**Kate & Kieran Moriarty Interview Transcript – Ep 21**

**Matt** [00:00:00] Welcome to this episode of Power Up Your Business podcast. I'm your host, Matthew Jones, founder and owner of Cube Performance, where we work with tradie business owners, assisting them, guiding them, coaching them, mentoring them to ensure that they build a business that serves themselves so that they earn more in their pocket, work less, and ultimately create a great lifestyle for themselves and their family. As part of our Power Up Coaching program, one of the key fundamentals in the key value drivers is our community of like-minded clients, who really help each other grow, sharing tips, tricks and everything in between, offering support and the key thing is having a community that has an abundance mentality where with that abundance mentality, people are happy to share. There's enough for everyone, as opposed to some communities and some people, they work off that scarcity mentality where it's all about them and they don't want to share. So the key thing out there is be involved with like-minded communities, like-minded people with an abundance mentality, and that will help you on your journey that will definitely speed up your journey to success or achieving those goals that you want to achieve. Now, in this episode, it's an awesome episode. We talk with one of our clients on board since 2020. Kate and Kieran Moriarty from KPM Plumbing based in Brisbane. Similar journey to most business owners starting in 2014 with 100 bucks in the kick and now on the journey through to now, developing and building a business that's turning over more than 3 million, but more importantly, driving profitability. And more importantly, they've now put systems in place. They've built a strong culture, a strong team. They're working with key A-class commercial clients and they are now really positioned over working hard over the last three years through the Power Up program. They are now positioned to really flourish over the next decade and that's the key thing where you'll hear how they persevered, got out of their comfort zone, made some really key changes to ensure that their marriage survived. Before coming on board with us, six years frustrating, no time, no holidays, it's stress talking business at the dinner table all the time, whereas now stress is minimised. It's all about balance and it's all about excitement for the future. So really enjoy this conversation with Kate and Kieran. I know I really enjoyed this conversation. And again, I think it's very relatable for most people and especially husband and wife teams. Cheers. [00:02:48]Your here to change your life. Because there's too much on the line. You're sacrificing a shit load now, and your family need to benefit. You gotta make learning a passion for yourself. The clicker for me, I came to realise that, Hey, I've got to get better at business. [19.3s] Kate and Kieran, awesome to have you on board this episode of the podcast. I know it has been in the last six months trying to get you on board so good to finally have you on board.

**Kieran** [00:03:26] Thank you very much, Matt. We really appreciate it.

**Kate** [00:03:28] Thanks for having us.

**Matt** [00:03:29] And just as a side note, your set up is unbelievable in terms of your podcast. Mic, speakers, you look enormous and I can't wait for your own sideline podcast to be soon released. But that will be for another time that will be for another time so very good.

**Kieran** [00:03:45] Thank you very much. We'll plug it at some stage.

**Matt** [00:03:48] Plug it at some stage, put like a little subtle plug in there. Kate and Kieran, you got a great story, business story. And like in most tradie businesses, there are the ups and downs. And I know that when we first come in contact with each other, I think it was around 2017 where you came to one of our business training sessions that we hosted for Reece, and then since 2020, been jumped on board as a client, which has been great. So for the last three years that's been great to have you on board as a client, valuable member of our community but just give us a bit of an update or give the listeners a bit of an update of your journey. When you started, how that looked like through to sort of when we started working together.

**Kieran** [00:04:32] So we started in 2014, just a bit before that I was a sole trader and then rolled into the company structure of KPM Plumbing and we started with $100 in the business account that $100 was for the first tank of fuel, and then we'll get into sort of go on from there. So that was 2014 and just was out slogging it very much that tradie mindset just got to be busy, got to say yes, got to be trying to do all facets of plumbing like roofing. And it's like, I've never really done much roofing, but yes, I'll do it, you know, it's got to pay. And then we slowly sort of, you know, push past that and got into a bit of residential and started getting a bit of traction with key builders and getting a couple of staffing on board. And we were still just constantly sort of churning the wheels like we weren't really seeing like a really good financial backing from that like lifestyle. It was just like hand to mouth, sort of, you know, sometimes I just sort of come home to like, what are we doing, like is this going to be feasible for longevity? So yes, that was, we were going through that and I came to one of your first ones with Reece came along and walked away and I thought, that's great, you know, and I just I thought that was for like a big corporation to sort of engage their employees for that, not like a one-man or a two-man band. So I sort of walked away and I was like, oh, that's good. You know, I couldn't really justify it at the time. If I knew what I knew now, I would have 100% got involved back then, because it probably would have saved me a lot of blood, sweat and tears. So but anyway, you got to live that journey and make the mistakes and sort of learn from them. So I mean, yes, in 2020 we sort of rekindled our relationship back then we kind of just got, we tied the knot.

**Kate** [00:06:38] So did Kieran and I actually.

**Kieran** [00:06:40] Kind of just tied the knot as well and that was a big thing, you know, like we sort of looked at that as a. Kat, we've come together. We're married, and I just, I didn't want to our marriage, our relationship, suffering from what the business was doing day-to-day.

**Kate** [00:06:57] We were lost on our numbers, weekends went weekends.

**Kieran** [00:07:01] I would be working Saturday, Sunday during the week, like just crazy hours.

**Kate** [00:07:07] Winning all these jobs, but just kind of not really seeing like the fruit from it.

**Kieran** [00:07:13] And it was like it was a big thing like we'd sort of been really moved out of that residential market and we were sitting in a commercial market and contracts were a lot tighter, admin was a lot more heavy. And we just probably had that residential mindset of, you know, like you do the job, get paid, and it was like all of a sudden it's like, holy hell, what's our retention? Oh, they are holding, you know, 10% of the projects on me now. oh my God, we've got a massive tax bill. Like, where did that come from? And just not having the right guidance at the time in and around our numbers, it was just, it was wild times. Like I sit here now thinking back at that and like now and like I must say, you know, some of the guys that worked with us through their journey, you know, like I commend them because there were some pretty wild times, you know, stuff that, you know, like it was just hand to mouth.

