

## Rod McMillan

**00:02-00:23: GL:**

Hello and welcome back to The Apple Cart. My guest today is Rod McMillan. He is a professional non-exec director, investor, business development and performance improvement specialist. Phew. He is experienced in helping business owners and leaders with strategy, people, organisation, structure, finance and commercial problems resolution.

Rod's obviously always been a high flyer because his bio says that he became a divisional managing director at a small plc at the age of 27. God, that is quite an achievement. I wasn't doing anything like that when I was 27.

So Rod and I met over dinner at a conference in Edinburgh. Rod was there with his lovely driver, I mean, wife, Janet. But I think I really got to know Rod better when he was locked down in Austria during the pandemic. And I think the rarefied air went to his head. And he had a bit of a metamorphosis and became Julie Andrex. But other than that, Rod is a consummate professional!

Rod. Welcome to The Apple Cart. Thank you for being here. How are you doing?

**RMc:** I'm doing good. Thank you very much for inviting me.

**GL:** So your bio is very long, which is astonishing for such a young man. What have been the most valuable lessons do you think that you've learned?

You've been obviously a business owner, but also an advisor. Have you seen things that are similarities, where people make mistakes, or things that people do well that you've noticed over your time?

**RMc:** Yes, I think people do make the same mistakes over and over. I think that my experience, which no one likes to hear, really, is that my business is special. My business is different, my problems are different to everybody else's problems. And so on, and so forth a bit what I, impolitely in the background, call tortured entrepreneur syndrome.

So I think there's a danger that people that are in business, that are trying, striving really hard think that it's all special to them. When actually, quite a lot of the problems are pretty common, to be honest.

**GL:** I've certainly noticed that people seem to be comfortable at asking for help very early on when they're startups, especially if they're new to the whole concept of running a business. But after a year or so, once they get the actual work part of the business sorted.

They don't tend to ask for help because, as you said, they think their business is special and there seems to be a reluctance to be honest. And ask for help. At a point where you could do with help, rather than waiting until things have fallen apart, it's critical. Have you noticed that as a phenomenon?

**03:00-03:01: RMc:**

Yeah, I think I have. Sometimes what they do is special, and sometimes they are special people, but quite a lot of the problems are common. So what you've just described is somebody asking for advice, listening quite carefully, following the advice. Particularly when it's things like, Can you help me to raise money?

So you can raise money and everybody thinks you're brilliant. And then you can help out with some people issues or with long term strategic goals. And then it's very easy for someone to then think, Well, I've done all that. Aren't I brilliant because I've raised this money and I've sorted out all my people? I've got a strategy and what do I really need an advisory person for?

I'm suddenly amazing. Sometimes they are, and sometimes people don't need much more help, but mostly, particularly in startup, they do. But it's this. The reason you would start a startup is because you're confident and you're quite a poised, able person with a clear idea of what to do. And often it doesn't work out like that.

Often the original idea metamorphoses into some other idea that you thought were going to be easier. Difficult things that you thought were difficult are going to be easy. And so it's just a bumpy ride. I think one of the things that none of us understand at the start I certainly didn't was that. It's not just me trying harder, it's going to make the bumpy ride easier.

It's outside factors, who you get advice from, sometimes it's the overall external factors that's not in your control. And that sort of then becomes all about timing, and I think, for me, timing is everything. So people can have a great idea, they can have a great amount of energy, drive and have the right idea at the wrong time.

Or just not able to moderate their idea a bit more. And think about, well, is it the right time for this, or should I be doing this a slightly different way? Or even just waiting, which if you're trying to start up a business, or even if you're trying to develop a well-developed business. Patience isn't really something you come across a lot because people are driven, even if they're detailers and not real flat-out entrepreneurs.

People are impatient and have probably unrealistic goals. Maybe one of the biggest factors that I've seen is people just being unrealistic. And that's the same in very big businesses, medium sized businesses, startups. People are unrealistic about what they're going to achieve.

**05:45-05:54: GL:**

By when I certainly was in my own business, absolutely, yeah, yeah, I think that's right. I mean, when I decided to become self employed, my parents have both run businesses. And my dad said to me, whatever you think, you, your business is going to be now, it won't be in six months' time or a year's time.

And I think you've got to be flexible and adaptable and to realise that. And I think also as to your point about get the advice you get. I had some well meaning advice early on. That didn't work out in the long term. Because it was, why don't you try and do this? and why don't you

try and do that? Which, on the on the surface, seemed like really good advice, but wasn't what I wanted to do.

