

Doing It All: How It's All Possible

Hello, there and welcome to another episode of School of Sellers. I am Erin Waters and I have been a teacher seller for over seven years now and I have found such great joy in serving the teacher seller community. If you are not already a member of my Facebook group School of Sellers, I really urge you to join. It's free and it's just a really great place to hang out and try to work together to make business feel more doable. Because I think that's really the big challenge we all face is that we were not born with the intention of being business people, right? More often than not we grew up playing school, filling out report cards, doing all of those fun things and that eventually morphed into fulfilling our dream of having your own classroom. Never once did we stop and say you know what? I think I want to go into business instead. No, we are kind of what I like to call accidental entrepreneurs and that's why I think we struggle sometimes with the business side of things. We know what we want to create for teachers but when it comes to the demands of social media and building our behind-the-scenes businesses and all of those crazy things, it gets a little tricky.

So, it's interesting because I've had the opportunity to talk to a lot of teacher sellers recently and the one thing I hear from almost every single seller is about the struggle to do it all. And you know exactly what I'm talking about, right? Having to do all of the things all the time. We always are worrying about writing our blog posts, posting on social media, building that email list, making pins, any changes to the Pinterest algorithm just like we've recently experienced, creating products and that's not all. We are battling with all of those things on top of doing other things like taking care of our families, taking care of ourselves, working a second job as a teacher. So many things are on our plate at all times so it's no wonder that the big concern is can I do it all and if so, how? Here's my answer for you. Can you do it all? Yes. But...okay, and there's a big but there—but that's my answer. Yes, you can but and I'm going to follow up with what I mean by that. So, yes, it is possible to do it all. But there are some things you have to have in place and get serious about before you attempt to tackle all of the things all the time. Okay? And I have to warn you that no matter what you do in your business, things will never feel easy. They will feel easier and they will get easier but business is never easy. But it's worth it. Okay?

So, I think there are three major things that you should have solidified kind of behind the scenes before you attempt to do it all in business and in life. And one of those things that you've heard me talk about before is a very simple but very important mindset shift that we all need to go through before we attempt to tackle all of the things in our business and that is the adoption of the B minus work mindset. A B minus work mindset is simply lowering our expectations for the work that we do in our business. And this mindset does not come naturally to the teacher seller community because as a whole, not everybody, but in general teachers tend to be perfectionists, right? We like things to look nice, we like things to be all neat and tied up before we send them off and oftentimes this becomes a major roadblock in our business because we have a really hard time finishing things. We never quite feel done, we never quite feel ready to push that publish button or send that email because there's always something we can fix to make it even better and that is not a terrible thing. I think that we strive for greatness and a lot of that shines through in the products that we create for teachers all around the world which is something we should be incredibly proud of.

But when it comes to crossing things off our list on a day-to-day basis especially when it comes to those recurring business tasks like sending emails, scheduling Facebook posts, it's really important that we feel okay with being done and here's why. Work that is done is way better than work that is perfect because if we're putting too much emphasis on work that is perfect, chances are a lot of that work is never going to be done. Those blog posts will never become published. Those emails will never get sent. And by not doing those things, we are missing out on a huge opportunity to make a big difference in the lives of our audience and also in the success of our business. So, we need to start thinking to ourselves done is better than perfect. Something that is done is going to make a larger impact on our audience and our business than something that is perfect. So, we need to lower those expectations.

And another thing you can do is tell yourself in the moment when you're wavering between that publish button or save as draft button, tell yourself that you can always go back and make things better later. I will be the first to tell you that nine times out of ten, I usually don't go back and make it better later. But telling myself this in the moment of indecision is a really great way of giving myself permission to be done and move on to the next task on my list. Okay? So, get that B minus mindset nice and solid and that was your first step towards getting everything done and being able to truly do it all.