**Kate** [00:08:10] Everyone always got paid, we did not miss a pay day.

**Kieran** [00:08:15] Never ever like that, it's just like office, it's like I'd mean, like, you know, even from just the little things from, like, timesheets, like texting times or just, you know, uniforms when people start, like now it's like this process of someone starting and it's just like, oh I've never had that experience before. Like, I've got uniforms, I've got, you know, company inductions, I've got, you know, like it's not clunky anymore. It's like we've got everything on file.

**Kate** [00:08:42] We have a paper trail of everything now. People are actually getting job descriptions with KPIs. People are, you know, people signed a contract before, but I don't think there was really a lot of meaning to that contract. It was really like, you're an employee of KPM and you know, this is how many weeks notice you need to give if you do choose to leave us. And it was just a few sentences, really and there was nothing behind it.

**Matt** [00:09:08] It's all about compliance.

**Kate** [00:09:10] Yes and then we were wondering we were employing people, but not really getting probably the best out of them. And people were leaving us really quickly not that we were nasty to them or anything, but I just, I think we were just lost on the way we do it here.

**Kieran** [00:09:27] Yes and then yes that is like ideally, you know, we have brought that in and it gives the guys that confidence out on site to make those calls and then it gives, you know, on our side and it gives us confidence to, you know, be like, hey that's not the way we do it here. And really, if for disciplining like it makes it, it's just a clear line in the sand for us. So and yes, we were very lost at times.

**Kate** [00:09:53] Also with the way we do it here, it harmed us both particular you Kieran, you were there day-to-day doing it, calmed you down a lot as well. There was no, oh why haven't you done this and this that and the other. It kind of takes all of the emotion and stress out of it because you've got this very powerful document or really something you're living out and you can constantly choose whichever dot point you want from that value and say, hey, you're not owning it here and it doesn't need to be this, oh, why did you do that? And, you know, get all emotion filled, it kind of takes the emotion out and you just literally stick to the facts.

**Matt** [00:10:29] It's about the choice.

**Kate** [00:10:30] Yes, it's about the choice.

**Matt** [00:10:33] And again, just to elaborate that to probably all of our listeners, Kieran got a little bit of red in his hair so can get a little bit of fire in the belly at different times where in the old tradie mindset, which we're all guilty of and especially when you get that, you just employ someone, you just expect him to hit the ground running, you expect and why don't you get that right? Why do I need to tell you twice? It's just all this ridiculous expectation. And coming back to what you're saying, Kate, I am a nice guy, but why aren't people wanting to stick around? Why is it so hard to get people and this is where a lot of people are finding now, especially in the climate where they realise they got to change their tack, as a leader and how they recruit and coming back to it, setting real clear expectations and KPIs, good people want to know what they need to do. Good people want to know that they're actually achieving on a day-to-day basis and they're hitting clear KPIs that creates that set up within the workforce. So you've done and this is where you've done a great job in terms of turning that around. And so in six years, 2014 kicked off, 2020 and coming back to some of the points that you made prior to the podcast, just going through that frustration, feeling like spinning the wheels for no reason, no financial reward, lost on the numbers, no clarity on the numbers, Kieran constantly putting out fires, no sharing the load. So it's all about you, Kieran, it's all about me, can't share the load, no delegation, no free weekends, no downtime, limited family, friend time. I feel like we could never shut off and stress levels were always through the roof. So when we frame that for that six years, that's how we frame it is that you were enslaved to the job. Agree?

**Kieran** [00:12:19] I was probably looking for an early heart attack, to be honest, just in terms of those crazy stress levels that I was facing every day.

**Matt** [00:12:29] And that's when we talk about that enslaved the business where in 2014 you open, starry eyed going, I'm good for this. We're going to be good. I'm going to have more time and more money, 2014 and that's what you're expecting, six years later, less time, less money. And I do remember when we jumped on board and started in 2020. Well, I think one of the pretty much the first thing that came out of your mouth, Kate, was like, we've got to change. Otherwise, this marriage or the marriage is not going to last, newly married, ready to go, want the relationship first and foremost, not to suffer. And that's what happens a lot of time when it's all about work, work, work. And there's no clear definition of what we're about in roles and responsibilities and goals going forward, the relationship can often suffer. And so it's good to see you are still thriving and you've got baby number one.

**Kieran** [00:13:28] Baby number one.

**Kate** [00:13:29] He's got a little bit of red in his hair as well.

**Matt** [00:13:34] Oh, you got some good times ahead, good times.

**Kate** [00:13:37] Yes, lucky me.

**Matt** [00:13:39] So awesome, so six years, cool, needed a change, which is great, great thing about looking in the mirror, which a lot of people don't do. A lot of people don't accept that you know what, I need help. I can't keep going like this and I'm prepared for a change. Credit to both of you for making that change. And then so since 2020, again, just coming through a few things that we've implemented as you've listed and it's amazing when you do look back at the list of all the things that you've implemented, as part of the coaching, the mentoring, our tools like the way we do here, which is clearly defining your culture and what we just talked about before, your values and the choices that need to be made. Removing emotion, it's all about choice, profit and loss, sales, pipeline, cash flow forecasting, using Xero successfully, employing again really effectively, employ slow, fire fast prove our delegation and your leadership is a big thing. I think we need credit for Kieran, you know, in terms of the growth in your leadership has been massive, which is then rolled into that, been able to present to the team, professionally present to the team. This is where people out there listeners out there, as a trade business you got to be able to present and articulate messages really clearly to your team. You need to connect with your team, which you've done really well with that. The one-on-one reviews, the conversation documents, which again it really builds in really clear trust. You're getting a better connection and loyalty with the team. And then the good thing too, which you put down there is that it's enabled you. All of this pretty much has enabled you to remain calm and remove that emotion and think clearly rather than sort of being reactive. And we talk about sometimes on the journey and I'll touch on a little bit about the fantastic last financial year and some of the results there. But we do know sometimes even though you're putting in the work, you don't often get the results right. You don't often get the results, but this is where we need to remain calm now and focus on the process and the positioning that we know we're doing the work. Stay focused on that, stay calm, keep doing the work and the results will come and that's full credit to you in terms of remaining calm and not being reactive. But to me, taking a breath now, going through all those key things, yeah. How is it for you? What would you like again, achieving all of that and looking back on all the things that you've implemented, it's pretty impressive.

