



EP152: Like a Boss Part 1: How to Hire and Lead Your Team Professionally

THRIVE BY DESIGN WITH TRACY MATTHEWS

“So if you are starting to feel you are passing up on opportunities on growth potential because you don't have the capacity to produce work or respond to marketing for your brand, then I think it's really time to look for help.”

You're listening to Thrive-By-Design business marketing and lifestyle strategies for your jewelry brand to flourish and thrive. Let's get started.

Intro: You're listening to Thrive by Design, business, marketing, and lifestyle strategies for your jewelry brand to Flourish & Thrive. . Let's get started.

Tracy: Welcome to the Thrive by Design podcast episode 152. Hey there, it's Tracy Matthews here, the Chief Visionary Officer over at Flourish and Thrive Academy, and I'm super stoked to be here today because I have a very special interview. Actually, this ended up being a 2-part series, which is so funny because one of my favorite people in the world, Hilary Halstead Scott, she is an amazing, amazing business owner and entrepreneur and supporter of jewelry designers and makers, and I have her on the podcast at least once a year, every single year, and this episode is going to be awesome, but the funny thing is, when we were originally recording the episode because I record the intros and outros after because I like to know what we're going to talk about in the episodes, we ended up realizing we didn't have enough time to actually cover all the information that we want to do because today we're talking about how to really act like a boss and how to lead and manage your team in a way that is inspiring and professional but also gets them into your big vision with your company, and so this is the first part in a 2-part series so make sure that after you listen to episode 152, that you either wait for next week for episode 153 to come out or if you're listening to this later, that you listen to both episodes because they are filled with a ton of golden nuggets from Hilary.

So Hilary Halstead Scott is the president and CEO of www.halsteadbead.com. They are a jewelry supply company that is really dedicated to supporting





independent brands, smaller jewelry designers, and those who are really trying to take their business to the next level.

So let's talk a little bit more about Halstead Bead. They are jewelry suppliers for independent designers who are spread all around the world. They have wholesale findings, chains, and supplies for your business, and she is also the founder of the Halstead Grant that is for new jewelry businesses. She has an MBA and a master's in international management, and she loves helping small jewelry businesses grow their brands, and, in fact, it is a huge passion of hers. So she is really excited. I am always stoked to have Hilary on the show, and today's show is actually sponsored by the Halstead Grant. Halstead is an amazing, amazing company as we have spoken about. They're really dedicated to small, independent family-owned businesses.

I know a lot of you are smaller designers, and you love it when people show local because you're a local designer, and you want to really tap into that local community. Well Halstead is a family run business as well, and they are super excited to be supporting designers of all levels and all sizes. So as I mentioned earlier, one of Hilary's passions is supporting designers and helping them really reach their full potential, and that's the reason why she started the Halstead Grant. She really wants to support designers who are in business for just 3 years or less, who are designing in sterling silver, and who are really ready to take that next step in business. The winner of this grant last year was Kristen Baird-Rabun, and Kristen was in our Mastermind Program last year and is just a go-getter, and I'm really grateful to Hilary because Hilary introduced Kristen to us, and it was sort of this, like fluid cycle. She first knew Hilary through Halstead. Kristen found out about us through Hilary. She joined our Mastermind Program, and then ended up actually winning the grant the next year because she was so focused and determined on winning it. The winner, the grand-prize winner, gets \$7500 in cash and a \$1000 in jewelry supplies from Halstead. They also have great prizes for all the runners up. I think that they pick like 5 or 10 runners up. It's kind of insane. If you want to be considered for the Halstead Grant this year, and you are a U.S. based jewelry business, head on over to flourishtriveacademy.com/HalsteadGrant to apply. Make sure that you give yourself a little bit of time as submissions close on August 1st, 2018, for this round of submissions. So we are announcing this now so that you have a couple of months to actually think through the application process. It's not just





filling out a few words. It's really going to require you to think about your business plan because they really want someone who is serious about growing their business to win this grant, and it's such an awesome opportunity. You can even check out Kristen and her success with it.

All right, let's dive into today's episode. We're going to talk about how to be like a boss, how to lead like a boss, and how to manage your team like a boss with Hilary Halstead Scott. Remember, this is a part 1 of a 2-part series. Let's dive right in!

Tracy: Today, I'm excited because we're talking about something that I've been really passionate about for a long time, and that is hiring and leading teams and learning how to lead your team professionally. Today, I have Hilary Halstead Scott on the show with me, and she is going to teach you or talk to you a little bit more about how to lead your team like a boss, which I'm really excited about. Hilary, thank you so much for being here today!

Hilary: Thanks for having me, Tracy! I'm excited to talk with you!

Tracy: Awesome! I'm excited to talk to you as well because we have you on the show at least once a year, if not more. I feel like we're doing more together, but it's always fun to have you here because you bring such a unique business perspective coming in from sort of a different side of the industry but also running a family-owned business for so long, which is really amazing. I'm excited to have you here!

Hilary: Thank you!

Tracy: Yeah, it's gonna be awesome! So, for those who don't know, we're going to talk a little bit more about the Halstead Grant and the Halstead company, which is such an amazing company and sort of how you founded it, but why don't you give us, just again, a little background about your history, where you've come from, and why you're so passionate about hiring and leading teams.

