matt, have you realized that you get really pissed off really quickly whenever something doesn't go your way?" I'm a High D, so, "You just steamroll people. You scare people." I said, "What do you mean? I was smiling. What are you talking about?" They're like, "No, you're very intimidating and aggressive."

Have somebody in your life that, whether they're in your business or not, that can just speak into that, that can give you that perspective because when you get the business blinders on, and you only know one way, and you don't know that there's 10 different options, you just don't know. So for me, it was having

people tell me that, saying, “Hey, why don’t you try it this way next time and see how it goes?”

Jaime Masters: There are not a lot of times that people are willing to say that to somebody who’s the boss, whether it be internally or your wife or husband. They’re like, “Oh, by the way, you’re doing something completely wrong.” Constructive criticism is always an interesting thing. But I say this to my clients so often because they have no awareness of what they’re doing to their employees. There’s a great TED Talk that I’ll link up to, that of course I can’t remember the name of, but it’s about not scaring your employees. But the hard thing is that a lot of times they don’t even realize that they’re doing it. So once you realized that you were like, “Oh, wow. Maybe you’re right,” what did you do to try and work on that?

Matt Shoup: Yeah, for me, it was first having that realization. I was so thankful when somebody told me this. And I’ll share another story too about my jujitsu journey, but it was along that same line. Actually, just let me share it because it ties in really well to the point. I got bullied growing up, so I got into weight training, thought that was gonna help me be big and tough and strong, and then I may have gotten beat up one night, and I have been consuming alcohol when it happened, but I figured out that jujitsu is gonna help me defend myself, but I was this super aggressive – I mean, I’d just grab you and just try to strangle you. There was no smoothness.

About a year and a half ago, a guy that’s trained in jujitsu twice as long as I have, he pulled me aside and he said, “Hey, Matt.” And he’s intimidating. I’m intimidated by him. He is a big, strong, scary guy. I had a back surgery about a year and a half ago because of injuries in jujitsu. And he said, “Hey, Matt. Did you know that you’re the guy that nobody wants to roll with? Nobody will tell you that. Not only are you the big, crazy –” – and this is not at white belt, blue belt; this is at high levels – “People don’t want to roll with you because you just try to murder them all the time.” He said, “What would it look like if you rolled the complete opportunity way that you do?”

And I was so thankful – so the point I was getting at – that he pulled me aside and told me that. He wasn’t intimidated to because the guy wouldn’t think I would physically and then intellectually murder me, but I was just really thankful for that, just being able to do that. For me, having that perspective now that that window was open and I could see out it and through it, it showed up. It showed up everywhere.

The leadership jujitsu that I talk about, it's really the leadership lessons that I've learned on the mat grappling, they correspond to life. They correspond to business. They correspond to driving people towards a common goal. I said, "Wow, thanks for telling me that." Now I see it all the time. I see it show up. I see it when I start to get too aggressive in business or too assertive, and you see people back up. Now I don't need to be told. I just almost am able to tell myself.

Jaime Masters: Once you have that awareness, you can't go back, right? You're like, "Oh, no. I'm doing it again." Right? "Oh, jeez. I'm doing it again." And of course that it's the habitual training of trying not to. It's so amazing. When I used to do jujitsu, we would do the exact same thing. We would link it to business because everybody there was business owners, so we'd later go off the mat and go, "What did you learn in jujitsu today that you can actually pull off the mat?" which was so awesome and eye-opening because it really does relate ridiculously well. What are some of the other things that were really eye-opening that you learned to do both?

Matt Shoup: With the jujitsu and the leadership, I think that we try to grab after and go after skillsets that we just don't have. We forget that everybody in business, there's all the different facets or pieces of the pie of business, sales, marketing, accounting, whatever it is, and everybody has that gift, that genius level thing that they do; they're just excellent at it because they're done it for 10,000 hours, but then they also just have that wired or born with, innate ability to just crush it at that. Use the resources you have, and use what you're working with.

I train my daughter. She's eight years old, and she's a tiny – she's small. She's fiery and feisty, but I go, "Use your technique. You're not your brother's size, so don't try to be something that you're not." Don't try to grasp at resources that you're not naturally inclined to just possess, or it's just not your skillset. I see in business that we – I think Gary Vaynerchuk says this, right? – triple down on what you're good at, and don't try to be anything else that you're not. It's resourcefulness and using what you have to your advantage.

Jaime Masters: What's so much more interesting is when you see – like we used to train with this girl that was 13 and tiny, and she was so good. She would climb on top of these big guys and chokehold, and they're like – just like a spider on their neck. They couldn't get her off.

