Chalene Johnson: Yo. Are you pumped up? Are you psyched? You should be. I'm on fire. I'm going to have to speak really fast today, because I have so much flipping door bells going off. Hey, I should tell you about this. It is so cool, I'm just going to tell you. This is not supposed to be part of my podcast today, but it's the coolest thing ever. You just heard that on my phone just now. It's called "Ring," so you go to ring.com, R-I-N-G.com. I saw this featured on the news the other day, and I'm like, "There's no way that thing for 200 bucks works like that. It can't be that cool." So I ordered it.

 Here's what it is. There's lots of products like this, but this one ... I've ordered them ... this one is amaze-balls. It's a doorbell with a camera attached. So just now that little "ding dong" that was actually a notification telling me that there was someone near my front door. I set it up so that it picks up anyone who's within a 20-foot radius of my front door. That's kind of cool. Then, I know that you're walking up to my front door before you even ring the doorbell.

 Now, I'm in my podcasting booth right now, but I could be in North Dakota. When that doorbell goes off, I can see who's at my door and I can speak directly to them from my phone. I can be in North Dakota and they can ring the doorbell and I can be like,"Oh hey, oh hi, actually we can't come to the door right now so if you could just leave the package there, that would be great." Insane. I need to do a whole episode about this cool thing, I just thought, I wanted to share that with you. I'm not an affiliate for them, but it's the coolest thing I've ever bought. I love it!

 Oh, and I've got teenagers. So the other day, when my son decided to walk his girlfriend out to her car, I got to spy on them and see, "What? Why couldn't you say, 'goodbye' here inside the house. What was going on?" Then I got to yell through the speaker, "Okay, you're busted. Knock it off! Enough already." That was kind of fun. They weren't expecting that. Oh, and then I took screenshots on my phone to show them how inappropriate they were being. They're actually good kids, I'm just playing. I fully digressed.

 Back to today's topic, that has me, as you can tell, extremely hyper and extremely excited ... that is a continuation of an episode or an answer to a question that I started 5 episodes ago. Build Your Tribe is a podcast devoted to your questions about business. Building your business, and doing so in a way that is what I call "smart." "Smart Success," if you will. Doing a lot of these things, of course, to build your business, and your presence, and your email list online. Now, about 5 episodes ago, one of the students from the Marketing Impact Academy left me a message, saying, "Hey, Chalene. I'm growing my business and I'm trying to figure out, at what point does it make sense for me to start outsourcing? How do I do it? How do I know if it's right for me? I feel like it's kind of scary to spend that kind of money." And boom, here we are 5 episodes later, because it's that important. It couldn't be answered in one simple podcast.

 I also hope, sincerely, that you have put a tip in my tip jar, so that I know you are as invested in this program as I am. "Well, how do we do that, Chalene?" You can do that by, of course, going to iTunes and leaving a review about Build Your Tribe. If this particular series has been impactful to you, can I ask you to put this show on pause right now and just write those two sentences. Say, "This series about outsourcing and virtual staff and growing your business without killing yourself has been incredibly valuable." Give this show a rating, if it's a 2-star show, then give it a 2-star show. I will find you, I will hunt you down, and I will cut you. Give it an honest review, give it whatever rating you feel it deserves. Now time for a subliminal message, "Give it a 5-star rating, a 5-star rating."

 Okay, on to today's topic. Today, I want to talk to you, if you've been following along in this series. About not only how to make sure your virtual staff is happy, perhaps, even more importantly, how to keep yourself happy and sane in this process. What I will be sharing with you today are some of the blunders we've made in the past that cost us a ton of time. I will share with you some of the things that we have learned through trial and error, through research, guidance and mentorship, and from learning from people, basically, who've been on my podcast. I have to tell you that one of the best outcomes of doing a podcast is the incredible amount of experts I've had access to. The show does well, so top authors and experts ... you have access to them, which his super cool.