Hilary: Sure! You got it! Like you mentioned, I am the president at Halstead, and for those of you who don't know us, we sell jewelry supplies, findings, and chain, to small jewelry businesses all over the world.

My personal journey is that I have an MBA and a master's in international business. I came back to Halstead about 15 years ago. I started at the firm in





marketing. I am the second generation, so I didn't lead the helm straight off the bat, but my parents were easing into retirement, and I've been president now for 5 or 6 years, I would say, and just like all of you, as an entrepreneur, I wear a lot of hats. I know what you guys know what that means way better than most people and one of those hats is definitely HR.

Here at Halstead, we have a staff of 30...

Tracy: Wow!

Hilary: We run... Yeah... We're kind of divided into 4 different departments. So HR, hiring and professional development is a huge part of what we do at Halstead. We really believe in training and developing professions in-house. So we put a lot into our HR practices. I have a lot of experiencing hiring entry-level positions, up to manager positions, and leadership level posts. Each of those is a little bit different and just hiring is such a... gosh... we have a lot to talk about!
[laughter]

Tracy: We have a lot to talk about because we are always chit-chatting about this stuff, and I remember in our pre-interview and when we were talking last week... When I used to hire people, and I know I've told you this before, I used to hire people because I liked them, not because they were actually qualified for the position [laughter], and it lead me down this crazy rabbit hole, and I hired my first person on my team back in the 1990s, I think, and it was like I got my first couple of big orders. I needed help producing orders. I hired a production worker. She ultimately was great, but I realize some of the mistakes that I made hiring people but also leading them to actually buy into the vision of what I was going for with the company and where we wanted to go. So I know you have a lot to say about this. It's going to be super fun!

Hilary: [laughter]

Tracy: It's going to be a fun episode!

Hilary: Great! Let's get started!

Tracy: Let's get started! One of the things that I know a lot of designers struggle with is, number one, they feel like they don't have the financial investment to hire someone, and they're not quite sure when or how to hire their first team





member. Do you want to speak a little bit to that? Like when is the right time? Do they need to be part-time, full-time, maybe a freelance position, etc.

Hilary: Yeah, yeah, that's a great question, and I know that is so difficult just determining when that tipping point is, right? Because we all feel like we could definitely use some help but at what point is it a good business decision? So, you've mentioned money. That's the first consideration, right? Like afford a new hire? But I think one of the things that's tied up in that financial side of the decision, is could you make more money with your business if you had that hire? And a lot of times we want to know we have a 100% of that hiring expensive covered before that person even steps in the door, but I think when you really know you need to hire is when you look at what you're doing and achieving in your business, and you know that you are the biggest bottleneck for the business, and I think a lot of people have kind of reached that threshold point. In retrospect, it's very easy to identify, but when you're in the middle of it, it's a little harder to look at clearly. So if you are starting to feel like you are passing up on opportunities or missing out on growth potential because you don't have the capacity to produce work or respond to marketing or handle service the way you want to for your brand, then I think it's really time to look for help, even if the financials aren't totally, totally there yet.

We can talk about some steps to take to kind of get you ready for that big step, but money is the first consideration, right?

Tracy: Yes, so I have always heard the saying, and I don't know if you've heard this too, to hire before you're ready, and I think that this is something really important. You don't want to blindly just hire people because you think you need them. You need to be strategic, okay, so what is going to get off my plate? Would I have more time for PR outreach in getting exposure and/or sales outreach in getting exposure that way if I hired someone either to step into one of those roles and/or free up my time with administrative tasks so that I could focus more on the business development stuff. As a growing company over her at Flourish and Thrive, and, in fact, my jewelry business too, last year... I'll just share this with you because I share everything with the podcast; my jewelry business has been growing and sort of maintaining this certain level. Maybe a year and a half ago, I lost one of my key production coordinator person, and he would run things around the jewelry district, he helped free up a ton of my time.





He decided to move to San Francisco and become a full-time yoga teacher, and it was a struggle because I hired the first person I met, and she wasn't the right fit, and I held onto that person for way too long, until I just replaced with my new executive assistant, Sarah, who is filling in that role, and one of the biggest problems that we had was because I didn't have the right person in that role. I was giving people terrible service because things weren't completed on time, and then we were having some quality control issues because she wasn't doing a quality control check in the same way I would have, and even though I had a system in place for that, she just wasn't the right person because she wasn't on board, and so I think this... When you're kind of going through these hiring things and starting to build your team and lead your team, number one, you need to think about hiring that first person before you're ready but also thinking about how it's going to free your time up and actually make your business better. Since I've hired this new person in the production, she's helping with the production management. Projects are flowing more smoothly, everything is being done on time, it's on track, my customers are more happy, and that's the most important thing. So I'm glad that you said that about freeing up your time to do the more important things, right?

Hilary: Yeah, absolutely, absolutely, and you talked about finding the right person, and I think we're definitely going to get to that discussion in terms of finding the right fit, but I think there is some additional preparation steps...

Tracy: Yes.