Now the second thing that I really strongly believe in is making sure that you are being productive. A lot of times we feel very busy in this teacher business world but there is a very big difference between being busy and being productive and if you've ever spent a day working on your business and then at the end of the day you're kind of like looking around and wondering like what the hell did I even just do because you feel like you have nothing to show for it, it's probably because there was a larger emphasis on all of the little busy things that you had to do rather than being truly productive. And you almost have to turn into this like productivity ninja in order to get the things done that need to get done and the most important way to start on your journey to being super duper productive is making sure that you are spending your time on the things that matter because if we take a good look at our to-do list, I can almost guarantee that is a very split mixture of things that actually don't matter and things that truly do matter.

But sometimes it's hard to differentiate between those two things. In fact, in episode 2, I walked you through a priority plan that I use on my to-do list every now and then to make sure that I am really spending my time on the things that are going to make an impact on my business, right? Chances are no matter what your current situation is whether you're a full-time teacher, a full time TPTer or somewhere in between, time is a luxury. There are only so many hours in the day and we are always left with a feeling of wanting more hours. So, if you feel that way, there's absolutely no reason to be spending those precious, precious minutes on things that don't mean anything to your business. So, if you are interested in seeing how you can use your time more wisely, I really encourage you to head back to episode 2 and see how that exercise can help you weed out the must-do tasks versus the things that truly don't matter.

Another way to become a productivity ninja because again I think that using our time wisely is one of the major steps we can take to doing it all is making sure that you have a very smooth workflow in place and that means that you have a very specific set of systems and processes and frameworks that you use again and again in your business and that you are always fine-tuning those workflows so that when you sit down to do a certain task, you know exactly what you need to do, where everything is and how you're going to go from beginning to completion. I strongly believe in systems. I talk about systems all the time and I have so many systems that I use in my business. So, if you are interested in hearing more about that, I actually have a video library on my website where I've filmed a couple short little videos about those systems and you can visit it at ErinMWaters.com and it's just one of the tabs at the top of the screen, video library. I also talk a lot about systems in our School of Sellers Facebook group so again if you're not in that group, head on over and join. You can just search School of Sellers in the search bar.

Now the third behind-the-scenes concept that needs to be strong and needs to be part of your solid business foundation is the desire and the drive to have a successful business. Because I'll tell you right now and this might sound a little bit like tough love, if you don't want your business to succeed and you're not very serious about your business, then you are never going to be able to do it all. Okay? Because even if you are somebody who wants it so badly and you are willing to do whatever it takes to get there, doing it all is still very hard. So, if you don't have the heart and the drive and the desire behind yourself to do those things, it's going to be even less enjoyable and there will be almost no chance that you can complete all of the tasks that need to be done. Okay? And I'm not saying that you have to run into your office every day with pom-poms waving, cheering about the blog post that you're about to write because I'm not going to be that person either but you have to have the deep down desire and the overall vision for your big picture, right? You have to be able to look forward 5 or 10 years from now and be like wow, I can't wait to see where my business is.

Now if you are in a season of life where things are just crazy busy, the first people that come to mind are my friends with super duper young kids, I mean that is a very hard time of life. So, I don't want you to feel discouraged if you're sitting here listening and being like well, I want my business to succeed but I just have a lot going on right now. I'm not talking about that. I know that we all go through ups and downs and different versions of the time we have to work and the time we don't have to work. But overall is your big picture there, is it strong and are you willing to do the work that it will take? If the answer is yes, then you are one step closer to being able to do it all and I think that probably most of you listening fill that category, right? Most sellers I talk to start this business more as a hobby because it was something we enjoyed doing, right? We really enjoyed just sitting on the couch at night, being able to make resources for our own classrooms and then having the additional benefit of posting them to TPT and hopefully making some money off of them. That's probably how most of us started. But along the way, we realized there was even more potential for success and that has driven us to the point where we are today, where we are not just doing this as a hobby but we are doing it as a business. But I'm willing to bet that the desire and the enjoyment factor are still there. We are passionate about this. So, I really think that probably most of you listening do have the desire and the drive but I had to point out that that is definitely a necessity if you are someone who is interested in finding a way to truly do it all.