 I have to say that one of the most valuable experts that I've learned from this year, in terms of changing and transforming my business, has been Chris Ducker. You're going to hear me talk a lot about Chris in these couple of episodes, because I've always been someone ... well, I shouldn't say always ... in the last 4 or 5 years, we have really taken outsourcing very seriously. However, I wasn't great at it. I knew it was saving me money, but in some instances I felt like, "I know it's saving me money, but it's not always saving me time." Or I know, "There's a better way to do this. There must be, right?" I would suggest you to pick up Chris' book, Virtual Freedom.

 Let me start first with one of the most important things that you can do when it comes to hiring virtual staff. It doesn't matter whether you're talking about someone who's doing something for you on Elance or someone you have on a more permanent basis. It really doesn't matter, because the bottom line is this: you want to work with people who you like. In order to like people, you have to get to know them. That might seem like, "Isn't that time consuming?" It is, but it is less time consuming than rehiring and hiring and rehiring and hiring. It's certainly far more valuable, because people go above and beyond when they feel like you like them. The only way someone can feel like you like them is if, basically, you do. That's going to require you having to get to know them a little bit.

 The mistake that we made in the beginning, and I say "we" but it's me. The mistake that I made in the beginning is I would post jobs to Fiverr or to Elance or any number of places and find other great freelancers online. I would simply look at their skills. I would say, "I need someone who can do web design." I didn't think about what it would be like to work with this person, because I would think to myself, "What does it matter? They're in another part of the country. I'll send them instructions, they'll send me their work. I'm getting a great rate on their work. So what does it matter what their personality is, or what they look like, or any of those things, right?" But then what we found, what I found, is that losing people ... they didn't do the work that they said they were going to do. There was a disconnect.

 I've described this in the previous episodes, but I kind of felt like they weren't real people. I don't mean that I felt less of them, but more so, it felt like a faceless, nameless provider. Almost like someone who was anonymous or like a robot doing the work. I know that's terrible, but I'm just being honest with you. It felt weird, right? Yet we still would get great work sometimes, but it was hit or miss.

 Now what we've learned to do ... a lot of this is from the things that I've learned by trial and error and of course from learning from books like Virtual Freedom ... is that I need to hire for people online for consultants in exactly the same way that I would hire for people to work with me in person. Yo, I'm not even trying to brag right now, but I'm really good at picking out what people are all about. I've got a sixth sense for this, and so do you. That's why you're the boss. You're good at being able to identify a person's true nature. Now we're not always good at listening to that little inner voice that says, "This is the right person, this is the wrong person." But I know you're good at it. You just have to turn up the volume on that little voice.

 This might sound crazy, but even if it's someone who we just have editing the podcast, or on a regular basis they're taking photos and making them square and adding our watermark ... We hire now, ready for this? Tip #1: We hire based on company culture. That means the people who I hire, I want to evaluate them as if they would be spending time in my office. That means, "Is this someone I would want to spend time with? Do I like them? Do they fit our company culture?"

 First, you have to define your company culture. Here's what our company culture looks like: we are all about family. Family's first. That's the bottom line. You rearrange your schedule according to your family's needs. However you need to do that, every one in my office pretty much knows that that is important. We all try to do that. Obviously, we have work to get done. Obviously, we all have our own responsibilities, but family comes first. We are fun. It is an office culture where it's very collaborative. No one should ever feel as though they're stepping on another person's toes. You would never say, "That's not my department." Or, "I don't normally do that." Everybody helps everybody else out.

 It's a culture of silliness, of honesty, of creativity, of kindness, of recognition of individuality. It's a culture of fun, a culture of faith, and these are the things that we have in common and we try to ... that's what we do. I think that's a benefit, a perk, of working for Team Johnson. We're all about family, faith, fun, it's collaborative, it's silly, it's honest, it's creative, it's kindness, it's individuality, it's teamwork ... I know everyone says "teamwork." Legitimately, every one is an equal. Period. End of subject. Whether you just came on board, and this is your first job and you're 18 years old, or if you're approaching 50 and you have all the experience in the world. Each person on our team has a very particular role and each of them we honor.