Hilary: ... to think about, even beyond...

Tracy: Yes, let's talk about that.

Hilary: ... just the money consideration. Hiring your first employee is going to change the way you run your business, and I think it's a major mind-set shift that is really important, and you want to kind of think through some of the changes before you have that person showing up at your doorstep on the first day, right?

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: I think first and foremost, for a lot of jewelry people, is just your location. If you are working out of your home sometimes that can work with a part-time hire and sometime it can't. A lot of that is going to depend on the layout of your





home, your personal comfort level, the space; a lot of those kinds of factors. So is your physical workspace ready for another person? Do you have a computer that they can use or can you share computer access? And how would that change the dynamics of your day if you are having to share space, technology, and resources with another person in your business. There are a lot of logistical considerations to kind of start putting in place maybe even before you're ready to pull the trigger on your first hire. Maybe just start just getting a physical workspace ready, you know? And that is going to help you get into the right mindset of having a person in your office with you every day or a couple days a week, whatever it is.

Tracy: That's a great tip, I have to say. It's so important too.

Hilary: Yeah, yeah, and when you're working from home especially, there are some challenges there. So think it through, have a friend come into your house and look at it with fresh eyes. You also have to think about how comfortable your employee is going to be in that workspace. Is it going to send a message of professionalism to them? The physical setup matters. It really does.

Beyond that, you need to do a little bit of research, and there are a lot of resources out there. I know you work with Mariel at Accounting for Jewelers. She would be a great resource on payroll considerations, setting yourself up to handle payroll the first time, but you also need to do a little bit of research just into hiring laws in your particular state.

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: There are a lot of things that happen at the federal level, but there are a lot of things that are particular to each state. You can just do a simple Google search in terms of hiring laws for California or employee rights in California or whatever state you're in, and a lot of states have kind of checklists for employers on what you need to cover and the laws on hiring practices in your area.

Tracy: Awesome.

Hilary: That's kind of the scary stuff though, right? [laughter]

Tracy: [laughter] Yup!





- Hilary: I think anytime you start talking about employment law, it makes me nervous, but you what? This is doable. They make it really accessible for employers...
- Tracy: Now I know at Halstead, sorry to interrupt you, but you guys have mostly people who come into your office. Have you ever considered hiring like a virtual person? Like a virtual team member who didn't need to be there?
- Hilary: Yes, we do, and we actually have had a couple of remote workers... Now this is... We have some unique considerations because we're wholesale, and if you have a remote worker in a different state, they can have some tax implications, which is a little bit tricky for us as a wholesaler, and a lot of people do use remote hires very effectively, and then I think you bring up an interesting point because there is a question of do you have a remote direct hire or do you outsource a particular part of your business to a contractor or another small business service provider, and that's a great question.
- Tracy: Yeah.
- Hilary: Which makes more sense for you?
- Tracy: I think there are certain parts of as you're just starting to do this, like if thinking about getting an employee, is super stressful for someone. You can outsource your social media management to someone, and there are firms that do that, individuals that do that, that actually have other clients that they're legally contractors. There are different ways, I feel like, you can piece out the work in the beginning to just get some stuff off your plate so you have time to focus on other stuff, and then when you're ready for someone to come in, maybe more full time, you hire them to come into your office and do the full employee deal, but it is important to check the laws in your state because every state is very different, and also I personally would go to like some sort of employment profession/attorney to find out if I was hiring actual employees from other states to see what implications are for my business and how it would work best for you. So...
- Hilary: Um hmm, absolutely, and score an SBA, the Small Business Administration. Those local offices are fantastic resources on hiring in your state. They can really connect you with the right resources that you need for your first hires. That is something they do very frequently, so I recommend kind of starting there if you're getting ready for this step, but think about outsourcing in the





meantime like Tracy said you can piece together some specialties, and that will help you to kind of bridge some time and really think about your first internal hire.

Tracy: Absolutely. So, I have sort of like alluded to this earlier, but I know that sometimes when you're hiring people or thinking about bringing people on, you definitely want it to be cool and fun, and so what I did in the past, especially when I was first hiring people, is I hired the people that I wanted to be friends with, not the people that were actually going to do the job very well. How do you determine when you're hiring people, that it's a good culture fit, meaning they're going to fit in with the culture of the company but also do the job correctly.

Hilary: Right, right... Yeah, I mean there are a few things we disclose in our job listings right off the bat that we think kind of help to attract the right type of applicants. For instance, we have 5 or 6 dogs in the office every day... [laughter]

Tracy: [laughter] I love it! That's a great culture!

Hilary: [laughter] If you don't like dogs, you are probably going to be really unhappy here, so we make sure we put that right in our job listing. There are certain things I think it is totally okay to put in your little company brief. If you want to say we jam out to country music in the studio every day, we love to laugh, we work really hard... It doesn't just have to be the nuts and bolts of the expectations. That's very important, but I think putting a little bit about your culture right in the listing is a really good idea because if someone hates country music, they're not going to apply for your job, and you know what? You might as well just not waste your time on them.

Tracy: [laughter]

Hilary: [laughter]

Tracy: So, like I only listen to death metal, and... [laughter]

Hilary: [laughter] Well, but there are some things...