So like you said, it doesn't matter the actual size or whatever you're doing, as long as whatever you know to do, you go in deeper. I feel like we hear it so many times in *The Big Leap*. It's in so many other books, but I feel like it's easier to see when it's physical on the mat going like, "Oh," versus in your business on what you're doing because I feel like there's so many grey areas of what your strengths could be and what you can do and how many people that you have on your team because sometimes you've got to do stuff that sucks too, right?

Matt Shoup: You do, yeah. There's always the thought process of triple down and invest everything that you're good at, and it's sales and marketing. It's like, you know what? The other day I had to sit down, and as much as I hate it and will never love it – it's not my skillset – I had to sit down and do some accounting with my accounting and ops person. She knows I hate it, so she was making it as less painful as is possible for me. But yeah, you can't be the business owner that says, "Well, I'm –" You can never be too good or too skilled in something else to not just get down in the trenches.

We had one of our high level executive leadership guys yesterday, Rick, somehow something got caught in the toilet and clogged up the toilet, and he replaced the toilet. He replaced the toilet right before our leadership meeting. So just stuff like that; it brings the team together when you can see somebody drop down from their high level that they're at and just do something that's so ground level.

Jaime Masters: Well, then they're human again instead of on this pedestal and perfect and all that sort of stuff. What if you have somebody on your team that's not willing to do that? They're like, "That's not part of my job description," or whatever those excuses are on why they can't do that stuff.

Matt Shoup: If you would have watched our show from five years ago, my short answer was like, "Just fire them," right? There's people that aren't willing to do it and never will be. Again, if the culture that you're developing is – like for us, we're open, we're transparent. Nobody's afraid to do what they have to do. We're a team. We're a family, and we're gonna get this done together. It stands out like such a sore thumb when somebody has that kind of attitude with us. They don't last long. So for me, I'm a little more direct. I see that immediately, and I'll let somebody go or say, "Hey, you should go find something else." I do it a little bit nicer now. I've

found some other creative ways to be a little bit better about it.

Jaime Masters: Not so aggressive. “You’re fired!”

Matt Shoup: You have to just say, “Hey, this isn’t a good fit. This isn’t how we roll, and I’m not gonna ask you to change.” So I leave it in their hands. If you’re able and willing to make some adjustments and this really fits who you are, great; if not, there’s other companies where that’s not an important value over there, and I’d be happy to let you know who those people are, and go check it out.

Jaime Masters: How can you tell, though, when it’s a grey area? That does make sense. That’s like, “You’re not even wanting to be a part of the team, so therefore –” Right? But when it’s a grey area when somebody’s maybe really trying hard and it’s just like, “Oh.” What do you tell somebody that’s in a grey area on how they can determine if it’s a good fit culturally and they need more training or they need more of you, or you need to be better, versus you should let them go?

Matt Shoup: Yeah, I have a saying. When we’re interviewing and we’re recruiting and we’re working with somebody, the first thing I do, we don’t have an interview. I sit down, or somebody on the leadership team sits down, and just has a coffee with them for an hour. At the end of the meeting, the only thing that we’re looking for – whether we tell you this or you know it or not – is would we enjoy just spending time and having a coffee with you? I don’t care if you’re the top paint salesman in the country, and you just flew out here, and you can make my company \$5 million, if you’re an ass – bleep that out if you need to – but if you’re just a jerk and I didn’t enjoy my time with you, then there really is no grey area on that.

We’ve got a team member – he’s actually stepping up within the company – and when we first met him, he knew absolutely nothing about painting, about the industry. But a senior leadership team member said, “Hey, this guy, Steven, he’s a phenomenal guy. He’s a great guy.” Sat down, loved meeting with him. I’m like, “You know what? I would hang out with that guy for years.” I love him. I’ve gotten to know his family. He comes and trains in our jujitsu with us. We have M&E lunch jujitsu on Thursdays.

But we came to an issue the other day where he was having some struggles with something that’s not a natural gift, and we deal with conflict and customers that are maybe creating conflict in different

ways. He was able to see that. I was able to see his style, and it was really cool. There wasn't a grey area there because he was a cultural fit. He was a people fit. He just needs more of a skillset. But I would always lean towards, if it's a technical skill that can be trained and learned, I would rather have the need for that than somebody that's not a good fit. I don't know if that answers the greyness of it.

Jaime Masters: It does, and I have so many more questions. The other thing is sometimes – you have a very refined hiring process because you've been doing it for so long, and somebody whose skillset isn't super great at hiring can go back and forth and go, "Well, I need somebody that knows this skillset now because I need them to start, and I need them to go," right? And we make exceptions when things go, right?

Matt Shoup: Yes.

