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Rushab Kamdar: [00:00:00] Welcome to the Business 360 Podcast where we will take a 360 degree view of all things business in under 30 minutes. I'm Rushab Kamdar and I help businesses, startup founders, working professionals and master students think business, talk business, launch their business and grow their business.

What's going on Business Heroes? Welcome to episode 18. And I'm really excited about this episode because it's actually very relevant to what many aspiring and new entrepreneurs go through. And that starting a business alone, a one-person shop. Those that start as a one person shop are referred to as solopreneurs.

Our guest today is going to provide us with strategies that you can implement as you go through your solopreneurship journey and also pitfalls to avoid so that you don't make costly mistakes. So let's get to it.

On today's episode, my guest is Karan Nijhawan. He's the founder of Jube, a client relationship consulting practice that helps businesses deepen those relationships with clients and prospects through human connection dinners. To date, Jube has hosted over 184 dinners around the world with entrepreneurs and companies. Now, Karan has become known as the guy who brings people together in a meaningful and profound way.





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Karan is also the founder of the Solopreneur Success Club, a membership community that helps one person business owners get to their next level. Karan, I'm so happy that you are a guest on the Business 360 Podcast. Welcome.

Karan Nijhawan: [00:01:48] So stoked to be here, man. I, this is, I feel like was a, it was a long time coming and I'm grateful that our relationship has flourished so much since meeting one another. That I'm, I'm stoked to be here.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:01:59] Yeah. I mean, listen, we, we met on Clubhouse. The Clubhouse room that we used to do on a daily basis was called Solopreneurs Creating An Impact. And you are a solopreneur who believes in creating impact. You have really taken the mantle of, of spearheading solopreneurship and, uh, you know, diving into that specific terminology.

Uh, so why, why call yourself a solopreneur, uh, versus the generalized distinction of entrepreneur? Like why do you stick with that and then work only on solopreneurs?

Karan Nijhawan: [00:02:33] It's a great question. It's something I ask myself every single day and I ask myself, is this the right way? So the term solopreneur to me simply just means a one person business owner.

Even if they have a team, it's typically one person who's the visionary. It's the one person who's kind of steering the boat and yeah, sure you might have a team,





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you might have a crew with you, you might have coaches and assistant coaches, but you're the one calling the shots. So even in my business, I am not a one person business owner. I am the sole visionary of the company. I get to decide and steer where the boat is headed, but I've got a crew behind me as well.

So to me, the, the term solopreneur, something about it feels very empowering to me. It feels like you get to call the shots. It feels like you got to create a life on your own terms. And for me, that term has just had, has really stuck with me and, and the audience that I have been able to create and the community. Um, I've got nothing against the word entrepreneur like it's one of my favorite words of in English dictionary, but the term solopreneur to me, it's just like, who's this lone wolf who's used to doing things alone.

Maybe they're type A like me, maybe they have a vision like me, maybe they execute at the same speed as me and likes attract likes, right? So when I find people who resonate with that term, they typically find, find their way into one of my programs or one of my services or they just find their way into my community or my podcast?

And, um, yeah, it's just kind of like the, the solopreneur term to me is like the underdog. And for me, I'm a huge fan of the underdog.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:04:06] So in your world, does solopreneur ever graduate to an entrepreneur?





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Karan Nijhawan: [00:04:11] I think a solopreneur is an entrepreneur. It's just it's, I feel like the term solopreneur to me is more of a mindset than it is in practicality. Practicality, like I would say in a way Steve Jobs was a solopreneur. You know, he built one of the biggest companies in the world with thousands and thousands of employees all over the world yet he was the guy with the vision, right? Elon Musk, he's got a massive, he's got so many companies, so many successful exits, but nobody thinks like him, his brain is just on a next level.