Tracy: ... all day long, [laughter], just kidding...





Hilary: There are some things to disclose right up front that are just going to make sure that everybody on both is happy, right?

Tracy: Exactly.

Hilary: But then it does come down to where do you find prospects?

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: And how do you interview those prospects? So, of course, there are a lot of great online sites where you can list jobs on social media now to cast a broad net, but I really encourage you to use your professional network to look for new hires when the time comes. Now, notice I said your professional network...

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: I really advise against using your social network for hiring. I know that's very tempting and sometimes you have a friend and maybe they just need a little part-time work, and that can produce sometimes, but I think it is wise to know you're really putting social relationships and friendships at risk when you change them into an employment relationship, and that does not mean either one of you is a terrible person, but it is just a fact it will change the relationship. I think a lot of people don't want to believe that's the case, but you need to be realistic about it. Hiring can be really difficult. It also can be incredibly rewarding, but it is different than your social life, so I would encourage you to keep that separation right from the get go.

Tracy: You know what is so interesting? I've heard so many stories of friendships going south because they decided to work together, and it's always discouraged unless you've really done your true vetting because that relationship always is going to change. It's always going to change because you have to have these hard conversations that you might not want to have with a friend if things are not going right or in the right way or have to adapt. That's such great advice, and I can't... [laughter]. One time, oh my gosh, I love her to death, my friend Whitney was trying to start her own business, and she's like I'm going to pick up some extra time, I'm really good with my hands – and she is an artist too, and eventually she went on to opening a couple of companies, and now she is a mom – but I laughed so hard because back in the early days when I was in San Francisco, I'd have her come into my office, and I was like, well she can be an





extra bead stringer, and for me, it was so easy to pick up when I was first starting to this in the 1990s, and [laughter] she came in, and God bless her, but she was trying to figure it out, and even after she spent like 5 hours making 1 necklace that took me 20 minutes...

Hilary: [laughter]

Tracy: ... she could not, like literally could not figure out the process or how to actually make it work, and so it's just like... We laugh about it to this day, but at the end of that, we were like, I don't think this is a good fit, and we both agreed....[laughter]

Hilary: [laughter] Well, that's good, I'm so glad that ended on friendly terms. That's wonderful...

Tracy: ... when it doesn't get awkward, but I've heard so many other stories of things going south. You have to be prepared if you do go that route to make sure that you guys can be candid with each other, and that you have some sort of out, like a friendship out, if it's not working or something.

Hilary: Right, right, and yeah, I totally agree with that. Hiring a stranger often seems a little bit scary, right? You know, the devil you know always looks better than someone you've never met before, but there is a little bit of protection in that, just in the sense...

Tracy: Right...

Hilary: ... that it's a brand new relationship, and you can establish new expectations of how your relationship is going to develop right off the bat. You aren't bringing past experiences or exchanges into the workplace if you're hiring someone you don't have an existing relationship with. So even though it feels a little more scary, I really encourage you to go that route, and then it just becomes a matter of connecting with good resources in your community and a lot of that varies depending on where you're located, right? [laughter]

Tracy: Yup.

Hilary: Yeah, so some of us are lucky to live in cities where there may be a metals program if you're looking for someone to do kind of some polishing and assembly or packaging work and they're familiar with jewelry, that's wonderful,





but a lot of jewelers are working in locations where you can't really expect that skill set from a new hire.

Tracy: And you have to find them, right?

Hilary: You have to either find them or you have to train them.

Tracy: Yeah.

Hilary: Yeah, and that, I think, makes hiring a lot more difficult because we run into this all the time at Halstead. We are in a small northern Arizona Community. There is no jewelry industry or educational institution anywhere near us, so we can't put jewelry skills in a job listing and expect to get applicants, and I know that is a reality for a lot of your listeners as well.

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: Yes.

Tracy: How would you go about training someone for a jewelry position where they're actually having to like making or something like that?

Hilary: Yeah, yeah, and I think this raises a more of kind of fundamental issue in terms of just planning out what this person is going to do, right?

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: I think when you're so frantic and you're at the point you need help, a lot of times you hire without really thinking through what their day is going to look like, but I think that's an important exercise in terms of which things in your day can you let go and which things can you reasonably assign to a new person and train them on in a reasonable amount of time.

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: Do yourself a favor, kind of start writing out those notes and a little game plan in terms of what their hours are going to look like, where they're going to spend their time, and then also kind of some backfill, just like a list of things that need to get done during days and times of the year when it is slow. That planning stuff is going to help inform your training decisions when you make that new hire, right?





Tracy: Yup.

Hilary: Training is difficult and especially if you're dealing with someone who has never worked with jewelry tools or processes before. It can seem a little bit overwhelming. I'm sure you've experienced that, too, right, Tracy?

Tracy: [laughter] I have!

Hilary: It's totally overwhelming.

Tracy: It's so overwhelming. I was so lucky though because the first person that I hired, I lived in San Francisco when I first started hiring people, and CCA is right there, so there was a great jewelry/metal program there, and so I got a lot of students in that program, which was great. New York City, the same thing. There is a lot of industry here, so it wasn't too hard to find people. Now reliable people is a different story though... [laughter]

Hilary: That's a different issue, yeah!