Jaime Masters: Instead of really trying to – I know they always say slow to hire, but most people don't really do that, so they get stuck with this piece. If they are stuck, they already have a team right now, so they can't just refine – they should refine their hiring process right now, but if they can't and they've got this grey area, and they know that they suck kind of as a leader, so it could be them, or it could be the skillset, or it could be a culture fit, can you determine which one it is?

Matt Shoup: Are you referring to the grey area with regard to say a team member where it's just not quite clicking and hitting on all cylinders?

Jaime Masters: Yeah. Is it you? Is it them? Is it training?

Matt Shoup: Yeah, I think it's boiling it down to what the issue is because in painting, like for us, we're cyclical. We're seasonal. In the height of our busiest time, which is right about now, nobody has 10 minutes to sit down and reflect on it, so I think asking the right questions and boiling down to what is the issue in one sentence?

I use this example with Steven. This guy's been with us, and we had a really difficult customer, and he's just giving me a hard time, and I've been doing this for years. He sat down and he looked at me and he said – like, I know he's a good cultural fit. I know he's got the technical paint training. What we were dealing with is how do we handle and address conflict when the person on the other

side of the conflict may be being unreasonable and only seeing it their way? He just said, “You’re really good with people, and I want to learn how to do that.”

I just kept asking him questions. “Where are you having issues with this particular scenario?” and it came down to, “I say yes to everything, and I can’t say no to people.” We overlaid that with his personality style and why. He’s a people-pleaser, and that’s just how he is. We boiled it down to what that major issue was, and now we’re addressing that. I said, “Hey, I want you to go out for the next 30 days and tell people no just for fun, just to see how it feels and get out of your comfort zone, and see what that feels like,” and we’re working on it.

Jaime Masters: See, I love that. That’s exactly what I was looking for because I feel like you’re actually helping them with the personal development side and investing in them instead of going, “Ahh,” right? Or, “I don’t even have time to train them.” It’s like you actually get to know what their belief systems are or what their issues are. I know you’re a real big fan of assessments. Tell us a little bit more. Do you think everybody should take assessments? Which ones should we take? Give me a little bit more info on that.

Matt Shoup: Yeah, I love it. I’ve been very formally and trained pretty deeply in DISC and the human motivators index. Really if you look at social and behavioral psychology and then mathematical algorithm, they group together. Then you’ve got DISC. You’ve got Myers-Briggs. You’ve got what color are you, what animal are you, what cheeseburger are you? There’s all these different ways to describe things. There’s Enneagram. There’s strengths finders. I’d say whichever one you choose – I think they’re all great. They’re based on the same fundamental thing. But whichever you’re gonna use, I’d say get really educated on what that system and that model looks like, and then just go really deep with that.

We tried bouncing around and doing all the different surveys and exams, whatever you call them, and I love the DISC, and I’ve spent a lot of time in it. I would definitely, throughout your recruiting and hiring process, just drop those in there. They’re really fun. They give a lot of insight, even if you don’t end up bringing that person on your team.

Jaime Masters: I really appreciate the level of depth that you’re saying because I think because it’s a quiz model, and we’re sort of in the quiz era, right? Everybody’s taking quizzes for something. You just assume

that that one little sheet is everything. “Oh, okay. Great. That’s it.” But even Kolbe index, everything can go into so many nuances, and you can learn so much about each other based on that stuff that the little thing that you get on the free profile thing isn’t always enough. I appreciate that.

Matt Shoup: Absolutely.

Jaime Masters: So how long did it take you to actually dive in and really learn the DISC? I know you’re certified and all that fun stuff.

Matt Shoup: The first time I took a DISC profile is 2007, and I’m a big Dave Ramsey follower. I love all his stuff. And we went to his EntreLeadership conference. He sent it out and said, “Hey, take this.” I took it, got the results back, and I’m reading this and it’s saying, “You’re very aggressive and very assertive, and some people will find you to sometimes be mean, and you always need to be right.” And I’m reading this like, “Oh, my gosh.” It was like all my dirty laundry and my deep, dark secrets.

So I give it to Emily, my wife, she reads it, and then she gives me hers because we did this together, and I’m laughing at it because I said, “How the heck? I answered like 12 questions. How can you tell me so clearly about myself?” Since then, we would just continue to implement that. So the past 12, 13 years, I’ve been paying to use these in my company. Then about five years ago, I went out and just went through a formal certification. But it’s like anything. I have my real estate license, right? Nothing on that certification that I have has anything to do with real estate. It doesn’t make me a good, bad, or indifferent realtor. It means I passed a test.