In way, I would say Elon Musk is one of the greatest solopreneurs of all time. Jeff Bezos and Amazon is how many employees, but yet he's the guy with like the vision. So in a way, Jeff Bezos is the solopreneur. So for me, it's, for me, I think the term is more mindset and visionary focused and less practicality and what's on paper.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:04:59] Got it. Yeah. Not those, those technicalities. Um, so you know, let's do this, right. You started a company four years ago. That was your first foray there's.

Karan Nijhawan: [00:05:08] Well, no, no, no. I start with a side hustle four years ago and the side hustle became, again, as a by-product of these dinners, people came to this dinner and I would wake up the next day to email saying, when's the next one?





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And after doing this for four or five months, I said, Hey, maybe I could create a membership model around this. So people pay a hundred bucks a month and they got to come to a dinner once a month that was covered for them. Their ticket was included in that a hundred bucks. And I just started to build this community in St. John's, where I'm from, of business owners and entrepreneurs who just wanted to do networking differently.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:05:41] Fair enough. Now, so, um, along that lines, there are thousands and thousands of people every day that are starting side hustles or legitimately intentionally trying to start a business. Um, you know, they're usually one person, right? And if you want to go to the technical terms of solopreneur, the one-person business, you know, what is usually the, the first mistake that most of these, uh, aspiring solopreneurs make when they're going down this journey?

Karan Nijhawan: [00:06:11] I think they, they pick out, kitchen's gonna look like, the faucet that they want, the fridge that they want to order, the marble countertops without really having a clear idea of where it is in the world they want to live.

So I think that the problem they make is instead of focusing on the foundations of the house, aka their business, they focused on the sexy stuff like the technology, the software that they need, the email service provider, the weekly emails, the funnel software, the it's like they, they, they focus on that because it keeps them busy.





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And any time an entrepreneur is busy, think they're being productive. Now busy and productive are two very different things. I know a lot of solopreneurs and entrepreneurs that are busy as hell, but they're not productive whatsoever, right? And they're just doing the same thing over and over again expecting a different result.

So I think the mistake that I often see a lot of first time entrepreneurs or solopreneurs make is that they would rather focus on the sexy side of the business in terms of like outfitting their business versus really spending time on the business, asking two simple questions, who's this for and what can I provide them?

So for me, it's like any solopreneur who's, you know, has started a side hustle. I always say to them like, how can you get your, your first one to three clients in the next 72 hours? Go, make that your mission. You're going to learn so much in that process and you don't need any tech for it. You just need it to be able to text message your friends, message a couple of people on LinkedIn, who you think might be good fits and like, let that be your validation.

You'll learn so much more by 72, 72 hours of just grinding to try to get your first client than any book or course or tech will ever teach you.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:07:54] Uh, now let's say some of these solopreneurs who are already into their journey, right? Um, there are still pitfalls that we've seen





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that, that, that they make. What are some of the top three or five that you feel would benefit a solopreneur to avoid?

Karan Nijhawan: [00:08:08] Yeah, that's a fantastic question. The first one and I'll list four that I have struggled with that I find myself even today, sometimes struggling with.

The first is delegating way too late in their business and just wearing all the hats. So naturally when you're starting off, like your only thought process is how do I get the most without putting the least amount of money in, without the least amount of time in, without the least amount of effort in, how can I get the most value or ROI? Naturally as a way to save money, you want to do everything. You want to produce your own podcasts. You want to send out your own email marketing campaign. You want to run your own Facebook group. You want to post on Instagram. You want to, you want to be you're in sales, you're in accounting, you're in, you're in everything, right? You're the one incorporating your documents like you're doing everything.

So I think the first thing that a lot of people struggle with is that they fail to value their own time therefore they hold on to all the pieces of their business. Um, cause they're they're, they, they see delegation as a cost and they don't really see it as buying back your time. And when you make that distinction of what is an hour worth to you, if it's worth 20 bucks an hour or 2000 bucks an hour, then if





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you can delegate a task that costs less than that, you're probably better off doing it.

If you're doing a task that cost more than that. You're probably better off keeping it yourself. So like, I think establish an hourly rate for your, for yourself. When you're first starting out, you can make it up a hundred bucks, 200 bucks, 500 bucks, whatever you want, but establish an hourly rate and anything below that definitely delegate.