I could do it, but I didn't want to. And I think you've got to seek out the right, the right kind of people to give you advice. And that's the hard bit, too. Because we've all got a friend who says, Yeah, whatever, we've all got a mum or dad that will say, really. And you also got people that will encourage you massively.

**06:52-07:26: RMc:**

The question is, are they really qualified to be able to help you? And quite a lot of the challenges of being a non exec or being an investor are people saying, Well, what do you really know about my business? to which my answer almost always is nothing.

I was sort of hoping you know about that bit, so they expected me to come along and help you. With the architecture, for example, we're going to be doing. I thought I was helping with finance, strategy and people, and I thought that was what I was here to do.

Yeah, and if I can help you with that, then that would be kind of a use of my skills. But in the tech, and a lot of people make that mistake. Oh, if you don't know about advertising, you can't help me in an advertising business. Well, it's entirely untrue.

And I think that's the where I sort of either stepped forward or stepped away from opportunities, really. Because people that think they're really, really convinced that you've got to be doing what they do. To be able to help in their business or make a contribution, don't really understand the nature of professional advice.

So I've been with a healthcare business, I'm not a doctor, but a private healthcare provider. I was chairman of that for two years to be able to smarten it up and develop it into a business for sale. So there's lots of doctors I helped to appoint.

I did the first interview for a medical director, which sounds a bit like I'm not in the industry. But equally, you know a lot about people, about performance and about how profiles personality profiles, which is a thing that I have a lot of expertise in work. And so if you use personality profiling and you do job profiling, then you can find somebody who's maybe more of a fit for the organisation.

And in the end, all this stuff about getting the right people is all about fit, and we all, when things go wrong, employing people, it's often because they didn't fit. And when things go right because they do fit, yeah, how do you cut through that and make less mistakes, because we all make?

I made horrific mistakes in my own business, with the people stuff, and that's how I got into psychometrics. So somebody just came along from a much bigger business in the city where we were operating and said, Do you need any help? And I said, Well, not really. We're amazing. I mean, I'm 27, 28, I know everything really.

Yeah, and luckily they didn't say, Well, you sound fairly arrogant. I think I'll just leave. And they pushed on the point and said, What do you need help with? What are the problems? What are the things that you really find really difficult?

And our problem is hiring people, and we hired from 30 people to 550 people in less than 10 years. In nine years now. To do that sounds wonderful, but we've made a horrendous mess of it for quite a long time. Until that guy came along, pushed hard on us and really became our advisor.

He didn't want anything, he just worked for a big company locally, he was the director of. That had heard about us and came round to see if we wanted a hand. And that changed my life, absolutely changed my life. He sent his personnel manager, this is how long ago it was.

They were called personnel managers, and the personnel manager came Howard and said. We all really ripped it out of him a bit, to be honest. And I'm quite embarrassed to say that. But this guy was used to it and just said, Well, just fill in the profile. So he did our profiles. And we all went, Oh my god, yeah, this is absolutely incredible.

And one week later, I was in Canada because you could only get trained in Canada in those days. That's where the thing was based. I was there the next week with my finance director going. I've got to learn how to do this, I've got to use this to help me get this whole people thing. And that, I would say, in terms of transformations, that idea of using some kind of science behind the people stuff is a massive part of what's really helped me.

And then I've been able to help other people with it for the last 30 or 40 years. But it was because we were in a mess. I mean, it's very easy to say. We were just amazing, we did everything right, had a great strategy and just became wonderful. The reality is it was a fight, a struggle and the people part of it was very, very difficult.

**GL:** Yeah, and you don't know what might have happened if that guy hadn't offered to help. You wouldn't have continued being amazing if you were struggling with the people.

Well, I don't think we were amazing at that point, really. We were just doing loads of business and scrambling through it. And what would have happened for sure, is that we wouldn't have made it. That business became a management buyout and became a stock market listed company.

But there is absolutely no doubt at all that we wouldn't have made it, we might have stumbled along and sorted it out. Okay, and maybe not gone bust because the market, the timing for the market was good, so we were very, very lucky. But if we hadn't got the people thing right, we could never have grown the business.

And we were in several countries as well, so you've got language differences, but the commonality. The thread amongst it all was. We were all dealing in the same products, that stuff was pretty easy, we were buying from one person and selling to another and counting things a lot.