Same with that certification; I have the certificate, but I’ve been able to spend so much time with so many people from so many different backgrounds, and it just comes down to the data. There are four emotions that people present when they behave, and they mix and behave differently, and then there are seven core drivers of what influences those behaviors. I just love it.

Another thing, Jaime, I’d add is you asked what kind of surveys or what kind of things, and there’s not a formal survey for this, but when you sit down and meet with somebody, no company will ask this, and people are surprised when I ask this, but I just say, “What’s your vision? Why do you exist in one sentence? What’s your purpose here?” Most people can’t answer that, but you get

them thinking about that. What is your vision? Paint a picture for what your life and family looks like. Tell me about your family. Tell me about your hobbies.

There's just too much of this, "What are you gonna do for me? What am I gonna pay you?" transactional business going down. I've got a couple of people celebrating their 10-year anniversaries this week. It's been a decade feeding you and your wife and your three boys, and my other team member just got married. They have a baby on the way. That's serious for me. It can't just be all about business.

Jaime Masters: You actually care. Who knew? Everybody listening I'm assuming is one of those kind people. But it's funny, looking at my mom – I've talked about my mom before. She was a secretary. She worked at a job. She hated it, like hated it, hated it, but it was because of the culture and the people. She's still a secretary now. She loves her job. She thinks it's the best thing in the entire world. And the fact that you can do the same skills but have a completely different view of a company is that caring. She knows she's actually cared for.

Matt Shoup: Yes.

Jaime Masters: So how do you suggest, especially as a very busy business owner, how do you suggest we remember how to talk to these people? So if you know – you've had them take the DISC. You're like, "Okay, I know what type they're like, and I know I need to potentially talk to them better," but I feel like it's a communication thing where you're like, "They perceive everything I'm saying completely differently than I'm saying it," right?

Matt Shoup: Yeah. So that and the behavioral profiles, that's gonna give you a filter because you're gonna view through your filter and your results of your profile, and then this says, "Hey, take off your filter. Look at it through their filter," so maybe you need to slow down or be less assertive or take more time or present more facts and details or have more fun, make them feel good. But another thing that I think even supersedes that – because that's the how and the what. That's kind of the road-mapping of how to navigate a conversation with somebody.

But bigger picture is know what's going on in their life. They're 8:00 to 5:00-ing it with you, the traditional work schedule, but what's going on before the 8:00 and after the 5:00, right, with their

spouse, with their friendships. Maybe they're going to school. Maybe they had a sick parent. I have a team member who lost a close family member, another one who's got a sick family member. Just know about those things. That's how they're gonna know that you care.

And if you don't care about people and you're in business for just yourself, then I'd say go be a solo entrepreneur, a solopreneur, and do it all about yourself. You're still gonna interact with people, but get out of business if you don't care about people would be a suggestion.

Jaime Masters: Tweetable, yeah. "Get out of business." No. But how do you know where the line is? There are boundary lines of going, "Hey, how much does the owner actually share about their personal life, but how much do we actually let the other person share?" Because if you become a trusted confidante, do you know what I mean? It starts to blur the lines a little bit too.

Matt Shoup: It does. I actually just sent – and I'm sending my leadership team through a process called a life plan process. It's a 2-day, facilitated engagement where they literally paint their life out on paper. I've gone through it. I was actually considering getting certified to do it and I go, "There'd be a conflict of interest there. That's too much information." I let share as much as they'd like to share. I have some team members; they're calling me every day spilling their beans and their emotions. That's just how they are. And then some, they're a little bit more reserved, and they'll only get so close. I think it matters.

So for me, as the leader, I always say it's up to me to set what that culture is. I'm very open with my team about what I've got going on, and then there are some things where I say, "This is none of your business." "Matt, you look like you're pretty frustrated with something." And I go, "Yep." "Want to talk about it?" "Nope, it's just none of your business right now," and they know that, and we have that ability to engage deep if we'd like, but then also those boundaries to say, "No, we're not gonna go there." It's different within all companies. I've got a big spectrum of team members where some share way more than others, and that's okay. It's all great.

Jaime Masters: I love that you say, "It's all great," instead of – because other times it's like, "Oh, my gosh, now I know everything about that." And then it becomes a drama fest, and that's different. Companies can

get down to that point too, especially when people are talking about personal stuff all the time. Does that happen with you guys or no?

Matt Shoup: Yeah, you've got to be really careful with that because it can turn into a drama fest. As somebody's sharing whatever they're sharing with me, the filter that I'm always seeing things through – for me, it comes down to just a couple of sentences – I find, and I chase down, and I recruit and attract really amazing people that I'd love to spend time with, and then I focus time, money, energy, attention in making their life better.