 That means when I'm hiring somebody online, I have to get to know who they are. I have to figure out if they would fit with our culture. "Is this someone who's generally negative? Is this someone who doesn't really like people? Who doesn't have a silly side? Doesn't appreciate a silly side? Isn't forthright? Isn't that polite? Isn't that kind? They have no faith? It makes them uncomfortable when people do talk about the fact that they are spiritual. They don't have much of an opinion?" That's really important. If you're going to work in our office, if you're going to work in our environment, you need to have enough confidence to say, "Now why are you guys doing that, because it doesn't really make sense?" That's who I need on my team. Someone who has enough confidence to say, "Wait a second, Chalene. Why are you guys doing it that way? I wouldn't open this email." Or, "That's not what I would pay for this product."

 I need a collaboration, because I know y'all are smarter than me. We are better as a team, we can do far more as a group than we can as just a single individual. That might seem crazy to you, thinking, "I'm going to hire someone to proofread my documents and I need to kind of figure out if they fit with my company culture?" Yes. You need to like these people, you need to like them. So "Hello," so that they like you. That means you're going to have to figure out who they are a little bit.

 Obviously, first you look at their skills when we're talking about outsourcing. The bottom line is this: there's so many people out there on the planet who have that same skillset that it doesn't make sense for you to hire someone with that skill set who doesn't meet or match your company culture. There is somebody out there who does match your company culture. When you find them, you will be happier and they will be happier. Even if it's just part-time, occasional work.

 Tip #2, and this really relates to Tip #1. If you're going to hire people who fit with your company culture, you're going to have to follow Tip #2. Which is: Get to know people. Get to know them, before you hire them. Once we've found out that somebody has what we need in terms of perhaps skill and they have the ability. I mean, obviously, this is someone who you are hiring for your virtual staff. You want to make sure that they obviously have the skills that you're looking for.

 Once I know their name, I go into ninja mode, and I figure out who are they really. I look them up on social media. I look up their last several posts, and I try to find anything that they've ever done on Twitter or on Instagram. Before they know that we're interested in hiring them. So they don't have a chance to clean everything up. There's been instances in the past where for example, I found a blog post from this guy that I wanted to do some podcast editing for me. I found this crazed blog post where he was going on and on about some ex-girlfriend. It was brutal. It was creepy and scary and weird. I'm like, "Note to self, not going to fit in with our culture." How do you know those things unless you look, and you need to. A lot of these people are going to have access to your accounts, your other staff members, etc. You need to get to know them.

 Here's the other reason why you need to get to know them. We do more, you and I are going to go way out of our way, and do incredibly arduous time-consuming things for people, simply because we like them. We like people who like us. We assume that people like us when they seem to want to get to know us, when there's a genuine concern and an interest. Not only in what you can do as a consultant, but who you are. Then hopefully, there's a natural compatibility between you and your consultants. Now, this goes across any cultural and language barrier. I've Skyped with people who speak very little English. Yet, I have an instant connection with them. I've also done the same with people who speak the language really well, and I'm like, "This, there's something not right about this person." I think their work is great, but I don't think ... if they lived here, I don't think they would fit in with our office staff.

 Oh, the other "F" that I forgot in terms of our company culture is Fitness. Fitness and health and well-being is a big part of our company culture. We are strong advocates of having our staff, "Hey, you want to go work out right now because that's going to help you to be more creative?" Go do it. You don't have to ask to come in 2 hours late because you want to go take a cycling class. Do that. We know that you're going to be better for it.