Tracy: But by the point that we had to go in and train people for the position, like I had a production manager who could actually do the training so I didn't have to physically be there and train, which I don't have a lot of patience... [laughter]

Hilary: [laughter]

Tracy: I wouldn't have been the best trainer, so I feel really grateful for that. [laughter] This is another important reason I think why creating systems and handbooks in your business can be an important tool if you do have a personality like me where you can send people to a reference point of how you expect things to be done. You have it clearly outlined for that, for the role.

Hilary: Absolutely, and I think that can be really simple. That can just simple bullet points, so I think the word handbook is very daunting when you're just trying to hire your first new person, right? But writing these things down is really important, so before you even have your first interview, do yourself a favor, write down some quick bullet points in terms of what you expect from your employee. Do you expect them to be there within 5 minutes of starting time every day. Okay, well write it down. Do you expect them to give you notice if they need time off? Okay, write that down. You know? Just some very basic expectations as bullet points can be the start of your handbook. It doesn't need





to be a huge document. Start getting some thoughts in writing on your expectations, and then like you just mentioned, kind of documenting some of your key processes; again, it can just be bullet points. This isn't going to your senior English teacher, right? This is quick bullet points on what you expect to finish, a pair of earrings for example, and maybe a physical sample to go with that...

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: ... so that they have a visual guide. Anytime you have those references, you're going to get better results than if you just very quickly try to show someone something and then expect it to turn out like you imagined. That can be a frustrating experience. That prep and planning time is absolutely critical, and I think that's hard! [laughter]

Tracy: It's so hard! And we recommend doing different things here at Flourish and Thrive too, like recording your screen as you're doing the job because sometimes that takes a lot of the thinking out of actually writing the system, and then you can just have it transcribed and bulleted out from there, but also now I think a lot people – this is a little bit off topic but related – they really want to hire a manufacturer outside of their company where they can send product to and get help with the production, they want to approach that piece of it in a different way, and the biggest mistake I always see people making when they're having bad results is that they don't set the expectations up with the factory of the production house in advance and/or have a really good production bible or production samples that they give them with explanation of how they came across that because a lot of these people, you don't want to leave them up to their devices or creativity if you want something to end up exactly how it goes in your creative process. Documenting all that stuff is really important.

Hilary: It is, and I think that should be a precursor to hiring and interviewing. It's one of those situations where you're hiring because you're desperate for help and you need more time, but it's going to get a little bit worse before it gets better because you need to put that prep time in before your new hire walks in the door. Have some of those processes documented, have some basic expectations or your mini-handbook ready to hand them as soon as they start on their first day, and that's going to go a long way towards setting the tone for your





professional relationship, and I think setting expectations is a big part of your new hire.

We've talked a little bit about training, but I think it makes sense, actually to back up a little bit more to kind of the interview process...

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: ... setting those professional expectations and setting those professional boundaries right from the get go with people you're considering for employment, and Tracy, I think you brought up a great point because a lot of new leaders, and especially as women, I think we really have this need to be liked and be not respected so much of as thought of in a positive light, right? Nobody wants to feel like the mean girl? [laughter]

Tracy: [laughter] Yeah, exactly!

Hilary: [laughter] And I think with a lot of new managers that can lead to a lot of mistakes and it doesn't mean that you need to be mean and firm and serious all the time, not at all, but I think, again, you need to look at this as a totally different relationship than a friendship...

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: And that's the first mindset change to make is you're not hiring a friend, you're hiring an employee, and you may become very friendly colleagues, but it is not going to be the same as your friendships outside of work, and that's okay. It's great in its own way. Just don't try and make it something it's not, and I have people here at Halstead who I've worked with for 15 years, the whole time I've been here, where we're fantastic colleagues, we're very friendly at work, but that's different than my personal relationships. You kind of need to create this whole new bucket in your life for your professional colleagues at work, and then you need to kind of set some parameters around what that's going to look like.

So Tracy, you mentioned that you had some experiences go really south? Can you talk a little bit about that? I think that's interesting.

Tracy: With people that I hired?

Hilary: Yeah.





Tracy: Okay, so one of the first people that I hired that it wasn't a great fit, and she was doing some sketchy stuff, was this girl. I interviewed three people to be an office manager, and it was when I expanded from just by 100 square foot office to two 100 square foot offices, so she was going to be working in the other office, answering the phones, following up on orders, getting people's credit cards, doing some customer service, and that sort of thing, and I would go in there in the middle of the day, and she was a really good talker, really good at spinning every situation, but I noticed after she had been working with me for a while, that certain things weren't getting done, and/or she was calling in sick when I knew she wasn't calling in sick because she had a new tattoo when she came back...

Hilary: [laughter]

Tracy: Or like she had one time called in sick because she wanted to get her teeth whitened and thought that was okay, and just all this random stuff, but it ended up being really hard because I hired someone who I didn't set professional boundaries around, like here are the expectations, here's how we're going to handle getting things done, here are the key PIs or key performance indicators, what shows me that you're actually doing your job and shows you that you're actually doing your job the right way, and that... It ended up... She only ended up working for me for about 6 months, and I think she, I can't remember if she quit or I had to let her go, but I replaced her soon thereafter with an awesome person. She worked for me for a couple years. It was definitely a different approach...