That wasn't really a very hard business from a technical point of view, you needed to have knowledge, but you could learn the knowledge. It was all about getting people in teams and making people comfortable and creating the circumstances where people feel motivated. I have a massive hobby horse about this motivation thing because people say, oh well, you're really good at motivating people.

And I thought that was true quite a long time. But actually, the reality is that as a leader, what you're trying to do is create circumstances in which the people can become motivated. Because that comes from within and being quite rah-rah about it as we were at the start, that was quite a big mistake.

And if you can imagine we had a business in France, we had a business in Germany going and doing. The American style, British adopted rah-rah routine went down incredibly badly. They just thought we were idiots.

And we had to give them permission to work out how to motivate themselves, how to be motivated, and to listen really carefully for what actually motivated them. As opposed to us thinking that it was something that we had to do to them.

It was something that they had to have within themselves. And finding the right people that were naturally well-motivated people. Probably just to succeed and to just be better than they were was enough, really. We could teach them everything else.

**GL:** Yeah, and it's interesting those personality tests, I've been doing a few of them recently. And there's all kinds of different ones. I've done the I've done one called Motivational Maps, I've done DISC, I've done i3.

And I've recently been reading Gretchen Rubin's Four Tendencies, which I found really interesting. But I think not many businesses are using them even now. I remember early job interviews where I was given one of those sort of psychometric tests.

Where you had to pick your favourite monkey and things like that, which I had never come across, and that was really, really early on. But people don't still don't seem to use them. I think I've only worked with one client who does and it makes a massive difference.

**RMc:** It makes a massive difference. But people are still shy of it for whatever reason. And it's been around forever. I've been around forever in terms of business sense. I'm really old. But I think it's quite incredible how it isn't adopted.

I've got a client who is well, he was 77 last week, so he's even older than me. And he's got absolutely, really excited about using personality profiling in their business and cognitive testing, so they're both parts of the techniques I use. So it's not about it being new or it being a young person thing.

He's a very, very strong venturesome business leader, he's got family business, and he's got other people in the family in the business who aren't the same personality profile as him. And so he spent pretty much all his life being pretty angry about everybody not being like him. And he is a pretty attractive character and he's very dynamic and he's achieved huge amounts.

Built a huge business from 17 years old, when he bought a digger, bought a JCB. Was brought up on a farm and he's built this huge business. But ultimately, what he's come to learn in much later life is that there's a balance of different types of people that will make a good team. And it doesn't matter what technique you use, lots of them are good and lots of them.

It doesn't have to be the thing that I use, I just use things I use, I know it works. And it just tells people about how they innately are as a person and then how they behave. And part of the challenge for people in startups, back to your original question.

And the way that they are trying to progress needs to be within the profile of the person that they naturally are. So be a very venturesome person, have lots of brilliant ideas, so they're going to be a great entrepreneur.

Not necessarily because they're going to have far too many ideas. Potentially rush off and things too much and be what we would all consider to be dynamic. So the end game of that always sounds wonderful when you hear the story afterwards, but there can be all sorts of catastrophes along the way.

And if you've got a certain kind of business that's more technical, then you want somebody that's high. Somebody that's high on attention to detail, good at focusing, good at not being distracted, does things in a methodical, organised, planned way can be just as important as a leader, so if you think about, I don't know, the humility of leadership.

Jim Collins' Good to Great. That kind of thought, which is pretty old hat now, some people might think, but it's all about people leading from the perspective of who they are. Not trying to be some manufactured leader.

And the media don't help us with this, because we all think that the leader is James Dyson, or Richard Branson, or Jeff Bezos, or whatever. Because they get lots of publicity and general media will say, well, this is leadership, and it isn't. So people ask me for years and years, forever, am I able to be a leader with my profile?

To which the answer is always, well. Let's think about what you do and how that fits with your profile. And then, or if it's a startup, what are you trying to do? Don't try and do something that's incredibly venturesome.

If you are a technical specialist, do something to do with being a fantastic technical specialist and get somebody else in your team to do the ventures and stuff. Yeah, no, that makes complete sense. So if you're, if you're looking for a company, sorry, the dogs are going mad.

**19:11-19:45: GL:**

If you were looking for a company to invest in or to mentor, what kind of things would you expect them to be doing? What if somebody was thinking about getting a mentor? what? how should they approach? approach a mentor, or an advisor, or even an investor? What would you suggest?