**Kieran** [00:16:02] Yes, it's been huge, like all that when we started rolling everything in and the team members that were with us previous to the Cube and they've, you know, they've grown with us and they've seen the opportunity and the path that we are taking, it is just like it's sort of like all sort of, you know, looked across and gone, hey, this is something that we want to be a part of, like Kieran and Kate are taking the time to invest in us and, you know, training and the one-on-ones like all these takes time and effort out of your day. But you've got to make sure you're making and this is and Kate always says it to me like you stick to those rocks, you have those meetings that's a priority, that's, you know, you have to have that. And it really I think with the guys, it really I think, oh, he's making time for me. Like I know that it might be, you know, 10 minute or 20 minute meeting, but you have to sit down with them because what you get out of that afterwards is huge for six, seven months. You know, they really want to keep on striving forward with it.

**Kate** [00:17:09] I think feeling valued is just so important. And I mean Kieran and I can even reflect on jobs we've had in the past and, well, particularly me, I'm a schoolteacher and schools that I've worked at where I've felt valued by my principal and by the admin team, I have wanted to work so much harder for them and for my students. So I think really putting all of these things in place and making our staff feel valued and, you know, taking a real interest in them and giving them as much professional development as possible has really made them think, oh, Kate and Kieran care about me and I want to grow in this business, grow for them, grow for me. And yes, we found there's been a lot of success even from that. And I think when we did start rolling some of these things out, like the Way We Do It Here started to do some presentations with the team. And fortunately, while some of the staff thrived on this and thought, wow, this is where I want to be, we also had a little bit of a period where we lost some staff because they thought, no, I don't really want to be in a business where maybe they felt they were being watched or I'm not sure. And also I guess with presentations and one-on-ones, they can be a little bit daunting sometimes for some people. But yes, I think is what it's really helped us.

**Kieran** [00:18:28] Yes, 100%.

**Matt** [00:18:29] Well I think coming back to the Way We Do It Here and glad that you touched on that and just for everyone out there, the Way We Do It Here is our framework where everyone in our community rolls out very clear document about our vision, our aspirational vision of where we want to go as a company, our promise, what we deliver on out for our customers every day, and then our values, which is our choices. What that does is when you roll that out, some people, if they don't believe in it, what it does is it actually puts pressure on. So if you think of it, generally when you go to an organisation, tradie mindset organisation, there's no structure there, it's just get to work. There's no clear framework and people can hide. They can hide in corners, they can hide in the shadows, or when the boss comes, they look active and yes, yes. And then team-mates maybe, you know, see people they're getting away with it. They are just put left to their own devices, basically but what we do with the Way We Do It Here where it's team buy-in, we put pressure on so we're actually squeezing it in. Now people don't want to be squeezed if they don't believe in it and they will pop, they will leave. It's that short-term pain that we need to get rid of people and if every organisation that don't believe in it, so short-term pain, oh shit, you know, I really need that extra pair of hands, but long-term you're a lot better off. And the cool thing what you're doing is because you're putting that framework in the way we do it here gives people, especially those who believe in it, confidence, enthusiasm that I can own this. I can make choices. We're all buying this together. Collectively, we're ready to push through a wall together because we're all together as a team, which is great. And it just, again, enables you to push through. And I know you did some great projects up in regional or north Queensland that you weren't there for a large part of it, but your team were able to thrive on the Way We Do It Here and make the right choices because they are all inducted, bought into it, believe that this is the way we do it here.

**Kieran** [00:20:24] Yes.

**Matt** [00:20:25] And that's enabled you to help your leadership, be calm and composed again, remove emotion, because it's not about personality. It's about choices. So it's really, really powerful and again, when you do bring in that coach, which you've seen and like when you bring it in, some people don't want to buy into it, but at least so it pulls a Band-Aid off.

**Kieran** [00:20:44] Yes that has been one of those things with those guys that have left. And yes, it's given the other people that are who are keen and want the opportunity to thrive within so it's been really good.

**Matt** [00:20:59] And then it allows now when you're doing presenting, when you're up in front of the room, there's nothing worse. I'm just going to say from my perspective there is nothing worse. When you're up presenting, you're prepared, you're ready to go, and the people in the room are not engaged. And I've done this hundreds of times where you just are saying; I've wasted my frickin time. What am I doing? Nothing worse, it's the same thing as a business owner and a leader and you're talking to a crew of one, three, ten, and you know that half the people there are folding their arms and sitting back and not engaged. It's really deflating.

**Kate** [00:21:34] And especially when you put so much time and effort into it and you rehearse it because as you say, piss poor preparation leads to piss poor performance. So that's always in our minds.

**Matt** [00:21:49] You got to own it. You got to be great at preparation and what we say, if you don't take it seriously, no one else is going to take it seriously. And it starts with the preparation and the rehearsing. So now you get in that stage where it's so great, it's exciting when you are, you've done a great preparation and you're standing up in front of your team and you know everyone in that team are leaning forward and they're engaged. So how does that feel?

**Kieran** [00:22:13] It's rewarding, like for Kate and I, it's like that hard work is paying off.

**Matt** [00:22:20] And it's not a quick fix. It's not a quick fix. How many, again, are the ups and downs and how many times you said Jonesy, you know, this is not working. It's just like stick to the process. And we talk about that latent potential, everyone in life, you make a change. You do some training, you do a presentation. You expect it to go up straightaway. We know it's going to go down. You've got to stay persistent, stay patient, and the rewards are there. And then fast tracking now, when we talk about the rewards as a credit to you winning one of our Power Up awards, our community Power Up awards for nailing it in an unbelievable year so essentially you double that turnover. And just for everyone out there going from where that one 1.5 million to over 3 million and more importantly, profitability, operating profitability has increased by about 28%, 30%, which is huge. And this is a key thing all the while doing that and delivering that capacity, operating at a totally different level. Operating at that calmness, being able to still again focus on, you know, family time like you talk about it, weekends is your time, going on holidays, all these key things right that I remember that was not happening beforehand. And I think one of the first things I said, well, I think one of the first things I said, I said, you're going to lock a holiday in now, right now.