Hilary: Um hmm.

Tracy: ... to hiring.

Hilary: Yeah, and I think some tips just as part of the hiring process they're going to help your odds for success to improve, is just approaching the interview, itself, as a professional and thinking about the questions you ask. So, again, when you're hiring a person for the first time, I think we're all tempted to find commonalities like what do you like, what do you like to do in you spare time, what kind of music do you listen to, just thinking about sharing a tight studio space with this person, you want to make sure you're going to get along, but





even the way you phrase those questions can really send a professional message, right?

Tracy: Um hmm.

Hilary: So we want to talk less about, I really want us to get along, I want us to be friends, I want us to have a good time in the studio... Well you can still kind of get at that same information by framing those questions a little bit differently, right? For example, you could say productivity in my studio is really important, but I understand we all have different expectations for work environment where we can focus. For myself, for example, I like... Let's just go with our example from before, I like to play country music kind of quietly in the background, and I tend to stick to myself while I'm working at the bench so I can really focus. Could you describe a work environment that works best for you? You're getting kind of some of the same information, but you're very much putting it in a professional context in terms of a workplace environment and performance expectations, and it's a lot less about do I like you, do you like me, do we like the same things?

Tracy: Would you call these behavioral questions because you're trying to figure out how they would react or act in a certain situation?

Hilary: Yeah, and I think a behavioral question that is kind of a borderline behavioral question. I think what you're referring to is when you give someone a scenario and ask how they would handle it or how they handled it in the past. Behavioral interviewing techniques are very telling, and one of the questions I really like to use in interviews is tell me about a difficult boss you had in the past and how you handled it, and one of the things I think is really telling about that question is why they think the boss was difficult, and that can tell you a lot about an employee. Sometimes they'll say a boss was very difficult because they were always hounding them on deadlines. Well, you know what? That probably tells you something right there...

Tracy: That they're not deadline keeping persons! [laughter]

Hilary: [laughter] That they're not a deadline person, right? Or maybe the boss was belligerent and always yelling. Well, okay, you know, that was a boss that was out of bounds, how did you handle that? You learn a lot about people with those kinds of hypothetical or past experience questions. On the flip side of that, I





always ask about who is a boss or leader you worked with who you really admired and why?

Tracy: That's a good question...

Hilary: Which is a great question. Some of the answers I personally, I'm really turned off by are oh, I had this boss, she always dressed really great, she drove this really nice car, and I just really admired her. Dressing great and driving a nice car, in my opinion, are not professional reasons to admire a person.

Tracy: Yeah...

Hilary: If that's what you're looking to as someone you want to emulate, then you're not going to fit with me. [laughter]

Tracy: Yup!

Hilary: You know? So, think about some of those answers and what is between the lines there because, again, that gets to culture fit, that gets to mindset fit, and how people see the world, and how they see the workplace.

Tracy: Absolutely, absolutely. Do you have any struggles that you've ever had in the past with higher team members?

Hilary: Yeah, you know, people I think are the most challenging part of the business, but they can also be the most rewarding. No matter how prepared you are, there are always variables with hires. You never know what's going on in people home lives and their health. There just always will be surprises, and I think that is probably my biggest caution with hiring as much as you plan, there will always be surprises. The more you can set those expectations, like we talked about and establish those professional ways of handling of them, the better you'll be able to navigate those professional boundary situations that arise. I think what's most difficult as an employer is when someone you work with is going through a real personal struggle. That can be divorce, than can be a major health situation, and you want to be as sympathetic as possible, but you also have things that you have to get accomplished at the office, right? So balancing your sympathy with how can we work this out, what can we do at work, and what's reasonable... Those are some of the most challenging conversations, and sooner or later those are situations that you're going to hit. It's good to kind of





set up your relationships so you can have those conversations in a professional context, just like we talked about before.

Tracy: Yeah.

Hilary: Do you have some experience with that as well, Tracy?

Tracy: Oh my gosh, so much! Like boyfriends breaking up with me, and the girl... When my team members would go out, he would text her and she would run out and go smoke five cigarettes and be on the phone for half the day, and I'm just like, how do you handle that? So, I'm curious because I've handled a lot of this over the course of 20 years of employing people in different capacity and different ways. How have you handled... Like find that balance? What if they really are just not getting their job done and aren't really capable of it? How have you handled that in the past?

Hilary: Well, again, it comes back to setting the tone right from the beginning, and I make sure that all of my conversations with subordinates, my direct reports, are always about the work and their skills.

Tracy: Okay.

Hilary: So, when we talk about a project, and we critique a deliverable whether that's a finished piece of jewelry like you would be dealing with or a marketing campaign like we would have here at Halstead. It's very much about this is the deliverable, this is where it meets my expectations, this is where it doesn't, and it's not personal. It's not...

Tracy: You keep it focused on the work...