I think another mistake, a lot of solopreneurs make when they first start out, even if they're a year or two in, is that they still work really hard and not overly smart. And what I mean by that is they, they again want to refer back to that productive thing, right? They stay busy, they stay busy, they stay busy.

They've got this massive to do list of, to do items, none of which are like incredibly revenue generating. So if you have this massive, I think in the book, the one thing they talk about the to-do list and then the must-do list. So I think where solopreneurs need to make that distinction is sure you could have a, to do list, but what are the two or three must do, maybe revenue generating activities that you should be doing to validate yourself financially.

I like, you know, I like this concept of what's your one big focus for the day. In Brian Tracy's book, he calls it, eat the big frog, right? Like eat that, that the most difficult thing first thing in the morning.





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There's two more mistakes that I see over and over again. The third is they under price themselves because they're pricing based on their own worth, right? Who's going to buy from me. I don't have the credentials. I don't have the history. I've never done this before. So you know what, how's 20 bucks for this. I'm like 20 bucks. It's gonna take you 10 hours. Uh, okay. How is 25 bucks? Right? It's like entrepreneurs don't know how to price themselves. So typically we price ourselves based on our own self-worth not really the value that we're generating for your client. Probably one of the easiest ways to raise your rates is just by asking yourself that question. Am I pricing based on my worth or the value to the client?

And then the fourth mistake, I think a lot of people make, and I, I still struggle with this from time to time is that their measurement of success is just financial. So they validate their worthiness, they validate their success based on what's in the bank account or what's coming in every month. And they fail to realize all the beautiful progress that they're making on themselves, on the mindset, all the relationships that they're building, all the seeds, they're planting all the new ways that they've stretched themselves in the last 30 or 40 days and not letting the bank account be the sole determining factor of your success. And that's something I struggled with as well.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:11:48] Yeah, exactly. Choosing the wrong metric for success and usually, you know, and we know this, you and I both know this





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money is not a motivator, right? So don't use money as a motivator. Well, on the flip side, uh, what are the top three or five things a solopreneur should do to ensure success? What should they implement? And an easy cop-out is to say the opposite of what you said are pitfalls. So I'm going to, I'm going to put it on you that let's talk about some, some strategies that they can implement for success.

Karan Nijhawan: [00:12:16] Absolutely. So one strategy is, is think about what you feel your competitors are doing and do the opposite. So let me, let me tie that back to Jube. One of the biggest keys of my success in my entire business was hosting these human connection dinners. Nobody was really doing them. It was a foreign concept. It sounded a bit weird and unique. Some people thought it was spammy. They were like, what do you mean I'm going to pay to come to this dinner? Who's this Karan guy I've never heard of. People would literally send me a hundred dollars on Eventbrite and have never had met me before cause I was like, Hey, we're going to do this dinner. So I started doing things that created a conversation. So in your business, think about your version of a dinner. Maybe it's a dinner, maybe it's something else, but how can you shake the boat a little bit and do something that's conversation worthy. That's the reason why I've been able to do 184 dinners is because people leave these dinners and they tag their friends in the videos. They tell their employees, they tell their friends, they tell their entrepreneur buddies saying, Hey, you got to do one of these dinners. So I always have this like Rolodex of people who want to come to a dinner.





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The second thing I would say is where can you add more human elements to your business? I'm a huge fan of audio and video messaging. I have instilled audio and video messaging and so much of my sales in the way I prospect, in the way I deliver customer experience and customer success, in the way I run my Facebook group. And I'm a very human based business. So if you have a business where you care about relationships and you want to go deep with clients and with prospects, ask yourself, Hey, when the, when the prospect gets an order confirmation email, what if I sent them a video email instead. What if there wasn't just a receipt? What if it was a two minute GIF of you going and just waving? Like how can you stand out? How can you make your emails forward worthy? And I like to think about my business, like where in my business can I introduce little aspects of magic that are forward worthy? And for me, my video emails do get forwarded among a company.