**Kate** [00:23:48] Another thing I really recall you saying that which I loved and I used many times was that you're not a brain surgeon, Kieran. You're not that important that was a really good one, particularly that first year, two year and a half working with you. You don't need to do it all. You don't need to like, put out all the fires you can delegate, you can trust. And yes that's important that message of you're not a brain surgeon like the people will survive. It'll be fine. I love that.

**Matt** [00:24:22] People need to realise they're not that important.

**Kieran** [00:24:24] Yes.

**Matt** [00:24:26] It's not life or death

**Kieran** [00:24:27] It was always hard for me to let go that's one thing.

**Kate** [00:24:31] Still working on that.

**Kieran** [00:24:34] Still working on that and that's something that I just, you know, I just hug this business every day and it's like, it's my baby, and, you know, but I've also got a real baby that I need to spend time with also. But I am super involved. I just sometimes probably overextend myself.

**Kate** [00:24:57] But I think the difference now, though, is that you have weekends. We do take family holidays. When you're home, you switch off. So although you still feel that way. So many changes have been made. And I think that remaining calm, that has just been the biggest thing for us because there isn't really stress in our family, like in home time anymore. You know, we're not going, oh no, what if this person doesn't pay and this and that and or staffing or these, like we still have stresses. Everyone has stresses, but it's just all about no, just trust in the process. It's going to be fine. We're keeping to our rocks. We're following the Way We Do It Here. You know, we have faith in our numbers. Our numbers are all tracked and I think it just keeps you very calm.

**Kieran** [00:25:42] Yes because you can't do anything about it. You know, at the end of the day, like, they're your numbers and, you know, what are doing forward, what you're doing day-to-day, you just you stick by it. And if something completely leftfield happens, you can't do anything about that. You just got to keep on going on.

**Matt** [00:26:02] As a business owner, we can do our best from forecasting, predicting, analysing, which gives us a calm. But like you said, there are some things there, left of field like COVID as an example, or floods, you can't predict that. You've just got to roll with it. You can't get upset with it; you just got to roll with it. Okay, this is placed in front of me. This is the next challenge. Let's work through it. Let's, as you say, Kate, stick to our rocks, our success habits, stick to the process, and we will come through this. And that's where the confidence lies and having those good numbers now that's that peace of mind that we talk about. It's amazing where so many business owners out there are still running blind. I haven't got time to look at the numbers, someone else look at that and you know, again, they go through the whole season, the whole 12 months, let's say we call it the season. You know that 12 months, as we say, they're battling away playing games. They've got no idea if they're winning or losing. You know, sometimes 12 months after the season ends, they work out that shit. What do you mean? I've bashed myself and I've got no money and I've got this massive tax bill.

**Kieran** [00:27:06] And it's so many tradies, you hear it at the suppliers when you go in there. I'm so busy. I'm so busy. And it's like but are you making any money, like, is it even worthwhile because you look pretty terrible, mate, have a sleep.

**Matt** [00:27:22] I really cringe badly when everyone came out of COVID and there was that short supply of trade and there's that catch up effect and everyone busy, busy busy busy but I'm just cringing every time I hear that because I know in the background what's happening. I know what they're going to see. 12 months, six months down the track that there's going to be no reward for it. They've been busy. And what do we say now? We say categorically no, unless it's a hell yes. So the big change, right, is we don't say yes to anyone until they've proven that they're worthwhile being a client that A-class client. And that's another key factor of reducing stress. We've still got the hangover effect for some poor COVID clients that again, you're feeling that lag right now. So just to let you know everyone out there, current job, it's a lag effect. It's really poor. It's sucking a lot of time, energy, money. But that's a lag from a decision made in essentially 2021.

**Kieran** [00:28:31] 2020, like me, you know, it was priced, you know, early 2020, no one saw the inflation of material and just labour rate going through the roof. But that's one of the things you can't, you couldn't predict that and we just we sit back to our numbers and we, we just focus on finishing it and then moving on.

**Matt** [00:28:54] Moving on and then going forward very much, it's definitely a no until it's a hell yes. It's got to be no until proven a yes, which is really key. So I think yes and that's a big part of it from the number and this is where I want to sort of talk about that delegation, which has been hard for you. Now you've done really, really well in building out. You can leave your own board. It really looks after your admin. These are a super talent and you know, like in terms of my dealings her, she's on and you're doing a great job getting her on board. Again, just having that support there too again for Kate that was a big part of your transition, with your full-time role at the time, knowing who do we get in there to help take pressure off you Kate and obviously Kieran and having it where it is now and just having that, again, peace of mind, knowing that Olivia is right across the numbers. How has that just transformed, you know, the information, where you're up to now.

**Kate** [00:29:56] She's an angel. She's amazing. We always say that, I mean, she has helped us so much and just we have so much trust in her because she just gets the job done and she looks like she's really enjoying it as well. I mean, yes, I think the biggest there was, you know, in the employment process that whole hiring slow, there was a period there where, you know.

**Kieran** [00:30:22] We went for a long time.

**Kate** [00:30:23] Without anybody.

**Kieran** [00:30:24] We were talking about we're like she's like we you know, our previous lady had put a resignation in and then we didn't have anyone there but two, three months. And we just were very patient, calm. And we just you know, there were times they were like that. Do we just like, jump the gun?

