

Jillian Flodstrom (00:07):

On the show today, we have a doctor of physical therapy who's committed to ensuring that his business rehab to perform is one of the most well-run, well-known healthcare companies in the country. He's immersed himself in business programs and community initiatives over the past few years in his efforts to ensure that the team and clients of rehab to perform are receiving everything they need at their best. He completed two business accelerator programs with a small business development center, is a Goldman Sachs 10,000 small business graduate and a fellow of Birthing of Giants program. It's his goal to push rehab to perform to the forefront of the community through innovation, progressive business operations, strategic growth and clinical excellence. Please welcome Dr. Josh Bunk to the show. How are you?

Dr. Josh Funk (00:55):

I'm doing great. Thanks for having me. I really appreciate the opportunity.

Jillian Flodstrom (00:58):

Absolutely. I'm excited to talk to you today because we're really gonna dive into some stuff that people don't talk a lot about, which is the hardest part of growing our company. So I'm excited to chat with you about that because I know you've got a ton of experience. So let's dive in first with how you became interested in becoming a doctor in physical therapy.

Dr. Josh Funk (01:20):

Absolutely. So growing up, I loved talking to people. I loved being active. I played a ton of different sports, had a passion and was good at everything science. And then it was an injury in college in which I finally got exposed to the field of physical therapy. So it took my interest in healthcare and really narrowed it down really, really quickly as a result of a torn lab and torn rotator cuff. So being at Ohio State had an amazing experience, came home, did community-based rehab, it was night and day and that was where not only did I know I wanted to be a pt, but I also wanted to open a business cuz I realized there was a significant gap in the market compared to what was found in a division one athletic setting versus what was offered to the mainstream.

Jillian Flodstrom (02:05):

Oh my gosh, absolutely. And that was what a gonna be. My next question was, did you know if you wanted to run a business like right from the start or did that come later?

Dr. Josh Funk (02:14):

Absolutely. I think I've always been entrepreneurial. I was a paperboy growing up for the Gazette on Wednesdays. I worked as a lifeguard, then did small group and private lessons for swimming lacrosse was my college sport. I did private lessons, small group. I ran a 90 person camp during college as well and then had another jobs restaurant, moving company. But overall I definitely had the entrepreneurial bug. So I think that I've always been somebody that's been a little bit more solutions focused. I've really enjoyed serving others and overall just being valuable. So it was a very natural fit when, again, I b I was exposed to PT at a very high level at Ohio State and I came home and I was like, man, there can't be this significant disconnect between what I had the opportunity to receive in healthcare and what everybody else who wasn't at a division one athletic setting was unfortunately settling for.

Jillian Flodstrom (03:10):

That's what I was just gonna say. I mean, to be at that level, have that level of care and then to come back into us regular folks, there was probably such a disconnect. It would be amazing to be like, how could I bring that back to regular people? I mean, how many clinics do you have? Right now

Dr. Josh Funk ([03:31](#)):

We have eight. So we just opened our first office in Virginia and we have seven others in Maryland. We're, and for everybody just per you know, in terms of a map, we're right outside of dc.

Jillian Flodstrom ([03:42](#)):

Oh wow. What's the hardest part of growing that company? Because you have a great understanding of physical therapy in its entirety, but what about that growing of your business? I

Dr. Josh Funk ([03:54](#)):

Think the most challenging part at this point, and we have 61 employees is the alignment and structuring of your corporate staff. Like if I just wanted to talk about one of our brick and mortar locations, I know what needs to go on there. I need, I, I know how things operate. I know we have a site director, we have other clinicians, what's going on at the front desk. But when it comes to the people that are supporting the eight locations and operating above all eight locations the organization chart or your org chart, roles and responsibilities of those individuals KPIs, ensuring that there's maximal efficiency at the corporate level so that everybody at those offices is getting what they need. That's definitely been something that I think I've probably thought of the most and been really tweaking and tinkering the most, especially over the past years. We've added four of those offices in the past 15 months.

Jillian Flodstrom ([04:52](#)):

Wow. What I think for me personally, I think for my business, one of the biggest things that has made a difference for me is like you mentioned policies and procedures, making sure that everybody's on the same page, that everybody's working towards a common goal. What are some things that you've done with your team that really have pushed you guys together and moved you forward towards that one goal?