Hilary: It's very focused on the work, and then if we're having trouble, and a checkpoint, which I would like to talk about checkpoints next if we have time?

Tracy: Yes.

Hilary: It's about the skills. So, again, it's a question of, okay, I noticed you're really struggling with this portion of the job, and this is where I'm noticing assignments are late, and they aren't quite meeting my expectations. Let's talk about that, and I think taking a problem solving approach and keeping it in the professional context is really important.





The first thing to do as a manager is look at it realistically in terms of did I give you clear expectations and the training you need to perform this to my level of expectation? And I think talking about that with your employee honestly is a great place to start because it shows you're trying to solve the problem, and a lot of times you will hear back, well, I did the best I could, but I hadn't done this before, and I wasn't sure how to do X, Y and Z, and then you can have the conversation of well, let's add some additional notes to this project so it can go better next time, and just come ask me rather than going kind of off course a little bit. Next time, come ask me, and we will talk through that, and then realistically, okay, I see that you really have trouble with this portion of the job. How can we help get you ready for more of that work? How can we train you to be more successful at this? And I think a lot of times you can come up with a game plan in that way, and notice that that conversation is very much about output deliverables, skill sets, and training. It is not a conversation that starts out, I really like you and I want this to work out... You know, that's a conversation you have with a friendship. That's a personal relationship, sort of conversation starter, and that shouldn't happen in the workplace. It is not about liking them. It's not about wanting to get along. It's about the work. It's about the training. It's about the skill sets. If you're framing all of your conversations in that way, you're setting up a professional relationship, and you're problem solving when there are issues, and it takes it out of the personal realm as much as possible.

Tracy: So have you ever had a really great employee or team member who is like really good at 75% of their job, but there's this one area where they're just like no matter how much training or how much you try to get them to get it, they're just not getting it. Have you every shifted responsibilities so that...?

Hilary: Absolutely, absolutely. All the time and I think that's getting into kind of the dynamics of teams, which is a whole topic on its own, right? When you're...

Tracy: Yeah, I feel like we need... [laughter]

Hilary: When you're dealing with one hire, you don't have the luxury of shifting around responsibilities a lot. I know that's really hard, but there is recognizing great hires, and the reality that everybody has strengths and weakness, myself included, oh my gosh, I have so many, right? Again, it's taking it out of that personal realm where I can talk about my weaknesses. That's okay. I know I'm





not great at certain things, but I think recognizing people for their talents and making sure you point out their talents and their gifts and kind of talking about how to best use those talents and gifts in the workplace is something that employees really appreciate, and then on the same note, when you talk about things that are challenging for them and do it in a professional way, it is not such an insult. It's a professional assessment, and you can definitely move around responsibilities, and, in fact, if you are kind of in the process of doing your first hire, I would encourage you to keep in mind that what that person ends up doing, may end up being pretty different than what you imagined, and that can be a very good thing, but the workplace is always changing. What comes at you is always changing, and as you recognize each other's strengths and weaknesses and the business's needs, you're always going to have to be adapting. That's normal.

Tracy: Did you cover the checkpoints thing? Because you kind of talked about some things to measure. Do you want to talk about that real quick?

Hilary: Thank you for bringing it back to checkpoints. So, again, setting those professional expectations, I think it is really critical whether you call them performance reviews or checkpoints or you go to coffee, whatever it is, once a month or once a quarter. Set a schedule from the very first day of hire that you are going to have these meetings at regular intervals. I use quarterly checkpoints with every single one of my direct reports. Some people do it monthly. It's up to you, what works with your schedule, but the purpose of those meetings is to talk about the employment relationship and how things are going, and the reason you set them up in advance is so that they are not so scary, and it doesn't feel like a big deal to call someone in for a meeting, right? You know you get that big, like closed door, angst-ridden situation where, oh my gosh, they never call me in for meetings, and now we have a meeting, what does that mean? And you're both coming into it with a lot of anxiety. Instead, if you set regular checkpoints where you sit down and, as a matter of routine, you say, how's the job going? Are we communicating okay? What things are frustrating for you? Where can we do better? So that we can both be more productive? And if you have a list of those same questions you ask at every one of those checkpoints, when things do hit kind of a rough patch in the road, you can talk about it, and it's going to feel a lot less uncomfortable and stressful than if it was





just the one conversation out of the blue, and you never talked about these things before.

Tracy: So you have, with your direct reports, you have these... Do your managers have these checkpoint meetings with their team members? Or do you...?

Hilary: Every single quarter...

Tracy: Awesome.

Hilary: Every single quarter. Yeah...

Tracy: I love that.

Hilary: And it's really important that a lot of times...

Tracy: I like when it you checkpoint instead of a review. It sounds so much better.

Hilary: Well, and it doesn't have to be so formal. I mean, you don't need a form or like any big fuss over it, but it is a chance to have an honest conversation about those things, and usually great things come to my attention through those meetings. My team will bring things to my attention in those meetings because they feel comfortable doing so, and those meetings are always private, and so they know it's a time on their calendar when if a colleague is making them crazy or they're really struggling with a project; again, it doesn't have to turn into a big thing where I need 30 minutes of your time to talk about X, Y, and Z. They know this meeting is coming, and oftentimes they will bring things that have been bothering them to that meeting, and we have time already set aside to start talking about it, and problem solving with what needs to be addressed.