**RMc:** I think it's really hard, first of all, because so many people have asked me that question the other way around. How have I found clients over the last 30 plus years? And the answer is referral.

I've been offered all sorts of stuff. If you get involved with venture capital companies and banks and the like, if you're me, then they'll try and lead you into all sorts of things. But quite a lot of them are often situations they've got themselves into that they'd rather not be in, that they want somebody to help them get out of.

So I've sort of turned down that kind of work for years, forever. But finding people that it might be through an accountant or a lawyer, I suppose that's been quite a successful way. Somebody you trust, it's all about trust.

Nobody's going to listen to a word that I or any other mentor or advisor's got to say if you don't trust them. And often the trust will come from somebody else. So it might be a bank, it might be more likely a solicitor or an accountant, or just somebody else who's in business.

They say, I've worked with so and so and I found them really great. I always have done half, I always say half a day, but it's usually a day with somebody to work out whether we really like each other. Fundamentally, if somebody thinks they're going to work with me over the years.

And they're waking up in the morning thinking, Oh God, it's him coming today, then that's when we need to have a little conversation about not doing it anymore. And equally, I wake up and I've got to get up at five o'clock in the morning to fly to so and so, to see such and such. And it really hacks me off.

Then I should be telling them and saying, Look, I don't think this is for me. So I think if you start off having, and if somebody won't do that and wants to charge you for an initial consultation, I would run a mile. I think if anybody wants to speak down to you or tell you what you should do, shutting people is hopeless. We all know that.

Really, when somebody says, well, you should do this, you should do that, well, yeah. What you need to do is usually turn up, ask loads of questions and listen really carefully to what the person wants. And many, many times I've said to people, I'm not the person for you. I really can't help with this, but I know somebody that is.

So the whole world of referral goes on within mentoring world, consultancy advisory world, non-exec world, which is people referring people. They know. That might be more appropriate to the challenge because occasionally it will be about the technicalities of an industry, not very often.

But if it is, then I'll almost certainly know somebody that is a specialist in that area. But it might be that they need a lawyer, not a consultant or a mentor. It depends, you know, my way into clients.

I mean, one in particular is a fantastic client. I really loved working with them, I did it for eight years, I was chairman of their business. It all started with a huge commercial dispute where they said to me, Oh, these guys have got this huge commercial dispute. Do you think you could sort it out?

And just like when I was 27, I still think I can do everything, but I've got a bit more cautious. And said, Well, I don't know, but I'll go and see them and have a chat and see if I can help. And it actually wasn't that hard to sort out. But it was a huge problem and it was a massive financial problem to them if it went wrong.

And so that created a level of trust and I suppose a working relationship from that. That made us have other conversations about, well, how are you getting on with your advisors? how are you getting on with your non-exec chairman? How's the business developing?

And that turned into a fantastic piece of work for me, and I'm pretty sure for them, you know, we achieved amazing things together. And the timing was right. So I got them to use Predictive Index, which is my psychometrics and cognitive testing. So we used that and used it throughout the business.

And that kind of opened their eyes to a whole world that they didn't realise was there. But you're right to say, people generally, for whatever reason, don't use that stuff. And they grow slower and are less self-aware.

A lot of leaders that think they're entrepreneurs, that think that they want to start a business are not necessarily that self-aware. And so their perception is their reality, but then there's everybody else around them and their perceptions of their reality.

So kind of putting that into some kind of context that says, well, you're more like this, and they are more like that. And they might be your customers or your suppliers or whatever. So you can think about everybody you come across in terms of, well, what is their fundamental driver, what's their profile?

So a technical business will often be dealing with technical people supplying technical products, and you need a lot of technical chat. So we've got to match that, we've also got to think, well, how am I going to make my business successful?

And generally, it might not be just knowing a lot of stuff, it might be a bit more than that. So then how are we going to find those people? Well, I would say it, wouldn't I, but I would go and search in the market for the kind of person that's the right fit.

That probably isn't you, so in profile terms, so then that means that you're looking to build a balanced team. Whatever the terminology is doesn't really matter. But you're able to accept

into your world somebody that's completely different to you, driven completely differently to you. And people are either fearful of that and want to be in charge of everybody.

So that's a Achilles heel, or they're saying, as I did very early on, I'm not actually very good at quite a lot of things. I need to find some people who are really good at the stuff that I'm not very good at and surround myself with. With people that know things, or have abilities or knowledge, or skills, or intelligence, or just basic human behaviour, that's different to me.