Dr. Josh Funk ([05:17](#)):

I think the biggest thing honestly, and it, it's so cliché, but just communication. So when you have really, really clearing and transparent communication, whether or not it's on the fly, when issues pop up and you're clearing the air really, really quickly, getting to a solution, moving on, not letting things linger, that's tremendously positive. And then also setting out periods of time where you are doing internal research. So communication also relates to you doing internal research amongst your people as individuals, your locations as groups, and then potentially your professions as a group within your team. The more that we are polling and doing research in different areas of the company, the more likely we are to come up with an end result, whether or not that's policy, procedure, process, whatever in which we have maximal alignment. If I can sit here and say we're doing something new and a majority of people have agreed that this is the best route of approaching this, then we're most likely gonna move way quicker without any second guessing, without people questioning things or potentially putting their hand up and going, why are we doing it this way? So the internal comms, and obviously that was so important also during the pandemic, but that's a make or break when it comes to the word alignment in a company.

Jillian Flodstrom ([06:45](#)):

Do you think that getting everybody on the same page and making sure that everybody are aligned, do you think that's the hardest part of growing your company or are there some other things that you're like, it's up there but there's also this other one?

Dr. Josh Funk ([06:59](#)):

Yeah, I'll be honest, I mean the hardest part for me is when we started out it was, okay, we know how to deliver amazing PT and we know how to make healthcare fun. But there's a lot of things that people, in terms of the patients, clients, whatever we're going to call them as they're transacting with us, don't necessarily directly feel or interact with, but that make their experience so much smoother. There's a lack of friction when things are done well. So a lot of this relates to front desk clerical tasks, administrative you know, administrative insurance authorization, things that involve the transactional side of medical necessity in the healthcare market. And that is something that I do not have tremendous expertise about. I have a relative competence and that's an area where I have hired people who are definitely among our key personnel because if they were to leave, I wouldn't necessarily know how to train people at the level in which they know how to train people on everything as it relates to administrative, clerical health insurance related tasks. So that's probably been the biggest challenge for me because I didn't, not only didn't go to school for business, but I definitely didn't go to school to learn the ins and outs of running a front desk and running some of these things behind the scenes that involve what I did go to PT school for, which was obviously physical therapy.

Jillian Flodstrom ([08:29](#)):

What's your best piece of advice when you're looking to hire someone, you're looking for those key people that you know, this is not my area of expertise, I need somebody way smarter than me to do this. How do you find those people?

Dr. Josh Funk ([08:44](#)):

Man, that's great. I'm gonna assume that you are referring to how I am gonna find them and not them finding me. Cuz the simple answer, if they wanna find me, and I just posted this in our internship group today, but transparency and intentionality goes a long, long way. If you want to work somewhere, be intentional, be very, very transparent about what your goals and ambitions are, what you're thinking as you approach that relationship. But on my end, a big part of this is external marketing as it relates to making our company attractive. So not only do we have to market for patients and clients, but we have to come up with things in our ecosystem in which market our company to be attractive so that more and more people see the opportunities in here. More and more people see the fact that they can climb the ladder, work their way into leadership roles, especially cuz they wanna look at a growing company and go, okay, the, that's great, the company's growing, but are the people growing? So we're doing certain things to showcase our people, in addition to showcasing the company in a wide variety of different professional settings, whether or not it's industry organizations, industry events, as well as social media, but having a marketing strategy for your company that is associated with talent attraction is a big part of having a successful growing company.

Jillian Flodstrom ([10:11](#)):

I love that you said that because I think that so many people, you know, we get locked into like the marketing to attract clients and you know, things like that, but we never think about we gotta attract employees, we gotta attract employees that love what they do, that love where they work, so that way

people can feel that when people are happy at work, it just makes a huge difference. So I'm so glad that you brought that up because I think it's one thing that a lot of us fall short on. And speaking of falling short, I love the transparency that we have here on the scale of your small business podcast, but let's talk about failures because we all have them. I think we need to talk about more about it as business owners, but have you had any failures in your business with rehab to perform? And if you did, what did you learn from it? Or maybe what could someone else learn from it?

Dr. Josh Funk ([11:02](#)):

Some of the biggest failures that I've had relate directly to due diligence and not doing enough due diligence. So when I started rehab to perform in the end of 2014, I needed to get our insurance contract set and myself and another provider credentialed with those insurance companies, I gave somebody a four figure check to get this done. Well guess what? They disappeared. So I never got what it is that was supposed to be done as a result of me providing a certain amount of money with certain expectation of service. So not necessarily starting out on the right foot when it comes to operating a business, I think it was about four grand. And in a situation where you're already kind of dipping into your own personal reserves and you've taken out a small business loan, you don't really wanna start out wasting \$4,000 right out of the gates.