Tracy: Awesome, awesome. This is such great advice on all checkpoints. [laughter]

Hilary: [laughter] Checkpoints are like... Sometimes it's easy to let them lapse. You feel like you have really good hire, oh they never bring anything to my attention, but I really encourage you to stick with those checkpoints no matter what because you can have an employee for years and years and years, and then all of a sudden they may have that big thing going on in the their personal life. They may have a fight going on with a colleague or something that will come up sooner or later, and without those pre-established checkpoints, I find that those things tend to fester and balloon a lot more than is necessary.





- Tracy: So, so true. Such great advice. We're going to pivot a little bit here. I want to hear a little bit more. Every year, you do a Halstead Grant. That's an amazing competition where jewelry designers who have been in business less than 3 years can win great grant money for their business, to actually help it grow. Will you tell us a little bit more about that?
- Hilary: Yeah, absolutely! So the Halstead Grant deadline is August 1st, each summer, so that's coming up, mark your calendar. The award for the grand prize is \$7500 in startup cash and \$1000 in credit for supplies and tools for Halstead. We also do a lot of PR work with our winners and kind of help to give them a little bit of a launch pad as their starting their business. We also recognize the top 10 finalists with smaller cash prizes and recognition in the industry, so this is a great opportunity for new jewel businesses.
- Tracy: So, so amazing! You can check it out over at www.flourishthriveacademy.com/HalsteadGrant, and we will send you to the 2018 application form. We are so excited, and last year, one of our Flourish and Thrive members and Mastermind, you actually introduced us to her. She was a runner up for you grant. You encouraged her to go to our Live event that year, and she ended up joining our Mastermind Program, and her mission was to win. [laughter]
- Hilary: [laughter]
- Tracy: Her mission was to win the Halstead Grant, and she did, and it was so exciting. Tell us a little bit about last year's winner.
- Hilary: Kristen Baird is amazing. She is out of Savannah, Georgia. I encourage you to check out her website, check out her work. Kristen Baird is an amazing business woman. She comes at things with such planning and preparation. She really thinks things through and is great at wearing all of those entrepreneurial hats we talked about. Running a business takes just a lot of different skill sets, and you don't have to have all of those from day 1. There are definitely great resources like Flourish and Thrive to help you develop all of those different entrepreneurial hats. We've been talking today quite a bit about HR, but the Halstead Grant focuses in on business questions about all parts of your strategy, capacity, finance, marketing, networking, all of those things that are going to help you to be successful in your business, and Kristen Baird is an





amazing example of a startup jewelry business and is really doing amazing things right from the get go.

Tracy: Amazing, amazing things! I feel like there is some other parameters about the type of jewelry that you make?

Hilary: We do require that the lines contain a significant amount of silver. We feel like there are a lot of programs out there for the fine jewelry segment, in particular, so we want to make sure that we are helping people in that bridge, mid-level category. You can work in the entire range of materials for jewelry, but we just want to make sure that a significant part of the business is silver. So that is specific to the Halstead Grant, you're right.

Tracy: Okay, awesome, awesome! So go check it out. We will be sending out emails about this to let you all know because it's such an amazing opportunity, and being of a somewhat competitive nature myself, I would love for another Flourish and Thrive designer... [laughter]

Hilary: [laughter]

Tracy: They didn't even tell us, and remember you guys were going to make the announcement, and I think you told us maybe like a day before, Kristen told us maybe a day before you were making the announcement so that we could share it with our community, or maybe you told us after? I can't remember, but it was very exciting for me because it just means that what we're doing here is supportive of what you guys were doing, and I love it, how we've created this relationship together, which is great.

Hilary: Yeah, I agree, I agree. Thanks for all your support, and if you are preparing a Halstead Grant application, Flourish and Thrive has a lot of resources that are spot on for some of these questions, so definitely use these podcasts and articles and content pieces that Flourish and Thrive has available. There is a lot there.

Tracy: Thank you so much, Hilary. Thanks for being here today!

Hilary: Aw, thanks for having me!

Tracy: Thank you so much for listening to today's episode. If you want to apply for the Halstead Grant, I highly recommend it. Make sure that you head on over to www.flourishthriveacademy.com/HalsteadGrant, and you can also meet me and





Hilary and the rest of the amazing Flourish and Thrive community at our Flourish Thrive Live Event for 2018. If you're interested in picking up a ticket for that, I highly recommend it. It is an amazing event where you have the opportunity to network with influencers, where you're going to learn a ton of great stuff about the latest and greatest about what's going on in the digital marketing space and the PR space. We're going to give you some support on implementing things, and we also have some very special guests that are going to give you feedback on your collection, and also help you get noticed by the press because there are... You know we always hook you up with some great influencers there. So make sure you join us. If you'd like more information, head on over the www.flourishthriveacademy.com/FTALive2018. We will also have full details over in the show notes.

Thanks so much you guys! I'll talk to you later! Until next week with our next episode with Hilary. It's going to be awesome!

