

EPISODE 1467

Whitney Sewell (WS): This is your daily Real Estate Syndication Show. I'm your host, Whitney Sewell.

Today I want to go through something that I've struggled with, it seems like, my whole business career. It's just something we, I mean, I've hired people to help me with this, even internally, that's full-time. And I want to share a little bit of that with you today. And I want to hear from you also, and or if there's somebody that you know, that you would like me to have on the show that we could talk about this thing, because it seems so basic, but it's not it takes a ton of time and thought, and one word is my calendar.

The calendar is just insane, right? I want to talk about my this position at LifeBridge. How that's changed over a few years, and how you know, if you are newly getting into entrepreneurship, or you're starting your own business, guess what, your roles are going to change. No doubt about it, but I hope they do anyway. That means you are growing, that means your team is growing. It's good things, means you can focus more on the business side of the business, right? We've all heard that. But it is a difficult transition. But it's a good one and it's worthwhile.

So I want to go through a little bit of that today. But I remember, you know, a few years back, not too many years ago, when we started Life Bridge Capital. When we started the podcast, I had a couple of days a month where I would record 12 to 15 interviews in one day. And my team, so I built a team of virtual assistants who had helped me to produce the podcast. They do, so we did everything in-house. And then, they knew they better have 12 to 15 interviews scheduled that day that I was off from my job two days a month or else we couldn't keep up, right?

And so, and they did that, and often, you know, I would do 12 to 15 interviews, and it's nonstop, there were no breaks. And literally, my wife would pack me lunch to go to the basement to work. It was intense, to say the least. She would call it my marathon day. So I would literally do that and still take investor calls and you know, emails, all kinds of other things, in addition to that also. So, just madness. I wouldn't wish that on most people.

But then you know, during the week, even getting home from the job, I'd have to go to the office and do more interviews, or answer more investor calls and call them back or emails or working with a team. All kinds of things, right? Planning, traveling and going to conferences and eventually started speaking at some conferences, and then you know, that's grown and things start happening. And then, it gets more and more busy. We start doing deals. I meet my business partner, Sam, and, you know, we took off. And so, it's been a massive transition for me in the business, where, you know, I was doing everything, and then it's Sam and I doing everything. Everything to make everything happen. It's like, well, you gotta get some relief, right?

And so we find, I had a few different assistants that were part-time or a few hours a week, and that grew over, you know, a few years. So I think the first one, you know, I think she provided two to four hours a week for me. Well, immediately I filled that up, I think she went up to like six hours. And that's all the time she gave me. So I had to find somebody else. And so I found somebody else that could give me like 20-25 hours a week. And she did an amazing job as well. Both of these ladies did fabulously. I would probably still be working with either of them but, that's all the time that they could commit to me with their work schedule, or the clients that they had or whatnot. And then, the next lady was almost full-time, and also did a great job. I was very pleased with her as well. And then, I think she was more contract type, you know, 1099 type.

But as we have grown, it was obvious that I need somebody full-time. I need somebody to help me. And this was one of the first things that they would help me with was my schedule, especially as I left the job and went full time. It's amazing how fast your calendar can fill up. It's like if I do not have it blocked off and all of a sudden, there are meetings everywhere, it is crazy. Even now, there's many days a week when I will be on Zoom. I stand almost all day, every day. It's very rare that I sit down. And I'm just more energetic and more alert, more awake by doing that, by standing up. And it just allows me to move a little bit as well even talk with my hands like I am doing now. But it's not uncommon for me to be on Zoom, like let's say from 8am to 4pm straight, a few days a week. And then so, but that could be, it'll say there's a day of week

where it's like one-on-one meetings with many of our team members. Sam and I, amongst many others, may have some coaching clients that I'll meet with as well. And then, other days of the week where it's just it's interviewing still most of the day, and then the rest of the week will be a number of different types of meetings. So, we do Level 10 meetings now as well. We do huddle so I've done a show on those that explore in depth a little more about those meetings and how we handle those where I try and encourage you to check out.