Dr. Josh Funk ([12:02](#)):

Then there was a situation in which opening our second office, I made a mistake as it relates to insurance cred, contracting and credentialing. Again, we didn't receive payment at that office for almost three months, and I actually had to let somebody go that I had convinced that this was gonna be a great environment for them that I had gone to PT school with. That individual still does not talk to me to this day. So that obviously was not ideal in those situations. I've learned a ton due your due diligence, reference checks, reaching out to people that are connected with the company or the person that you may be working with goes a long, long way. Not only that, but not potentially putting yourself in a situation where you're getting the opinion of one person. It's no different than the advice that I give to people when they interact with healthcare. If you're gonna do something serious like a surgery, get a second opinion. In both of those instances, I failed to take my own advice.

Jillian Flodstrom ([13:07](#)):

I had something very similar happen to me. I trusted somebody out of the gate that I thought I knew and it didn't work out and I spent a lot of money and I had to get a court order to get my website back. I mean, I was just looking back at it, I'm like, why would I have done that? But it's like, it makes me feel so much better to know that you had a similar experience where you're like, Hey, I trusted this person. They let me down, and it taught me a lesson and I learned from the lesson and I never repeated it again because the same thing happened to me. I learned from it, and there's so much now I'm a completely different person. There's certain things that I look for, like you mentioned, more research, more due diligence to make sure that the person that I'm working with is gonna do what they say they're gonna do. So I'm so glad that you brought that up. I feel like so many business nowadays, we don't wanna talk about our failures. We don't wanna talk about the dumb stuff that we've done, but we've all done it, so why not talk about it?

Dr. Josh Funk ([14:06](#)):

It's interesting that you bring up the website thing. I feel like that actually is not out of the norm and I don't know what it is, but there's something in the contract that allows the individual that set the

website up to have full control of anything and everything. So that's actually something that I'm doing a little business consulting and that has happened to two of the people that I've worked with, and then they've literally had to go in and like copy and paste and drop stuff into Google Drive to try to transfer text. It was a whole mess. So unfortunately that's not the first time that I've heard about that. I

Jillian Flodstrom ([14:40](#)):

Know, and it's so, it's too bad that you have to, so my situation, I had to get a court order for them to release it because it got to that point. But it's something that I always mention to people in the very beginning, you've gotta have a web presence, but make sure that you're doing your due diligence and trusting someone because that's a big deal if they hang onto it and won't let it go.

Dr. Josh Funk ([15:02](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. It, it's a huge deal. So huge deal. Absolutely. Your website, seo, all of the stuff that goes into the pixels associated with digital advertising now, I mean, there's just so many things that a website does for you.

Jillian Flodstrom ([15:17](#)):

Well, and you probably understand too that there's so many different aspects of the business that we run that you've gotta know enough in order to, when you do hire someone that you're making the right choice. I mean, there's probably instances that you've had where you're like, yes, absolutely.

Dr. Josh Funk ([15:37](#)):

I think for me, the area that I've gotten much better about the past, say two or three years, is I may not know the processes that need to go on in a certain area of our company as well as people, but I do have industry standards as it relates to keep KPIs. So if I have benchmarking in place, I can at least communicate to people, Hey, these, these are the numbers or metrics associated with this position or this task, help me build this out or help me tweak this if we've already built it out and they might have a lot more expertise in there. But my job might be to kind of tweak and again, troubleshoot when issues arise. A lot of that relates to from a front desk standpoint, I mean everything from a r to missed authorizations to, you know, copays to conversions in terms of people that have maybe submitted contact form for services. So I may not be as good as at as some of the individuals in our company about closing the loop between you know, the expectations and, and maybe what could possibly go really, really wrong. But I am at least able to sit in there and have relative competence when it comes to the conversations and troubleshoot as I need it to.

Jillian Flodstrom ([16:54](#)):

Well, I think that KPIs are so important. Let's dive into that a little bit more because maybe if someone who's listening to this podcast hasn't heard of that before or hasn't set those expectations with their employees or isn't familiar with that at all, where did you start with that process?

Dr. Josh Funk ([17:11](#)):

Big thing with the KPIs I started with honestly was an industry organization that we have and I'm a member of it, and they had a, a almost like a dashboard, like a cheat sheet for business owners. So that was tremendous with regards to me looking at things in terms of billing, clerical and administrative tasks, things as it relates to the leases, things as it relates to personnel when to hire. So fortunately I've always been resourceful, but that was an organization that provided me everything that I possibly needed, at

least in terms of the standard metrics. Now over the years, I've accumulated more, I've talked to people more and more. Those things have kind of tweaked themselves a little bit and we like to not only hit industry standards, but we've kind of created new standards for ourself with historical data. So while that's served as a nice floor for us, we've elevated the floor and based on historical data, the best part about that is it actually guides us when we grow.