**Kate** [00:30:44] Should we just employ this person they didn't quite tick all the boxes but because I was also doing full-time teaching at that time as well. So it was quite hard. Kieran was out on site a lot then trying to do his end of the office work. It was just a lot of juggling, but it was, yes, we just had to slow the whole process down. And then Olivia came along and yes; she's been an absolute asset to the company. We gave her a full job description, full KPIs, and I think she also came in going like, this is what's required of me. She was honest with the parts that maybe she thought she wasn't quite trained in, but working with Olivia, ensuring she had adequate training, particularly in ServiceM8 [00:31:28]because she said as many subs, many Xero and things [3.7s] and yes, she's just tackled it all like a pro and also we've kind of created an environment, not kind of, we have created an environment where Olivia also feels comfortable coming to Kieran and I when she's unsure or she needs support in something or she needs more professional development in a particular area as well. So yes, I think that's also a huge credit to you, Matt, and making us aware of the right way to employ and induct people.

**Matt** [00:32:01] Thank you for the kudos there, thank you, I'll take that one but what it is that again that hire slow, fire fast and we see it right now where there's not a large talent pool around. So everyone sort of running around, like with their head cut off just trying to oh, there's a body, let's just employ that person. We're playing a long game. This is not a short game. And to go through the whole process of recruiting, thinking about advertising, interviewing, getting them on board, inducting them, training them in their work, it's a huge process. You've got to get this right because again, you might have that short-term feel of, I've got a pair of hands, but it creates, you know, long-term pain. So we got to do it right. And again, this is where coming back to the job description the function roles, responsibilities, we've got the KPIs, we've got the Way We Do It Here, the induction, everything like that, training and development, it just shows that you care. And this is what is key, which is why a lot of people still don't get and I'll just scratch my head where I still hear round the traps. They should be just happy that they've got a job. They just should get it done. The great thing that you've done with Olivia and your team that you're building is you're setting them up for success. You got to show people that you care. You got to show that this is an organisation that actually wants me to thrive not only in the business, but out of the business. And we talk about it all the time and the key learnings that you've got, you know, we don't work to live. You know, you're a great example of trying to really knowing that you had to put the hand up, we got to change. The goal is to build a business that serves you. The goal is to build a business that creates a legacy and assists everyone, contacts your business and be part of your business. They're a better person at the end of the day; everyone's going to leave. Olivia is going to leave. How often do we say Olivia is going to leave that's just the nature of running a business, the nature of individuals. But when she leaves, you know that she's left a legacy. But she's going to be a better person.

**Kate** [00:34:07] Yes, absolutely.

**Matt** [00:34:09] And that's a great thing, I think that's what's really coming in our community. And as you know, Kieran and Kate, you know, some of the great wins that our community have and you really see the business owners that are investing in their team, they're getting so much satisfaction out of personal growth, personal development, more so out of just completing a job. So it's getting this whole how good is, this is exciting. This is great. We're making a difference here. And what's the by-product of that like you mentioned from the get go, Kieran, investing it, the by-product of that is that they're willing to turn up. They're willing to go to the next level because everyone's doing it. And like he mentioned, Kate too, where I'm happy to do extra because I'm feeling valued. It's a pretty simple human thing, isn't it?

**Kate** [00:34:56] Absolutely.

**Matt** [00:34:57] That's been really, really exciting in terms of that and that overarching that leadership, coming on to it now, like with the as you know, we've just gone through that the team reset and so everyone listening, it's just come to now. February, March 2023, just come out of Christmas time. How important has it been just coming out of that Christmas time, that Christmas period, trying to reset the team, get them refocused on the new year and what we talk about out there, those listening and people tuning in again and first time this but that reset is all about you know, your team members have just come through Christmas. There's a lot of noise they are talking to family over the Christmas dinner table. They're talking to friends. Why should I work? You can do this. You can work for yourself. There's a lot of noise out there on social media. So our strategy is that key time post Christmas team reset. Let's really connect everyone. Let's again show that we're getting an understanding of where they're up to. But more importantly, how are they going, showing that we care. The key thing to it, which we talk about, which aware of, is when you're having these sort of meetings, it's not just having like a usual toolbox talk at the same location. It's about that seriousness and having it at a good location that's conducive to learning, conducive to be a bit more of excitement. And I know that's one thing that, yes, with the new office and other things like that, you know, getting prep so you can have it actually in a good environment. How's it been with your previous presentations that we're beginning to do over time, but how are you feeling with just delivering that and how important for you is it having a nice environment to deliver that in? So as a leader, yes, you can really cut through the message because obviously there are so many messages, so much information now that every individual is getting now right. And I know for myself this is a personal point of view, sometimes it's hard to get to cut through. Like, you know, we'll be having a team meeting or I'll be presenting to people and you can see that there is a ping or a pong or whatever on the phones. And so it's hard to get the message through but what are you doing to really make sure that when people are sitting there in front of you that they're engaged. What are the little things that you're really trying to work on to make sure that your message is delivered, more importantly, when they leave the room, getting the desired outcomes?