I think I've shared with you that I sent this one email to a director of sales who gets pitched 50 times a day. And he sent my video email to 20 other leaders across Canada saying, this is the type of prospecting we need, which is what got me a pretty sweet contract back then. Um, so I just, I just like to do things a little bit differently and it's free, right? Adding more customer experience via video it's virtually free. Creating something conversation worthy in your business is virtually free. You just need to be able to like step off that beaten path and do something a little bit differently.





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Rushab Kamdar: [00:14:59] And so I think that that's a good segue to what you are creating now, which is a community of like-minded solopreneurs, um, it's called a Solopreneur Success Club. Um, it's a form of a mastermind. So why don't you explain, what are your goals for this club and what are you trying to build here?

Karan Nijhawan: [00:15:22] Yeah. Great question man and it's funny cause like my goals are really centered around the painful conversations that I hear my prospects or my ideal clients have every single day.

So when I hear a solopreneur or an entrepreneur say, I feel lonely. I'm like great, but what does that really mean? Well, really what that means is that they're not really sure how to make decisions in their business. What that really means is that their progress feels stuck. What that really means is that they lack confidence in their selling ability.

When I hear a client say, I lack clarity in my business, really what they mean is that they're not really sure if they're working on the right tasks or the right projects or their product language doesn't speak to their ideal client, or they really have an unclear picture about the future of their business.

And the last thing, when I hear my clients say, I need help, which we've all heard really what that means if you go layers deeper is that they don't have a plan and they're just winging it. The financials in their business are really foggy and





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confusing and maybe they feel pressure from social media and friends to have shit figured out.

So I've created a community, like an environment where conversations like that, the ones that we're having that nobody sees are the norm. So the conversations that you have at a typical networking event is not what we have in the solopreneur club. We have the exact opposite.

A good way to describe it, just because we talked about the iceberg, is like the solopreneur club. We focus on that bottom 89% of the conversations about what's the stuff that's really keeping us up at night. What are the thorns, as you know, the headaches, the problems, the fears, the objections that we run into as business owners and then putting multiple brains on the same problem. So if you're having a thought, if you have an idea about how to grow your business, if you're running into headaches and hurdles, I've created an environment where other people who have gone through that problem can just give you their feedback and their advice. And they've got nothing to gain except watching you win, right?

They're not going to get a percentage of the upside. They're not going to get a percentage of the downside. They just want to see you win. Because then they're hoping that maybe if you figure out something in your business, you can share it with them. And maybe that's an idea that they could test out in their business.





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So it's just, this, it's a peer learning environment where solopreneurs don't have to feel solo. And they can just make quicker decisions and ultimately create a more profitable business.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:17:47] Well, you know, that's a great way to, to, to highlight what is a difficulty for a lot of solopreneurs, right? Because the solo you're alone, you're lonely, even if you have a team, right, and a community gives you that support gives you that accountability and props you up. Um, and so I think what's happening in this club, this membership is, is amazing. And, and, you know, the value you're providing is, is top-notch.

Karan Nijhawan: [00:18:10] Uh, and I mean, it, it, typical conversation I hear from group members before they join is I've got no one to talk to besides my spouse at home or like my friends don't get me cause they're not really entrepreneurs. And there's only so many times I can go to YouTube and Google for my answers. And I get that, like, I get that, like, what else do you do when you don't know what to do, right? You rely on your partner at home or your spouse, or maybe you talk to your kids or you talk to your friends. But I grew up like four years ago when I had a side hustle, none of my close friends had side hustles, right? They were all, they all had corporate jobs or they were all doctors. Like, you know, like that's kinda how it was. So I'm like, who do I bounce ideas off of? And I found that again with these dinners that I was hosting, it gave me the platform to find other like-minded human beings that I could bounce ideas off of. And same thing happens, you





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know, when you're talking to, when I do a team dinner for a client and their employees, they're using it as brainstorming. When I do this for clients and their prospects, it's kind of like brainstorming. What I'm doing with the Solopreneur Success Club, you guys are brainstorming. So like there's a, there's a real commonality among every part of my business where it really does centered it centers around conversation.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:19:24] Another common headache for a lot of solopreneurs is the feeling of being overwhelmed with the tasks that they have. And I know you, you spoke a little bit about identifying that one big task to accomplish in a given week. Uh, but outside of that, are there any other tips you have for solopreneurs to avoid that feeling of overwhelm?