Dr. Josh Funk ([18:10](#)):

If I had a clinician or a location, hey, here were the standards at the other places and with the other people, you're gonna be held to those same standards. If we happen to grow, add people or add locations, and we're not in a situation where we are upholding our KPI standards that we have in place, then that could be signifying for us that we might be growing too fast. But fortunately at this point in time, I mean everything from net promoter score and churn rate to some of your billable units, to staff retention to some of the things that are going on at the front desk, like we've been able to handle our growth relatively well.

Jillian Flodstrom ([18:49](#)):

Well, and knowing what those numbers should be is so helpful in making sure that everybody's on the same piece. Like we talked earlier about like making sure that those goals are aligned and that everybody is moving towards that goal is huge for any business. Whether you're, you know, physical therapy, you're like mean insurance. I mean, it's, it doesn't matter as long as everybody's aligned and moving forward, that's when the real magic happens.

Dr. Josh Funk ([19:18](#)):

Yes. And a lot of that, I mean, you know, how central are KPIs to your meeting? How central are KPIs to I should say just overall transparency. How frequently are they being updated? When do people know that they can look at certain things? If they want to pull their own metrics, where are they Not to say that everything is solely objective and metrics driven, but without numbers, it's hard for us to have a true idea of trends and a true idea of whether or not a process change is actually leading to something that is tangible. We could say, oh, the process is easier, it's better for us, but if we change something and our measurables get worse, then that easier didn't necessarily mean better. That easier meant, well, maybe a, a step was being skipped that that needed to be done. So I think there's an inherent level of accountability there, and as that relates to growth, I think it's essential. If you're growing just to grow and you're not tracking your KPIs, you don't have certain standards and expectations in place, that special sauce that gave you that traction early on might remove itself and, and you might find yourself spinning your wheels a little bit more than you want to.

Jillian Flodstrom ([20:28](#)):

This has been such an amazing conversation. Now, where can people connect with you if they're like, this is something that I have questions on, I need more information, I need, where do I find this community of people that talk about these sorts of things? Where can people find you?

Dr. Josh Funk ([20:44](#)):

Yeah, I'm on TikTok and Instagram at Dr. Josh Funk. And yes, I said TikTok for all the millennials out there. I'm on the older side, but still LinkedIn, I'd be happy to connect with people there, but those are probably the biggest places where I'm talking about business. I am on Twitter as well, although that kind of goes in waves in terms of how engaged I am on that platform. But if you're looking to talk business,

anything professional, especially learn a little bit about the business of healthcare, those are the best places to connect with me.

Jillian Flodstrom ([21:15](#)):

Oh, that's amazing. And I'll be sure to link everything in the show notes so people have quick reference to it. One final question for you though, what's one piece of advice that you would give to a small business owner?

Dr. Josh Funk ([21:27](#)):

I think the biggest things early on, you have to be tremendously resourceful. You are a jack of all trades. You have tremendous skill gaps, and the quicker that you realize what your skill gaps are and the, and and, and get to something like the Small Business Development Center score, some of these places where there are low cost or free, free 99 type webinars, workshops even free mentoring through score, the better off that you'll be. But if you are not self-aware and you can't admit that you have skill gap issues, you're gonna run into challenges outside of that. Take care of yourself mentally and physically. Have a workout routine. Eat healthy, try to make sure you're staying on a sleep routine. Cut away from work for blocks of time and you'll know enough. You know when, when, when you've had that, that, that moment of time where you're filling your cup up. But if you can't recognize that, again, that's a lack of self-awareness and I would find it hard to believe that you're gonna find yourself able to be successful in a sustainable fashion.

Jillian Flodstrom ([22:38](#)):

Such good advice, especially the part about sleep. Oh my gosh, what entrepreneur doesn't need more sleep. Right,

Dr. Josh Funk ([22:46](#)):

Absolutely. Although I will say sleep now, compared to sleep in the beginning is night and day. And thank goodness,

Jillian Flodstrom ([22:54](#)):

<Laugh>, for sure. Thank you so much for joining us today. I really appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to visit with us. So many amazing things that we chatted about today.

Dr. Josh Funk ([23:05](#)):

Jillian, thank you so much for having me. I appreciate the conversation.