I want – whatever the engagement is, if they're having an issue with their spouse – because I've seen it go off the rails. We had something go off the rails a little bit ago, and that was a great lesson because the engagement ended up being less about, “How can you be better from this issue that you're having?” and it turned into maybe doing some talking about somebody that wasn't there when they weren't present. You've got to know, “What is the intended outcome of this engagement with somebody?” For me, somebody comes to me with whatever the issue, “Cool, let's sit down and take some time. What makes you better at the end of this conversation and engagement?”

As a result, when you make somebody's life better and you inspire them and you lead them to being a better version of themselves, and they have the skillset in sales, marketing, accounting, then your business just is rising the tide of their life. Rising that boat of their life is gonna bring your business up as well. But you have to control because it can go off the rails quick if you let it.

Jaime Masters: Right, you need to have like a radar of when somebody says someone else's name, like are we talking about them or? Right? Because sometimes it can get misconstrued in conversations anyway, being like, “Oh, that was an opinion,” or, “Oh, that was information,” right? And then it starts to stew from there.

Matt Shoup: Absolutely, yeah.

Jaime Masters: Yeah. How do you deal with employee reviews? Do you put a lot of the personal stuff in what they have in your employee reviews, and what does that look like?

Matt Shoup: Yeah, any of my team members would tell you, if they were sitting here watching this, they'd know how I'm gonna answer because I

am absolutely horrible at consistently scheduling. Like the traditional quarterly review, and I score 18 things; I don't do that. We tried that one year, and it's just not me.

Jaime Masters: Thank you for saying that, by the way. Just because everybody's like, "Oh, that's what we're supposed to do," so thank you.

Matt Shoup: I remember an HR manager. She's moved on. She moved out of state. But she would force me to do it with great intentions, and I go, "I'm just not wired to do that." And she goes, "Well, how are you gonna figure out if somebody deserves a raise, and what does this look like?" And I just, more for me because it's just how I am and I'm wired at a gut instinctual level, I just feel when somebody's ready for a raise.

And I know, like I said, Steven, we talked about him. Great guy. I know what he's working on right now, so every engagement I have, how are we building him up in that? Kevin, I know what he's working on, so same thing. But they're really sporadic. I drive a lot of HR professionals that are trying to rein that in. I drive them nuts because I have no rhyme, reason, method, but I would also say that if you asked any of my team members right now, I don't think any of them would say, "Man, I'm due for a raise, and Matt doesn't have a ping on that part of the business."

Jaime Masters: How do you work on employee development then also and how much you converse with them, meetings-wise? Because if you're like, "Oh, they can sort of ping me whenever, and we can just be talking about their personal development all the time," how are they just not going into the personal development, fun, awesome, trying to get better at things, and you not really know where the gap is, or if they've closed that gap, or if they're just going extra somewhere that you don't think that that's necessary, right, as far as the business time and the hours go?

Matt Shoup: Yeah. What we do once a week – and I think this is really important in any business any size; if it's you and your spouse, and you're running the business, or you and your dog, have a weekly meeting with your dog. We have a leadership meeting. It's every Tuesday.

Anybody that's in northern Colorado, if you ever want to drop in, it's open invite for other entrepreneurs – Tuesday, 2:00 p.m. in our leadership jujitsu meetings. We get together as a company. We do a very structured check in. "What is a one-word barometer of just

how you're doing today?" That sets the tone. Okay, we've got a bunch of people that are either tired, inspired, pissed off, worn out, and it's different, so you have to gauge that. Then we ask, "What was your biggest lesson that you learned last week? How are you better this week over last week, and what is your biggest challenge that you're currently facing?"

We put it all down on paper, and then from there, we pull – we go, "Hey, six of us are really dealing with how to deal with constructive communication during conflict," so then the next week we'll train. We do about a 30-minute check in. We review our metrics and our stats, and then our last 45 minutes to an hour, either me or one of the other team members, we're teaching on leadership. That's gonna cover the leadership and the personal development, but then somebody on the sales team may say, "Hey, our ratios are dropping," and then we turn that into sales training and more technical training.

I think the short answer is you have to cast the line out and see what you're pulling in from the team and see where they need the work.

Jaime Masters: Wow, so it's ongoing employee development, sort of a back and forth constantly so you can sort of navigate the ship a little easier. That's awesome.

Matt Shoup: Yeah. And when I get in the weeds, Jaime, I tell you. Like I'm in the weeds on – I'm talking about this example with a client. I knew I shouldn't have jumped in, but the business needed it and I did, and now I'm down in the weeds, and I hate that part of the business. But I know where the value is for me. It's making everybody better at life and leadership and helping them overcome those obstacles and challenges.