And realise also how, as a leader, you might be pretty annoying to quite a lot of people. When I was a managing director age 27, trust me, I was very, very annoying, and I'm still pretty annoying now. But the average, the average person in that business, was probably in the early 50s. I was 27 in a traditional business where I think I'm amazing.

I've been appointed to run the business and the rest, they're just out there going. Who is this idiot? And I was appointed because I got a lot of energy and a lot of drive. And the business was really struggling. So, in a way, the holding company weren't taking that much of a risk. I thought it was because I was amazing.

And they knew that I thought I was amazing, so that sort of worked until I realised. Well, these guys that are in the business, they know what they're doing, but they're not about to change. And they're not about to do the things that I think should be done in the business.

And it lasted about two years before I was very lucky and got recruited into technology, and the rest is history. But it was a good experience, but it was an extremely painful experience for them.

And it was a painful experience for me too, because I just couldn't get stuff done. Because people, well, you don't really understand, they didn't say because you look like a child, but that's what they really meant.

And it didn't help that I didn't realise that PR was a bad idea then either. So there were articles in the local and in a sort of big regional paper saying, You know, young, hand on the tiller. And it was like, Oh God, so I cringe really thinking about it now.

But it was a great opportunity and I was, you know, I was thrilled to have the opportunity, of course. But all it did really was become a stepping stone to something a bit more sensible. And something where I'd learned the lesson that you need a lot of people around you that know stuff.

**GL:** Yeah, yeah, very definitely. Now when you and I meet in real life, it's normally at conferences. Why would you recommend business owners attend conferences? Both industry specific and wider conferences on things like marketing and business? What do you get out of conferences and what do you think other business owners can get from them?

**RMc:** I think they're hugely important. I'm a lifelong learner. I love going to anything new, I'm just listening to what's going on and thinking, Wow, I don't know anything about that, and I think that's true. And I think if you don't feel like that, you probably shouldn't be going.

Because it probably means you think you've cracked it, and none of us have ever cracked it, far from it. But I think also the face-to-face networking has become vital. I think in the Covid years and in the internet years, and in the I don't really want to talk to another human being years.

But different generations, I think, particularly the younger generations, genuinely find that hard, genuinely don't have that much experience of it. So it's easy to write them off. Oh, they're very immature to older age, blah, blah, blah. And be critical about it. But they actually do need face time, and they do need to learn how to do that.

I'm always amazed by how much they know, you know, my grandchildren, from 16 years old down to eight. I mean, I'm amazed how much they factually know. They make a lot of stuff up too. But generally, younger people in business are pretty strong on knowledge and pretty strong on skills, and often are very intelligent.

But they're often not so great or don't feel so comfortable. Interrelating with other people and understanding that has huge value. So if you're going to build a team, you need to be able to understand people and to understand people, you need to be able to be comfortable.

Or even if you're uncomfortable, just go and do it and be uncomfortable because you're still going to do it. And I think it's a great forum for that. So I think there's a kind of, I don't think anybody think, oh, I'll go to a conference because I need to get better at meeting people.

I'll go to a conference for a technical reason, or to learn more about marketing, or whatever, whatever. But I do think that the side effect of it is much bigger than people realise, which is, oh, wow, I actually, I feel quite good about it.

It will come away feeling good, Why do I feel good? I've learned things and I've met probably more interesting people in one day. That are like me, that have the same interests as me, that have the same worries as me, that are neurotic about the same things as me. Whatever, and I've done more of that probably in one day than I do in the whole of the rest of the year. Put together, so it's essential.

**31:15-31:46: GL:**

Yeah, I would agree, and just a complete aside, just what you were saying there about younger people and interpersonal skills. It seems that that's one downside of working from home is that you lose that opportunity to be in an office environment.

Now I've been self-employed for a decade, the thought of being in an office makes me cringe. But those formative years, in offices and dealing with people of different generations and with different backgrounds and experiences, it's invaluable.

And it's a shame that people aren't (experiencing that). It sounds nice to work from home, and it is, but you do need that, especially if you want to be a leader. I think,

**RMc:** I think it's true across every aspect of life. Actually, so informal chit chat is actually really quite important, as well as standing at the coffee machine talking about, Well, I've got a problem with this. Oh, I'll certainly know about that. Or just watching what other people do.