 We also strongly encourage and talk a lot about therapy. What could be a better benefit to your co-workers than you having your head on straight? As a matter of fact, Powder Blue Productions a fitness and lifestyle company that my husband and I owned previously and sold for an amount I shall not disclose here ... We really believed that therapy, giving therapy to our employees, was a benefit to all the employees. We didn't offer dental insurance, but instead, we paid for therapy. My thinking is, it is more detrimental to me as your office-mate for you to be dealing with something like a death of a family member, or a past traumatic experience, or if you're going through a really, really hard time, that's going to affect everybody around you. Far more than if you just have a tooth that sometimes starts to bug you. When you're going through a really hard time, you need therapy. That will help everybody, and it did. That's a part of our culture. Mental well-being, your ability to handle life, how good you feel, how resilient you are. That is a part of our culture, we really take that into consideration. People are going to be happier, they're going to give you a better output. When people are happier, you're going to be happier. People just... they're more productive ... it's just better all the way around.

 Keep those things in mind, even when you're working with a virtual staff member. Remember, these things apply whether you're working with someone on an occasional basis, it's not as regular as you'd like, but you always want to make sure this person is available, then you've got to think about these things. It definitely applies when you're considering bringing on a full-time virtual assistant, or a full-time virtual social media manager, whatever it is. If you're bringing on a full-time staff member, you've got to make sure you're keeping all of these things in mind.

 There's so many more things for me to share with you that really make a difference. This is where you get that slight edge. You hear people talk about it. Taking their business to the next level. It's not transforming your business, sometimes it's just doing one tiny little thing differently. For those of you who have been outsourcing things, those of you who are considering it, just by making these tiny little incremental changes, you can take your business to the next level. It's that little tiny adjustment that makes a huge difference.

 I've so many more lessons that we have learned through this process that I want to share with you including: how to give constructive feedback; how to make your virtual staff feel like they're a part of your in-person staff; how to let people know your personality and not cross that border where you're giving them too much freedom, or it's all about fun; how to get people to work a little harder, without you always having to give them more money, because that's not what it's about. In tomorrow's episode, I'm going to go into those areas. I'm going to speak specifically about: how we interject our culture and make sure our virtual staff fits; that they feel appreciated, how we do that specifically; how we communicate with them; what apps we're using; what that schedule looks like; how to make all of this as seamless and systematized as possible. Ultimately, y'all we're all trying to work a little less, enjoy life a lot more.

 It's a date. Tomorrow morning, you wake up, you check your phone. You immediately listen to the next episode of Build Your Tribe. Promise me you'll do that, and I promise to be brief, to be bright, to make it fun, and then be done. I'm done. I'm done for now, but I love you guys. Thanks for listening.

 This episode has been sponsored by couragousconfidenceclub.com. It's a club that I've created specifically to help people who struggle with confidence and insecurities and social settings and just standing up for themselves. Being yourself and feeling good about it. All of us could benefit from having more confidence. I'd love for you to just experience a taste of it. So please be my guest by going to chalenejohnson.com\confidencetips. Now if you don't feel like writing that web address down or remembering to go there later, all you have to do is while you're listening from your phone, send me a text message. The number is 949-565-4337 and that is for US residents. Send me the word "confidence." I will send you access to this video.

 This video will help you to eliminate self-doubt and feel more confident in any situation whether it's work or personal, or just your social interactions. Every one of us can benefit from having more confidence. There you'll submit your email address, and I will immediately send to your Inbox my latest training video where I teach you step-by-step how to feel more confident in just about any social setting. I think you will find this incredibly useful. Whether it's business or personal, or just in your everyday interactions. Confidence is something that makes life easier. It helps you to raise more confident, self-efficient children. It allows us to speak our mind, to stand up for ourselves, to do the things that otherwise we are paralyzed by fear, and we just allow our own thoughts to stop us. By learning how to overcome self-doubt and fear of success, you can become that confident person that others are attracted to, the person you want to be, the person you deserve to be, the person you know is inside of you. Thank you for checking out my free tools by going to chalenejohnson.com\confidencetips.