I don't ignore the technical training, but when I make a salesperson's life better, and they can take a lesson that they can apply to their family, to friendships, whatever, they just happen to sell more. I don't think it's an accident. I'm not investing a lot of time. A life plan is not sales training. A life plan is, "Why do you exist in one sentence, and look at your life on paper, and what are the chapters of your life, and what are your value sets?" and all of these things. Then they happen to sell more or happen to manage or produce more. It's fun.

Jaime Masters: Yeah. It's so funny though because everybody's like – I hear from

a lot of entrepreneurs, and they're like, "Well, we have to give them direct training for what they want," and if you go, "A life plan. Well, wait, that's helping them in their life. What if they leave?" Like we have all these negative thoughts of all the pieces, right? "I just spent \$5,000.00 for my team to do this thing, and now they're gonna leave after," or whatever those pieces are. How do you mitigate that? Or do you trust your team just so much that it's not a big deal either way?

Matt Shoup: No, I love that you ask it because it sits here and it gets my internal fear dialogue going, and I think it's abundance versus fear based, right? It's the first question you asked, and what we're talking about is, hey, pour into people and make their lives better, and then there's all this greatness for them. Okay, what if they outgrow you? Yeah, you dropped \$4,000.00 on a life plan, and then they come back and say, "You know what? I did my life plan, and here's why I exist, and it's not to become a project manager or continue to be one with your company."?

So the first one I did, the first team member that went on it, that's what he found out. I was in Spain the last two weeks. I did a 70-mile hike of the Camino in Spain. I got done like on my third day, and I knew he was finishing. I said, "Why do you exist in one sentence? What did you take out of this?" and he told me, and I said, "That's awesome. I knew that." And he goes, "Yeah, and it doesn't look like being here at M&E is gonna be a fit," and I said, "Cool. We knew that." But again, that fear starts talking. It's like, "Shoot, what if the second person does that?"

Jaime Masters: Right?

Matt Shoup: And then I'm the solo entrepreneur, the solopreneur, next time we interview together. It's trusting that it's all gonna work out. Do you want to keep somebody around out of fear that they're gonna leave and know that they're not really living their purpose with your company? I can't go to bed at night knowing that Rick – like we'll openly share. His name is Rick. He's a phenomenal guy. He's become a great friend. His purpose is to do bigger things, and he's got a phenomenal story that people need to here. Yeah, and I'm excited for that. Now I technically look at it and go, "Crap, I've got to find a project manager that's just as awesome as him," and those are big shoes to fill, but it's okay. It's great. I'm happy for him. I really am.

Jaime Masters: It's practice in letting go as an entrepreneur also and not holding so

tight to the reins. When you came the last time, I had Kendra, who was my right hand, who is fantastic. She's coming over to go swimming next week actually. She started her own agency. At the time, I was like, "Okay." It's really tough, especially teaching people business and somebody in my business gets to know how much money everybody's making and what they're doing.

Matt Shoup: Yes.

Jaime Masters: And so when you think about the path of where you want, you would never want to hold a person back from what they actually want to do in life. And now Leilani is my right hand, and she's freaking amazing too. Like being able to sort of project into the future and just know that eventually I'm gonna find somebody who fills the shoes and I feel really good about also is helpful to get out of this because everybody does the spin. I loved how you went, "Oh, and then solopreneur," right? It's like from the very, very top all the way to the bottom.

Matt Shoup: It is crazy. There's so much of this. I love studying just how the brain works and how we respond to things and how we've been wired from our story to have just patterns of where we go. So stress happens. Okay, shoot. Rick's leaving; next person up. He may be too, right? Then the third person up; they may be too. I've got seven of these, and they all may be leaving. And you do, you get that one thought, and it just starts taking you down. I know what those triggers are for me.

We're sitting here having fun on a podcast, but I'll straight up tell you, yeah, there is a deep fear and that voice that comes in and it's like, "Really, you want to improve people's life and pour into people? That's your M&E Painting theme for the year, right? Pour into people. We made t-shirts. Really? You want to do that, Matt? Or do you just want to close some business and make some money? All your team's gonna go." You have to know how distinguish those voices and where they're coming from.

Not to get too deep, but everybody, when that negative crap just starts flooding in and floating in, there's probably some part of your life and your story where there's something where that stems from and that really sticks. I know what that is for me. Gay talked about in his book, those things where you almost sabotage yourself because you don't want to outshine somebody, or you don't feel you deserve it. You have to know the abundance voice and the scarcity and the fear voice and only listen to one. We don't do it

perfectly. I don't do it perfectly every day.