All of those things are important Going to a shop and checking out goods yourself without speaking to another human being is a wonderful idea for saving money on wages, but it's a catastrophic idea for the needs of a human being. People need to interact.

I think we've all learned through Covid that, yeah, working from home can be great. And it can be great if you're in a technical job. Being able to focus and really get your head down and get stuff done. And it can also very quickly feel very isolated, so I don't like working from home, particularly, I like getting off my backside and going to see people.

I do board meetings online and it's been wonderful because I live out of the country a lot of the time, or 50 of the time. So it's wonderful that my clients let me do board meetings online. And they've all got used to that.

Probably because Covid pushed us all into doing FaceTime and people chatting to their family or chatting to their grandkids or whatever. And so that's transferred back into business after years and years of business resisting it. So that's all great, but there's no replacement for being face-to-face with people.

And if you're trying to learn in a business, you learn so much subliminally, you don't know you're learning it. It's just being in the same room, or even in the same building as people. Having lunch with somebody can be just as important as continual professional development and doing things from a technical point of view correctly.

So I think it's a big factor. I'm not convinced that even hybrid working for certain jobs is as great an idea. But then you see financial institutions just try to force people to go back to the office for no apparent reason.

Just because they like to control people, they want to tell people what to do, they're autocratic organisations. They don't trust the people, and their people don't trust them. You look at all the fuss that went on with, I think it was the J.P. Morgan people in particular.

They kicked up a massive fuss quite rightly and suddenly went, Hang on a minute. I'm commuting as well as doing an 80 to 90 hour week. But J.P. Morgan's view was a bit, Oh yeah, but we're paying you a lot of money and they're going, yeah, but I want to have a life.

And I've just found out what a life is from working from home. So I think they've worked that out, but I think they've had to listen very carefully to each other about how to work that out. And I think quite a lot of financial services businesses are still, and professional services businesses are really struggling with it.

Because they think it's all about if I can't see them, they're not doing anything. I think it's pretty tragic. Because if that's the relationship you've got with somebody in your organisation, as an employee, you need to be thinking about whether you're in the right place. And as an employer, you need, well, you need to think about that.

**GL:** Yeah, I agree. So you have been in business 30 to 40 years, which is astonishing because you don't look old enough. But obviously one of the things that's ensured your success is trying new things and being a bit different.

What have you done, or what would you say to people to be a bit more creative? I know you dabbled with vlogging for a while. Which I think was looked like fun from where we were all sitting. What would you say to people to encourage them to be a bit more adventurous and a little bit more creative with their approach to business?

**36:00-36:31: RMc:**

Well, I think vlogging was an interesting idea because it was Marcus Sheridan and Brian Fanzo who, no, Brian Fanzo pressed the damn button a few years ago. And actually, it was a great lesson in just trying something and saying, right. You're going to do 100 vlogs in 100 days, and you're not going to stop.

You're going to keep going, you're not going to edit, and you will get better to camera if you do that. And that's been employed in quite a few businesses I've worked with where people have gone. Oh, that's just not my kind of thing.

I don't really like it. Do it, you know, anybody can speak to a camera. And if you look at the first ones, then look at the last ones, you'll see the difference. So I think you push yourself quite hard on things like that. I think it's dangerous to for people to try and do things that make them feel super uncomfortable.

So be a leader. Well, what does that really mean? I mean, that could mean that you're very quietly doing a lot of things that you know about. To be able to help other people, teach them, train them, whatever for them to go and get results out there. In the real world, it might be with who look at me, I'm a leader.

I think that's you've got to be very careful with that. But I think ultimately, people cannot exist outside their natural personality profile for too long without putting themselves under pressure. So the people bit is actually quite easy, yeah, to be more inhibited or more outgoing, you can learn to do that.

And it doesn't put you under that much pressure. People will say, always say, I hate networking. Do you? Do you? You hate being with other human beings that much that you can't actually do it?

You just don't like the idea of some kind of false situation where you're having to chat to people you don't know. But you can do it otherwise. Nobody's ever go to school or hate networking, I've got to be with other children at school.

We can get through that. But I think if it's something like being venturesome, or being more cautious, or being good at detail. Or wanting to focus on one task for a long time, or being able to juggle lots of things.

You need to be really careful not to put yourself in a situation where the demands of what you do make you do things that you don't like doing. We all end up doing the things we like doing. I don't like doing detail. I have tonnes of people around me that do loads of detail.