**Kate** [00:37:18] Yes, I think the biggest thing was going in with a less is more approach rather than content. I think our first ever presentation back in was it 2020 or 2021, probably 2021 because we started with the end of 2020, I think. And I think it was just information overload, very much, we went reading off the PowerPoint because we knew what we were saying, but there was just too much text on the PowerPoint, not enough images. There wasn't much for people to get involved with. So moving forward, particularly the last presentation, the one we did, we like had food on and everything as well, which, you know, food always makes people happy and well I think so and I think we really got them involved. We had like big poster paper, we had Post-it notes and you know, it was more of everyone get involved rather than Kieran and I just like, talk and talk like we're here, we're speaking, finish, thanks, guys, off you go. You know, we kind of made it really inclusive, like, okay, what are everyone's thoughts about our value of, you know, owning it or whatever. So I think that helped a little bit. Also, that's very hard when you have you know, everyone has different personalities. So you did have some stuff and naturally that's fine that kind of went, oh my God, I don't want to get up there. So it's also trying to tread that fine line of, I don't really want to put you out of your comfort zone. So I think, you know, the teacher in me was like, okay, well, maybe for particular people it's at all, just give me your Post-it note and I'll put it up there and say it. You know, things like that without being obvious, obviously but yes, I think we made the last one really inclusive. It was very colourful. It wasn't just like butcher's paper; it was like colourful poster paper. It pleased me and then also that was the last presentation. But since then as well, you know, we do an annual golf day, which is where one of our employees, Matt, he got all of these great little polo shirts set up for everyone as well, like KPM Annual Golf Day and things. So not only in the presentation, but we've seen great things from that and yes, with the less is more approach absolutely and involving food and things. But a really big thing we've seen success from away from just the presentations with this is all the information, we value you, this is the way we're moving forward, these are our jobs, it was really these company buy in days where hey you mean something to us and our work Christmas party last year as well. You know, we originally were like, let's go to this awesome restaurant and we'll have everyone together. It looks so good. The food's amazing. And then as time went on, a few of the boys were like to Kieran, oh, yes, so like, what are we doing? And Kieran kind of mentioned like, it's this really high-end restaurant. And they were like, oh, I thought we'd do something active like last year. So then we thought, do you know what? What's this about, it's about our team and what do our team like? So, you know, we changed it all. We did barefoot bowls, we went to like another a different pub, kind of a nice pub, nice pub restaurant, put a big bar tab on and we changed it because we thought, well, what does everyone want, it's not what about what we want? So I think we've seen great success with the buy in days as well, the company buy in days.

**Matt** [00:40:53] That's unreal, I think the big thing that you said there is that you're obviously the team know that you're listening to them, you're listening to them because obviously they're showing that you're changing it and it's great and that's a thing where you've got to just every time you do it, you're going to get better and better. Like we always say, it's about always try and do better. Okay, I've done a presentation. What can I do better? And like you mentioned, Post-it notes, less is more is a big one. As you know, too many people, they try and this is the thing, like if I've got and this is some of the tradie mindset thinking this is what people have said to me is, okay, I'm going to have 2 hours of a meeting, but what am I doing in that 2 hours? I'm going to probably shove up about six months worth of content in that meeting and it's just talk. It's a talkfest, right, Kate? Like, it's just like, it's just one directional. It's just a download as opposed to a conversation of what you're talking about, which that's where you get input. You get buy in, yes, people are going to be, at first, a little bit shy, apprehensive but this is the thing. You keep doing it more and more and more, this is why a lot of people need to, again, latent potential. They'll say to me that, oh yes, I tried that meeting, but no one said anything. Okay, so what happened in the next meeting? Oh, no, I didn't have another one. As like your buffet, you got to keep doing it. You got to keep challenging yourself as a leader. It's not them, it's you. How can you control and change the environment? How can you make them everyone comfortable to feel that they actually can speak up? And that's part of the if you are going to get someone to speak, prep them well before the presentation so you wording them up, it's all those little things, all those little things. But it's about personal, your own personal growth and development, which you're willing to do to change, which is tick that then will flow over onto the team, a massive investment.

**Kieran** [00:42:49] And like you always say Matt, we're here for the long game. You know, this shiny little moment, you know, in and out. We want to make sure we are investing in that time and making everyone feel valued and bringing them up through. And that's why we heavily on like, yes, apprentices. Apprentices aren't just labour, you know, cheap labour. They are there to learn and they're there to come through our system then to become really good tradesmen for us because that is essential for the industry we're in, we've got hardly, hardly anyone coming through. The average age is 55 for a plumber. So what are we going to do in ten years time? We're just going to be scratching around looking for workers. So while we have a really strong sort of, you know, apprentice system coming through, we need to make sure that they feel valued. So when they become a tradesman, they don't go, oh, I'm just going to run off to that other company. They are going to go, KPM has supported me for the last four years and they will continue to support me and want to see me grow. So that's what we want to try and achieve within.

**Matt** [00:44:00] Well, it's a great philosophy. It's that internal development and grow from within, really build from within, which we talk about a key part of winning the war on talent, where we want to again, bring people in that believe in the Way We Do It Here. They've got the aptitude and the attitude to learn. They can take on constructive feedback and they want to grow within, like you say, your system, your process. And this is where so many people just again, I can't find anyone good. Well, what are you doing about developing people? What are you really investing in? How are you investing in to develop your own people? So it's a great, again, choices as a leader, in that business performance mindset where we make the choice, we control the team that we can build and where we invest in that critical, long-term competitive advantage that we talk about. If you want to compete long-term, you've got to you've got to be in it for the long haul. You've got to be committed.

**Kieran** [00:45:04] We completely understand that and yes, there are times there you just love to click your fingers and see overnight success but that's not the case.

**Kate** [00:45:15] It was easy and everyone would do it.

**Kieran** [00:45:17] And I always bang on about that. That's what I say is if it was easy, everyone would be doing it and I know that sounds, you know, like I just I always say that Kate hates him. He's like saying that, absolutely.

**Kate** [00:45:30] Well, no, actually.

**Kieran** [00:45:31] Rolls her eyes every time that she says.

**Kate** [00:45:32] Just a side note, Kieran's favourite show is Yellowstone, John Dutton actually said it in the last episode.

**Kieran** [00:45:39] But I've always said it prior to him, so which is good.

**Matt** [00:45:42] [00:45:42]You sure?. [0.1s]

**Kate** [00:45:43] [00:45:43]John Dutton took the word. [0.6s]

**Matt** [00:45:44] [00:45:44]You gave it to John Dutton. [0.7s]

**Kieran** [00:45:50] But I've said it for a very long time and it is true though, it is true if like you'd have, everyone would be there, you know, every tradesman would be running their business. But that's not the case. But we need to make sure that we are growing a business that's, you know, it's under good management roles. Everyone knows their roles and it gives Kate and I the ability to sort of step back and not feel like we are the, you know, the punching bag all the time for everything. We can step back and guys understand their roles, what needs to be done on site, and then the business can just flourish within itself.