Karan Nijhawan: [00:19:43] Yeah. One of the most helpful things that I do every month is I brain dump everything on paper. Like I think about what are the things that are stressing me out right now. Okay. This kind of revenue, this kind of membership, the bills, do I hire, how's my Instagram these days, should I get back on clubhouse? Like I have all of these, like I have like a thousand thoughts a minute. And I feel like you probably do as well and sometimes it just keeps us stuck or it makes us feel overwhelmed. And one of the things I do is I brain dump everything on paper and I circle, okay, which one of these activities brings me joy. And then I X out which one of these brings me headaches and pain.





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And if I can delegate or terminate the headaches and pains category and just focus on the ones that I circle, it gives me a really good, almost like a, it allows me to restart every month with a new plan of attack for that month. The goals don't change. What changes is how I approach those goals and the activities that I choose to help me get to those goals. So I think brain dumping on paper is one of those exercises. It sounds so elementary. And like, so old school, like what do you mean paper? You mean like on my iPad? No, no, no. Like write this down pen to paper and really get clear on what's keeping you up at night and it, and address it. Stop, like stop shoving your business headaches underneath the bed, thinking that, Hey, if I just hide them, I won't see them. You're still going to feel a lumpy ass bed, right? Still like, just get rid of the problems altogether. Don't just hide them.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:21:10] Yeah. You're you're big on systems and implementing systems. Exactly. Is there a, is there a one or two that you think are instrumental?

Karan Nijhawan: [00:21:18] Well, when I had a podcast or I still have a podcast, not really, uh, take a guest right now. The part that I love to do the most was the actual interview. Everything else the uploading, the YouTube, the creating the graphic on Canva, publishing on Spotify and iTunes, I created a step-by-step Google document. Step one, log on Canva, step two, use this username and password. And I also created a video documentation of me doing the task myself,





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and I just started to create these SOPs are standing standard operating procedures for every task that I did in my business, that costs me time and that others could do just as good.

So now I've got this list of, you know, the, my, my Facebook group. All of those posts are scheduled every Sunday. And now that I don't even touch them, I'm completely hands-off. I get one message a week from my marketing person saying approved or not approved. I go approve. They send, they craft my weekly email. I look at it, approved. I create one video a week. And it gets turned into IGTV stuff and an article and a blog and an email. All I do is go approve. So I do the thing that I want to do interview, Beyond Zoom, motivate people, create group conversations, facilitate group dynamics, but everything else I have found a way to go completely hands-off. So really, man, it's like I'm literally growing a business where I want to be 99% hands-off.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:22:47] Yeah. And, and, uh, you know, I think this entire concept of systems is so difficult for a lot of new solopreneurs. Um, and it's so important for, I think that's one of the most important things to, to really educate people on and, and the, and how easy it is and that it's not overnight, but it will take time, but you'll get there, you know, and I think that's also another important thing. You mentioned during this interview a couple of books, you're an avid reader of books. Um, I've been always an avid reader of news articles and you know, that world. It was only after I met you that I started getting into business





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books. Uh, and so real quickly, top three business books any aspiring entrepreneur solopreneur should know of.

Karan Nijhawan: [00:23:36] Great question. So these are, these are all gonna be business and mindset style of books cause I don't think you can have a solid business if your mindset is not in place. I just don't think the two, one, one cannot exist without the other. So I've, re-read the book, the Go-Giver about three or four times. It's got timeless principles of about how to give more in value than you take in cash value. The rule of always being authentic, the rule of compensation, just really good timeless value pieces that you can take into every negotiation you can take into every business conversation. So the Go-Giver is definitely in the top.