But also, you know, just I have other people reaching out to me all the time wanting to meet or wanting to connect, wanting to talk, and I try to take as many of those as I can. But that is becoming more and more difficult to be able to do that, especially traveling a lot as well and speaking at different places, and is taking a lot more time.

But one thing that I now do is time block. I have to set some definite things that hey, only time that I should have a scheduled appointment is between this hour and this hour. And I have to let the entire team especially my assistant know. But one thing I told my assistant upfront when she started was, I need you to help me to monitor my family time, like make sure that, you know, give her the authority to question me about being at home enough. Am I in the office too late every day, because it's very easy for me to do. I can just get caught up and stuff and knocking stuff out, feeling so good about how productive I am in the office, and I'll be here and then all of a sudden, it'll be 6pm or later some nights and especially early on. And it was much lighter than that most nights.

But now, I don't have to do that most nights every once in a while. But it's just not as necessary for me to be in the in the office that light every night. And so I gave her the authority. I said, Hey, I want you to question me about it. If you notice that, hey, I'm still working at 8pm and are freshly numerous nights. Why is that happening? Right? What appointments am I having that are more important than having dinner with my family?

And that's what I want you to ask yourself. What kind of appointments are keeping you from doing the most important things, those things that we would say we're doing all of this for? Our family or spouse or kids, whatever, you know, and oftentimes, they're the ones that get the

brunt end of the deal here, right? They see you a lot less because you're working so hard quote for them, right? Which is just not the case. Typically, you are doing it for them. But are you really right? It's so easy. And I'm just like that to get caught up in the office for I know that, hey, I've missed dinner again. And it's like three days since I've seen the kids. And it's just not okay. It's not okay for me anyway. Man, they just grow up too fast. And if you have children, you know what I'm talking about.

But, a couple of things I'll say that we have done to help my calendar is time blocking. I know exactly what days of the week, what times of the week, I'm opening for interviews for the podcast. I know what days of the week, what times, I'm doing team member one-on-one meetings, meeting with them and talking through specific things that they're working on. Or I know what time of the week that we're having a Level 10 meeting, you know, or another time of the week where we do, you're actually we'll have what we call some connecting calls with some people who have reached out that want some assistance or just want to connect in some way, maybe a potential partnership, or whatever that may be. And then actually lately, I've been trying to block off Fridays altogether from any kind of scheduled meeting. Because what you'll find is like, especially for myself, I can get so caught up in Zoom meeting after a Zoom meeting and is productive to some to a big degree.

I'll say most of the time, it's somewhat necessary. However, man, you still have to have time to work on the business tie, you have to have time to just think. You have to have time to plan, to strategize, especially as you are leading the business. You know, something that I've been working on a lot lately is hiring a controller, you know, somebody in an accounting-type position. And it's been a struggle to get those interviews done. It's been a struggle to even think through this thing. We call it RREK. I got that from Don Wenner, as well. You've heard me talk about him a little bit. When I've talked about the meetings and the hurdles, the daily huddles and the L10 Meetings and some things we're learning from them.

It's crucial that we do good interviews, right, and that we spend time with these new candidates. But that has been a struggle to get that done. But yes, that RREK that shows our roles, responsibilities, expectations and key numbers. That's what that stands for. But it's very

detailed. And it lays out exactly what is expected of this new employee, right. And even current employees, you know, they have these as well, we've been trying to develop those. And that's taken a lot of time for me, or I've not been able to devote enough time to getting those things done. And they're crucially important. You want your people to know what's expected of them, no doubt about it. If they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing. Well, guess why they may not even know that you're expecting that thing right.

So we are working to get those done. But my whole point right now is the calendar is crazy. It is doesn't have to be that way. And so I encourage you to think about what are the most important tasks and what are things other people are doing and as my role has changed, and I say you know we were doing everything too well where we started you know hired an assistant and then we hire somebody else for Like Investor Services that's helping investors to, you know, invest and fund and get confirmations of their investments and the investor portal and tax documents, all those things, right.