**Matt** [00:46:31] It comes back to that rather than being enslaved to the business, which a lot of people are, they thought they had that freedom. Coming back to what you said at the start, I want to start my business because I want more time, more money, but quickly become enslaved. So very clearly with your outlook, it's about building a business that serves you, serves your family, and what you're building again, with the culture, with all the processes, the systems, the accountability, the A-class clients that you're bringing on board, you're able to scale the business so that you can operate the business under management, so you can step away. So the business essentially does not rely on you to survive that's exactly what everyone wants. But unfortunately, they say it, but they don't want to have the discipline, the commitment and the dedication to follow through with it.

**Kieran** [00:47:20] And I guess it's the big thing, you know, I've seen it so much. You know, tradies get to 60 years old, wanting to retire, but they've literally, there's no soup, there's nothing left for them. And they've just got to keep on working. And you see that so much. And I think I look at that and I go, that's, I don't want that, that is not living.

**Matt** [00:47:44] Yes, we've had a lot of people, unfortunately, too late, can you help me? What are you doing? I want to retire next year. Like, say they got no cash in the bank. They don't own the house. They got no superannuation. And unfortunately, the business that they bring blood, sweat and tears for 40 years is no value, there is absolutely no value in it, because they've just been working day-to-day. They haven't been investing in building the actual value in the business itself. So their value for them is I'll go turn up and I'm going to do a job today. There's no ongoing leverage because they haven't positioned themselves. So again that's where it's coming back to it, so it's a long game, but unfortunately a lot of people just want to click the fingers. Now just the final piece of that puzzle too, now coming back to which we did touch on. But those A-class clients that we're talking about, on your journey about really identifying that it's a definite no now until hell yes. But again, early on, we need anyone, anyone with a heartbeat, right. Anyone with a heartbeat will say yes to the pain of that again by making those decisions, it's elaborated on really well becoming to where we are now. And this is where I give you big credit, where you really position yourself in your market in that southeast Queensland or Queensland market in that commercial space. You're really starting to now play with some big players. You're well respected now where got big players coming to you and asking for you, which is fantastic. But how important is it to get to that position where you are now? You've had to make some tough decisions and let certain clients go over the last period of time because they just don't suit and fit the Way We Do It Here. Just elaborate on that process of defining that A-class client and really getting into that position of where you are in that defined market now in a commercial space.

**Kieran** [00:49:40] So there is a big one like for that A-class when we sort of met Matt in 2020 and we're talking about A-class clients and then, you know, you sort of walk away and you're like, what's your ideal client, like someone that respects us, like, you know, as a business, it doesn't want to burden you. On contract, it has a good sort of forecast of work that we want to keep on working with them throughout. And if it's, you know, if the numbers are matching, you know, it's got to be profitable. So whilst going through that journey, yes, we have dropped off certain builders that just didn't meet those levels. They didn't respect us. They would call us and go, where the hell are you? And it's like, well, you never booked us in but you should just be here and it's like we're at their beck and call. It was like, whoa, what's going on?

**Kate** [00:50:32] Or so just a very quick blame like, oh, it's your fault.

**Kieran** [00:50:35] And just very quick to sort of, you know, blame us. So when we've gone through and we've partnered and I've spent a lot of time with, you know, like meeting up with PMs and team leaders and really cementing ourselves a good relationship and then sort of saying, well, you know, having that same clear mindset about both want to make profit on a job, both want to be respected on the job. And it's just more like this, you know, revolving door of new subcontractors rolling in each job, you know, and so you try and partner with someone that wants to keep the same sort of team and grow that team through, which has been really good for us. We have seen that and now instead of us tendering on jobs, you know, they send a private tender to us that we can price on and another and you know like yes you're obviously got to still be within the numbers but they give us the opportunity to you have a handful of people pricing on that job or and it's really it's great for us to see that and to get just so much coverage in the market for the right client. It's been incredible for us.

**Kate** [00:51:50] And a big part about across A-clients as well is, it sounds funny, but it's a really serious one is they pay on time. So we were finding that previously we'd had some clients that didn't pay us or it was just always so late and you'd have to continuously call, check up like, oh, you haven't, no, that's another payment week where you haven't submitted that or it's the end of the month, I still haven't received that.

**Kieran** [00:52:17] And funny, Kate like those people that never pay, they're the ones that call you and demand all these things and you're like not being rude but you got to respect me. You never pay me on time and then you demand I'm there and then you argue on this and you know it's not fun but it really makes it really hard to get up and enter that phone call with them, which it's been really good. We've been out of sort of reign it in and we work with some really big people in the market, like some big builders. And it's really rewarding that all that hard work, like from when that hundred dollars hit that account to now, it's been really good luck. We've just been really, really fortunate that we every day we rock up and perform and, and keep those relationships growing and yes just keep on capturing those high clients.

**Matt** [00:53:17] Again, it doesn't come out to luck. It's definitely our position now because of the last journey, every step you've taken it's 2014 day and the rapid change you've made in the last three years that positioning to get to where you're at is hard again to be in that select few where people are coming direct to you is amazing. And this is where the future is exciting even though right now, there's still a bit of a lag with some of D-class clients, but this is where it's just amazing where it comes down to respect. And everyone out there, you've got to be working with people who respect you. Don't get sucked into the whole and you hear, look sorry, mate. I won't be able to pay you that on this job. The next job, you know, I'll fix you up three times as much, it never happens. So don't get caught in or don't be fooled by this is going to be a big job when you look at it maybe from a top line. Again, select clients, do they respect us? Have they got our values aligned? Are they professional? Definitely look at other clients that they've worked with or other references as well, because we're better off say no until it's an educated yes and you've done a really good job of that right. But it's tough, right; you've got to be committed. You have confidence to say no to other clients.