There's another book called the The Science of Getting Rich by Wallace Wattles. I'm a big fan of books that were created, like in like the thirties and the forties. Cause I think that's, that's where personal development really originated was like in the twenties and thirties and forties back in like the Napoleon Hill, uh, Andrew Carnegie days. I think everything produced today on motivation is really it's really taken inspiration from that generation. So The Science of Getting Rich is amazing.

Um, and there's this really good book that not a lot of people talk about, but it's called The Road Less Stupid and it's by a guy named Keith Cunningham. And he talks about how do you avoid paying the dumb tax in life? Like how do you avoid





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paying the tax that you don't know you're going to have to pay one day? So he says, he's got his one line in the book is like, you can, you can make a decision today. But based on that decision, you can't predict the future repercussions of that decision. It's just, it just really makes you think. But the idea in the book is that every week or every couple of weeks, give yourself this window of what he calls thinking time. Spend 45 to 60 minutes go into that session with just your pen or a pencil and your notebook. Go into the session, asking yourself three to four questions because every answer that we ever need in life is not really in the books. It's not really in the courses. It really is within us. So for me like this thinking time practice, I need to get back into it. I've done it a couple of times where I've just blocked out 60 minutes of my calendar, just to think. And you'd be surprised, man, this 60 minutes feels like hours and you walk away every time with pages, full of notes on inspiration, on motivation. So those would be three books that come top of mind to me right now.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:25:59] I've never read that book, but I'm an avid practice practicer of getting my, my thinking time. Yeah, I do it. I do, I do once a month. Yeah. I mean, at least once a month. So

Karan Nijhawan: [00:26:10] Man, there's, there's so many other books like I'm, I'm reading right now, The Psychology of Money, amazing book. There's a book called Who Not How by Dan Sullivan, which is all about who can do the thing cause you, you shouldn't be doing all of it. Um, there's a book called The





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Happiness Equation that I read a long time ago that's again, just timeless principles about life. Um, Yeah, man. I'm a, I'm a huge book guy.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:26:35] Yeah, no, listen that's uh, that's why I asked that question. Cause I think a lot of people will get value from knowing which ones would help them in their journey. Uh, so I'm going to leave you with this, what parting advice will you give to any aspiring solopreneur out there or even an experienced solopreneur out there?

Karan Nijhawan: [00:26:56] Double down on what your inside is telling you, like double down on your intuition, double tap, double down on your own thinking, doubled down on your own vision that you have, because it's very easy to just make progress on a vision and then be like, Ooh, look, shiny object, new project, new contract, new something.

I think about the last two years that I've been in business, had I known what I know now about what I'm building and sure, you know, sometimes we need to go through life and the experience to figure out what is that, that you're truly building. But now that I'm so clear on, like, this is my, my niche, this is my family, this is what I'm building, I've, I've never had more motivation and more energy and more passion. I've never had such clarity on the direction of my business than I do now. And really it comes down to this idea of what are you building and who's it for.





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Rushab Kamdar: [00:27:46] Beautiful, beautifully said. Uh, Karan, I really, really appreciate you being here, uh, imparting your wisdom on all of us with, uh, uh, everything that results with solopreneurship and creating impact. So thank you for being a guest on the Business 360 Podcast.

Karan Nijhawan: [00:28:02] Yeah. Thanks for having me, man. And thanks for creating the space for people to learn about not just, you know, what we read in books, but practical takeaways as well. So thank you.

Rushab Kamdar: [00:28:15] Thank you for joining us on the Business 360 Podcast. To learn more about our guests, go to thinkbusiness360.com. In life, I follow two things that keep me grounded. Number one, if you only listen to someone's successes and not their failures, you've only heard half the story and number two, compete with yourself and help everyone else. You stay classy, Business Heroes.