I can do detail when it applies to me, I can do the detail really well. Under pressure, I don't wake up in the morning and say, Ooh, let's open some spreadsheets and have a thrilling day. I do not, some people do think that.

And that's great, so I'm surrounded myself with lots of people that are good at those things. But I think it's really important to feel motivated and to get yourself on that journey. Think about Maslow's hierarchy of needs and getting to self-actualization. How do you do that?

You do things that you like doing that you are good at, that motivate you to drive yourself, you do not set yourself a whole bunch of things that you go. No God, that's still on my list, and it's on your list, even if it's top of your list all week.

It's on your list because you really don't like doing it, and you're really, probably not very good at it. And the less you do it, the longer not being very good at it will last. And maybe doing that thing needs to be delegated to somebody else.

Or needs to be less of your life and more of your life needs to be the things that you. You'll be great at stuff if you do the things you like doing. Yeah, look at kids, how do we all develop as kids? How do we develop into what we are and what we do?

By doing more of the stuff that we like and less of the stuff that we don't like. Not very complicated, but I think that's very true of people's roles and responsibilities in a business. And a business leader who thinks, But I want to be successful? Well, what does that actually mean? So you've got to define that.

How long is it going to take you? And usually it takes a lot longer than people think. How much crap are you prepared to put up with along the way? Well, I don't want any of that. Well, you're going to get loads of it.

So, you know, get real, there's going to be a bumpy road. You are not going to succeed by not working hard, and you're not going to succeed by thinking everything's going to be easy. That's just you might. You might be really lucky, but I wouldn't be betting on that. Being sort of master plan for success and success can just be feeling really satisfied with where you are in your life, doing what you're doing.

That might be working independently by yourself, with no employees. No, I do what I do with no employees. I have lots of people that are employees in other people's organisations that do all sorts of things that are to do with what I do. But I don't employ anybody and I'm not

interested in employing anybody. And actually, I was probably a fairly poor... not probably. I was definitely a poor day-to-day manager, but a good leader.

I think people have got to understand the difference between management skills. I massively admire people that are good at day-to-day management. I was not good at it, I was good at leading, I was good at motivating.

I was good at being motivated and creating the circumstances, I said at the start. But I wasn't a good, consistent day-to-day manager. I was, too. I was not consistent enough. Consistency is a skill that doesn't often come with very venturesome people.

Venturesome people are that people would think are natural. Leaders are often quite fragile themselves, are not as confident as they appear, want to drive results and can't understand why everybody else doesn't get it like they do, etc. etc.

And they can implode with driving themselves far too hard from that point of view, not realising everybody doesn't have to be like them.

**42:27-42:47: GL:**

Yeah, I think that's really good advice. Rod. I'm very conscious of the time and I'm very grateful and appreciative of your time this morning. And I'm sure you've got lots of busy things to be doing. Where can people find out more about you?

If they wanted to connect, if they wanted to hear about the things that you do to support businesses, where should they be looking?

**42:48-42:51: RMc:**

All my stuff's on LinkedIn. I don't look at it anywhere, I don't use LinkedIn anywhere, as much as I probably should. I don't look at it that often either. But all my details are there and people can even find things like my phone number and phone me up. I know it's a bizarre idea.

Sometimes people do, it's quite amazing. So yeah, and I sort of always put my details on everything that I do to say, here's my email address, here's my phone number. If you want something, even if you want somebody to say.

Actually, that's the most daft idea I've ever heard of, or that's incredible. Let's have a chat about it, just phone me up and have a talk. I much prefer that to people sending emails or even contacts over LinkedIn because it's all got a bit old hat.

I probably don't talk enough. My phone rings used to ring sort of 20 times an hour at the start of my career, and if it rings once a week now, it's like, What's going on? Who's that?

**43:55-44:06: GL:**

Yeah, if a phone rings, it's usually my husband's lost the door key and he's locked out. He's on his way back from a dog walk and he's forgotten the key. Yeah, otherwise, yeah, we don't ring each other, yeah.

**44:06-44:13: RMc:**

Well, I do phone when I don't know where the driver is. I'm like, come on, I'm supposed to be somewhere. Where are you? Oh, slacking.

**44:13-44:22: GL:**

Slacking, No shocking, you literally can't get the staff.

**RMc:** No, you can't. Day-to-day management skills are slipping, you see. Yeah, exactly, ask her about it, she's not a fan.