**Kieran** [00:54:30] And that's right and even just having our sales pipeline, knowing what we've got coming up and having, you know, at the beginning of the year or had to late last year, I had to say no to quite a large job because I knew our pipeline was full and I couldn't commit to them. I would be committing to them and we'd be delivering crap. We wouldn't be able to service their job. So why would I commit to that? And everyone, I think everyone thought I was crazy knocking back this job. And I just said we cannot service you. I'm sorry. We love to do it, but we cannot service it. And, you know, the respect that we gained out of that was huge. Like it was like, wow, like they just said no to this job. And they're respecting their clients they've got going at the moment, like the jobs that they got going. I think a lot of people were just blown away by that, which is really, really good because it's knowing what you can and can't do. And for a long time there and I'll be the first one to say it like I was that person that would say yes and just try and make it work. And you know what, if I work Saturday and then I can try and jump on to on Sunday, then I can try and catch up. It's not going to work like, you know, you're not getting ahead from that. You just got to be truthful and that's what we found.

**Kate** [00:55:53] Not only were you respecting the clients by saying no to this person, we're also respecting our team because we've, you know, we even had moments last year where everyone's running around like headless chooks because, you know, the ripple effect of some jobs that continue to go on that we accept during COVID time. And then obviously, as our pipeline jobs that were already in and we thought, no, moving forward, this is a year where if it's not a hell yes, it's a no. You know, it's quality over quantity.

**Kieran** [00:56:23] Let's put it up on the whiteboard, if it is not a hell yes, then it's a hell no.

**Matt** [00:56:30] Then right above your success habits too, I see there too.

**Kieran** [00:56:38] It's one of those things we like, we see it all the time delivering excellence today for the future and you've got to live by that. Don't say yes, we're going to do a job and do it poorly and probably end up costing us more money so why do that?

**Matt** [00:56:57] I love it, I think and as you say, Kieran, the team sees that too, that they go to jobs that they're feeling respected because if you're struggling to get out of bed and go to it, your team are as well. It's that knock on effect but that comes back to be able to make that again framing again comes back to the numbers right the forecasting having the sales pipeline you can see that hanging on. There's going to be a logjam here with capacity that's a definite no. People say, how come you, why are you saying no because, you know there's going to be log jam and I don't want to overcommit because I've got to deliver on our promise and this comes back to the less is more. Everyone do less, do a great you're going to have more profitability. It's simple, everything we do and everything you're really doing and we're really working on, it's about doing things really well or don't do it at all. It's a pretty simple philosophy. But yes, I love that. Unless, it's a hell yes, it's a hell no.

**Kate** [00:57:53] If it's not a hell yes, then it's a no.

**Kieran** [00:58:00] That comes back to us as well, you know, without, you know, our pricing, our quoting system, as you know, our quoting system is pretty intricate and we built that over that over many years. And we obviously keep on always adding into it. You know, we're speaking not so long ago, but now we've added that into the system. You know, if it's not meeting budgets, everything's talking. If it's not a hell yes, it's a no.

**Matt** [00:58:37] And that's where again, just having those good numbers, you can see it confidently, quickly and then move on rather than try and deliberate. Should we, shouldn't we, no, move on or yes, let's go. And it's exciting, really exciting about where our position now in the future. So just finishing off then what sort of piece of advice or recommendation would you give to any business owner out there right now that is looking to what are some of the things they need to sort of work on, if they need to make a change in their business? What are some of the key things for you or one key sort of takeaway that you'd impart?

**Kieran** [00:59:12] I think the biggest thing is process, having that that clear process on site, because the process will set you free from, you know, from the moment you wake up having that just that clean, clear process. Everyone knows what they're doing and taking the time and organising it. So it's just not always on the phone and obviously, you know, if they can afford, I'd be jumping on to yourself, to the Cube, obviously, you know, hopefully it doesn't take away from our time.

**Kieran** [00:59:50] I'm joking.

**Matt** [00:59:51] I know, coming on that it's whoever is with us if we're aligned that's great. But everyone needs some assistance. You can't go it alone. You can take support from an accountant or other people, but you need people in the corner that can objectively tell you that you're not a brain surgeon right here.

**Kieran** [01:00:16] Yes, you just need a realist sitting on you, on your shoulder, telling you to.

**Matt** [01:00:21] Get over it.

**Kate** [01:00:22] And I'd also say seek this out, but only if you're prepared to do the work, because if you do the work and you put all of the effort into it, you will reap the rewards. But yes, you need to definitely be in a headspace to actually put the effort in.

**Kieran** [01:00:38] To get uncomfortable too, you have to be prepared to get uncomfortable.

**Matt** [01:00:44] And that's the credit for both you to be prepared, to get uncomfortable and put you through some situations where so, oh, I'm not liking this, but better for the longevity.

**Kieran** [01:01:01] It's 100% so it's been really good.

**Matt** [01:01:04] As we say at the end of your comfort zone, that's when you start to develop, that's when you start to grow. A lot of people, though, they never grow because they never push through their comfort zone. So to really grow, to change, to prosper in the future, you got to push it through the comfort zone. It's just the way it is. And in every little aspect of life, if you want to grow, you've got to get uncomfortable. You got to challenge yourself and you've done that really well and that's evident. And congratulations on your positioning where you are now, both as a family as well. This is a great thing. Now we've got that good balance, which is the success that we're loving, right? Thriving family, thriving business so it's that balanced approach, which is really pleasing from our point of view.

**Kieran** [01:01:48] Yes.

**Kate** [01:01:49] And ours too.

**Kieran** [01:01:52] We've been able to buy our dream property, like just elements that we would have never been to do previously.

**Kate** [01:01:59] Yes, absolutely.

**Matt** [01:02:00] Good teamwork, good team approach to make it all happen. And from my point of view, it's great to have you on the community and what you do and you're leading the way and sharing with other community members as well, and obviously listeners now it's about collectively, you know, how can we improve the industry? The more that people work smarter, then it's better for everyone. There's is enough profit, there's enough work for everyone. So it's about working smarter and thinking long, long-term rather than just short-term today, making the tough calls.

**Kate** [01:02:36] Yes, definitely.

**Matt** [01:02:38] Kate and Kieran, awesome to have you on, awesome sharing your story. And from my point of view, it's great to be part of your journey.

**Kieran** [01:02:46] Thank you very much, Matt. We really appreciate it.

**Kate** [01:02:48] Yes, we appreciate it.

**Matt** [01:02:52] [01:02:52]