Jaime Masters: Thank you for saying that. We talk about this a lot on this show, about your brain because, no offense, you could pop somebody else that's done this a million times before and somebody's business and go, "Oh, they can do such a better job because they don't have the blocks or the negative thinking," or the whatever it is. It is so internal, and yet we can't be perfect either. Our brain is trying to keep us safe. So what I got from what you were saying is knowing yourself and doing that personal development on yourself makes it so that way you can actually start to distinguish what is you and for your greater good versus random crap that you get to spin down, right?

Matt Shoup: No, and knowing, like for me, I always ask somebody when I do leadership training, I say, "Hey, when the world happens, when the tornado of business and life and just the craziness happens, I do what or I think what? Where do I tend to go to?" For me, when stuff gets crazy, I grab on and I'm like, "You know what? I'm gonna hold onto this. I'm gonna control this." It's that control and watch out, and I'm just gonna steamroll things. And I know that I can't. That's the worst thing I should be doing in a time like that, but I know that's where I'm gonna go. I get pissed, and I get angry.

So when others see that in me – and I've asked people, "Hey, if you see me starting to get a little edgy or touchy, please, let me know," because I know where that comes from, and I know what that ends up leading to, and it's nothing good. It's nothing constructive or positive, empowering, or growth-oriented for your business or your life.

Jaime Masters: And it's habitual though, so it's way harder to get off that train that's already moving. You're like, "No, that's my pattern. I'm so used to going down this path," so having people be able to call you out on the awareness side is huge because sometimes we don't even realize we're going down that path until we're already there and going – I do the same thing. I'm like, "Oh, I am stressed. Hmm, I guess you're right. I didn't really pay attention beforehand, but huh, I'm like this," so that – you know what I mean? Like it's so harder in the bottle.

Matt Shoup: It is, and I just – so I think you know, and we've talked about this, but I lived in Spain in college, and Spain's just become a huge passion of mine, and I just crossed off a bucket list item. I hiked the Camino de Santiago. It's like a 500-mile hike across northern

Spain. I did the last 100 km, 115 km, about 72 miles. But you're walking on this thing, and I'm getting perspective. This has been around for thousands of years. People have hiked this path and this trail, and it's clearly marked. You'd have to really not be paying attention to get lost. It's very clearly delineated.

But I think it's just with our brain and our habits and our patterns and how we react and respond to things, that's – I'm 37, so for 37 years or from whenever I was conscious of it, I've laid this pattern and when something happens, boom, you fall right off onto that trail. So what does it look like? I was looking in this big field. I go, "What if I hiked over this way? There's no direction. This is new grass that you're packing down."

It's like anything. It's hard to unlearn habits and break patterns. But once you know what it is and you can at least identify it, then you're conscious of it when you're in it. It's dangerous when you don't even know, like when you don't know and you just go there and you're like, "What do you mean? What's your problem? This isn't me, this is you." It's like, "No, it's you. It's me."

Jaime Masters: We've had something like that. I love how you talked about the 12 years of small steps and small steps. One of the things we did on my personal mastermind group is we had a talk behind your back time. Pat Flynn and Shawn Stevenson, everybody could talk about me and my patterns when I wasn't there. It was so good, and you need a glass of wine to actually listen to it.

Matt Shoup: And then you come back and listen to it?

Jaime Masters: Yeah, you listen to it.

Matt Shoup: Okay.

Jaime Masters: Yeah, so they're allowed to share completely openly, and it was so helpful because I know some of the patterns that I do anyway, but they see them so much more blatantly, and they were quite callous in calling it out, in a wonderful way. I mean, we can take constructive criticism. We've been together for nine years. But what's so amazing is how simplistic it was to them and how like over complicated as all heck all my problems are to me, right?

Matt Shoup: Yes. Yeah, and two things that pop into my mind as you talk about that is when you're in an environment where you know that there's love – like I'm not saying this about Jaime or to Jaime or however

we're doing it because I have a vendetta or I want to get you kicked out of the group. It's like I love you, like I truly want your life to be better; that makes it so much easier.

And then the other thing too, it's really easy. For us, it's really easy. Sure, I can see Jaime's patterns and Kevin's and whoever's, but I can't see my own. And then when they tell me, it's like, "How dare you tell me?" It's so easy to see it in everybody else, but we just can't get out of our own way and our own dialogue a lot of the times, so it's great to have people in business that can do that with you.

Jaime Masters: Well, and how do you know? So you said a couple times where people really brought awareness to you. How do you know when it's for not the greater good versus the greater good? Do you know what I mean? Have you ever gotten people where they're like, "Oh, I just wanted to let you know," and they do it nicely, right? "I just wanted to let you know blah, blah, blah," and you're like, "Where is that coming from?" So how do you tell the difference between real true help from somebody versus not?