And then we hire an investor relations specialist as well. And so you know, now that person has taken most of the, or all the investor calls, initial calls anyway. And then so that takes more off my plate. It's amazing how well, there's so many other things that hop in there, you know, where I used to take investor calls so much of my week, now, it's full of other things, right? Then, you know, we hire, we're hiring other people, you know, or have hired other people. And it's helped a lot. And it's just a natural transition, right, where now I can focus more on let's say that culture, right, you know, what kind of culture are we building at Life Bridge Capital. It's very important to me, very important to Sam and just our team, that it's a great culture. We care about our people, we want them to know, we care about them. We want them to know we care about their successes as well. We are spending a lot of time and investing a lot of money in our internal operations.

And in just, you know, ways that we communicate and learn how to operate as a team and function as a team. It's paid dividends for us by being very focused on those things. So but as well, as it's happened, it's allowed me to focus more on culture. It's allowed me to focus more on the direction of the business. And you know, Sam and I both are able to talk more about the

strategy behind our growth. How are we going to do that? What is that vision for where we want to be a year from now? And three years from now? In five years from now? And we have laid that out very granular. I mean, we've gotten down to some many different details of what we want the business to look like, or different, you know, years from now, 1, 3, 5, and even thinking more out to even 10 years, as much as we can.

But if we don't plan, you plan to fail. And so we put a plan in place, and then we reverse engineer, obviously, you know how to get there. We even think that we're trying to think through now, you know, what does our business look like at 5000 units? What employees do we have at that time? And then thinking through who do we need next. And so instead of just trying to put out fires, right? Well, oh, my goodness, you know, we're so busy, our calendars are so full, like I'm talking about we got to hire somebody to help with this thing. You know, who is that next person now? And let's be looking for that person ahead of that. And so that's our goal is to get ahead of that hiring instead of having to hire when it's just madness. When it's just too late, almost, you know, we're just doing everything trying to keep up.

And so, that's part of that planning you have to take time out of the calendar, out of working in Zoom calls all day. Honestly, for me anyway, in meetings to thinking, I would argue to say that the thinking part of your time as a leader is some of the hardest times. And often that's why we move away from it. That's why we avoid it. Or that's why we're willing to spend time in email or getting email done, because it's kind of an easy task, right? And it allows us to kind of check a few boxes, make us feel a little better because we did accomplish those emails. But that's kind of easy work. And that is, that's not as important as thinking time. It's not as important as thinking about your business, your strategy globally.

So I just encourage you to think about these things in how are you spending your time and really just know, I want you to know, it's going to change over time, right? As your team grows, hopefully, you build a team around you that are experts in different parts of the business. We have done this and the Lord has been so kind to me and Sam and our team. But everybody on the team, they are better at what they do than I could have ever been at what they do. I mean, there's just no doubt about it. And that's where I want to be, I want to keep hiring A-players

who excel at what they do. And that's what we've had to do. And that's changed what I do as a leader in the business and it's going to happen to you.

So, know that's going to happen, but look forward to it. Because what a blessing it is when you can bring on people that are better than you ever thought about being at the things you're trying to get done. It just changes things drastically. And it has for me it has for Life Bridge and I look forward to the next hire and the next hire and the next hire so we can continue to do that and improve and to scale thoughtfully and strategically and not with our pants on fire.

So, I hope you have enjoyed this segment of just you know scaling and growth and things that we're experiencing in Life Bridge Capital. Things I'm learning as a leader in the business.

But I would love to hear from you. I hope that you will reach out at info@lifebridgecapital.com. I would like to send you a free book that I've recently read if you will give us a rating and written review on Apple or iTunes. Send us a screenshot at info@lifebridgecapital.com with your address. I want to send you a free book and I would love to hear from you. If there are any ways that you would like for us to improve the show or even someone that you know would be a great guest. I'd love to hear from you. Have a blessed day.

[OUTRO]

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