Matt Shoup: For me, just because I'm more instinctual, and I just feel it at a core level, I just feel like most of the time, unless I'm blinded by something and it's a big thing, I can just feel that and know. When somebody has good intentions, it becomes an easy conversation. But when I'm sitting here and I'm listening to this, I go, "Okay, what does this person want out of telling me this?" I've turned around many times and just said, "Okay, great. Thanks for telling me that I just steamrolled somebody," or whatever it was – told me my stuff that I'm working on. "Why are you telling me that?" And then when they can clearly, clearly answer that.

Like I had a team member tell me something. He saw an interaction I had with my son. This was a big thing. I remember this. He pulled me aside and he was like, "Man, I saw the way that you – you probably didn't even think about because it's just how you are, but I saw how he reacted to the way that you responded and reacted to him," and he goes, "Just wanted to let you know." And he said, "I'm telling you this because I'm a dad," and then he went on to say, "And I know how my dad communicated to me and the scars that can leave on a little kid's heart."

And I was like, "Holy cow." Like, "Dude, I thought we were running a painting business," right? And we're having these conversations. I knew that was pure and good intentions. But when

it's just like, "Hey," the tone, right? We've had also the chatty Cathies or the gossipy whoevers, and you can just feel it. Again, I left that conversation and that engagement regarding how I interacted with my son feeling better and, "Wow, I just learned something, and this is how we can make things better." But when you leave and you're like – you just feel like crap, and there was really no goal achieved, that's when I would start to question that person's intentions.

Jaime Masters: Wow, yeah.

Matt Shoup: But I'll also say that person, if you go look at that, that might be that not good fit in the company, and we've had those before, and you have to address them.

Jaime Masters: Go you for being so open to hear that from somebody though too because that takes a lot of openness also because, I mean, especially as a parent and trying to be the best parent you can, which I know you are, you could have gotten defensive and like, "I didn't mean it like that." You know what I mean? So go you for being so open and receptive to be able to hear it.

Matt Shoup: But again, we get our blinders on, and we don't even realize that we're doing it. Again, I'm like, "I didn't even realize, and you saw that through your filter and your perspective and your story, and it helped me make mine better, so thanks a bunch."

Jaime Masters: That's awesome. I know we have to start wrapping up, but you know I could chat with you forever because I think we got on a call the other day and it was like, "Oh, it's been an hour. Maybe you really should come back on the show. I didn't realize it hadn't happened before."

Matt Shoup: It didn't happen. We'll do Round 3. We did Round 2; we'll do Round 3. It's good, yeah.

Jaime Masters: Because I already thought we did, so yes, we will totally do it again. I'm gonna ask the last question. So what's one action listeners can take this week to help move them forward towards their goal of a million?

Matt Shoup: It's \$1.00 at a time, one step at a time. I'm coming off a trip, I took 200,000 steps over I think six days, and I thought my knees were gonna explode. There were times when I said – right, so wherever you are in life and your business quest and your personal quest and

your millionaire quest, it's one step. It's \$1.00 at a time. And don't compare yourself to others. It's your journey. You take it, and just don't stop. You might get setback, and that's okay. Just one step at a time is all I can say.

Jaime Masters: I love that. So where can we find out more about you? I know you have resources and all that fun stuff.

Matt Shoup: Yeah.

Jaime Masters: Where do they connect?

Matt Shoup: Yeah. Mattshoup.com. Just go to the website. I've got a free little all my business tips and tricks and resources and things I've learned over the last couple of decades of business. I send those out to you, and I love to connect. I love meeting people.

Jaime Masters: And we will definitely link to it, but I'm gonna spell your last name because I did not know how to spell it for a long time. Actually, you go ahead. You're good at it. You've done this a long time.

Matt Shoup: Well, thank you. You say it correctly; 99% of people say "shoop," then they sing the Salt-N-Pepa song.

Jaime Masters: I love that. That's my karaoke song.

Matt Shoup: That was in high school. I've got weird nicknames. We'll talk about that next time. But no, it's Matt, M-A-T-T S-H-O-U-P.com.

Jaime Masters: I'm quite sure the only reason why I say it correctly is because I said it incorrectly at first and then asked you because I ask everybody how to actually say it. Good thing I have this show. I can ask you easily.

Matt Shoup: Love it.

Jaime Masters: Thank you so much for coming on the show today. I so appreciate it.

Matt Shoup: Thanks for having me. It's always fun to hang with you.

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Duration: 47 minutes