Now the desire, the productivity and the B minus work mindset are more what I like to call behind-the-scenes elements of being able to work hard to do it all in your business, right? Those are things you have to work on on the inside of you. But there are some tangible things that I use in my business that I want to share with you today because I think that they've helped me get to a point where I feel like I can manage it all and do it all. And those are mostly tools that I use on a day-to-day basis in the inner workings of business. So, the first thing would definitely be the organizational and spreadsheet tools that I use to organize pretty much everything under the sun in my TPT business. And the top three that I use again and again and again are Trello, AirTable and GoodNotes and I encourage you to check them out in your free time and see what you think. I could go in and probably do an episode on each of these so I won't go into great detail but Trello simply put is where I do all of my smaller day-to-day tasks. You can organize things into cards, it's very visually appealing, easy to drag things into different categories and it's great for to-do lists and especially those recurring tasks that happen every day, every week, every month, you name it. I also find Trello extremely helpful for scheduling all of my social media. Okay? It's like my number one tool when it comes to all things social media.

AirTable is where I keep more of my long term information. So, my blog content calendar is completely stored on AirTable. I have a gigantic inventory of all my TDT products stored on AirTable and this is where you kind of keep all of the moving pieces and parts to those big systems, right? Like all of your links, all of your keywords, all of the important information that you want to be able to have accessible to you with the click of a button. And last but not least GoodNotes is my new favorite discovery of 2019. It is now a third of the way into March 2020 and I am still loving GoodNotes. I have never been an iPad user but I needed something that would allow me to write things out but also access them across multiple devices and GoodNotes was the answer. It is an app that I use to map out all of my product plans, all of my blog post plans. Even this podcast episode, I used GoodNotes for to make my outline so that I knew what I wanted to talk to you guys about. You can also use GoodNotes on a smartphone. In fact, there is a stylus that you can buy that is usable on smartphones which most styluses are not. So, if you're interested in trying out GoodNotes and you're thinking like oh, I don't have an iPad, that's fine. I will link the stylus in the show notes for today.

Now the second tool I swear by for doing it all are schedulers for social media. I love MeetEdgar for my Facebook scheduling and I also enjoy using Tailwind for Pinterest and also Tailwind for Instagram because as much as you'll hear about scheduling and how it'll lower your reach or that Facebook and Instagram don't like third party apps, it comes back to the point that something that is done is something that is better than being done perfectly, right? So, I'm the type of person that if I'm not able to schedule my content in large quantities at a time, then the odds of me actually posting to social media consistently are going to go down the drain and I probably wouldn't post anything at all. So, in my eyes, I think a scheduler is crucial here because it changes my posting from nothing to consistent and that in my eyes is much more important than following all of the expert guidelines when it comes to posting on social media.

The third thing I swear by for being able to do it all is the way that I batch every single thing in my business. I've talked about batching on previous episodes but simply put, it's taking a collection of similar tasks and doing them all in one session versus having to address these tasks day in and day out. It saves your mental space from having to switch between totally different tasks like your whole entire day and instead you're sitting down and focusing on the same type of tasks again and again and again. And the best part about batching is that once you are done, you don't have to revisit that task for as long as you want. So, I am at the point now where I batch, create and schedule all of my blog posts, all of my social media posts, all of my emails for up to six months at a time. And I know that sounds crazy but it is so doable and even though it's kind of a rough road getting there, the feeling of not having to deal with any of those things for six months at a time is indescribable. And I have a very specific framework that I use that I'll be sharing with you guys here soon. I'm kind of creating a special project that I will share in the very near future but that framework will be something that you will have the opportunity of learning about if that is something that sounds interesting to you.

In the meantime, I have created a sort of do-it-all survival kit for you and you can find it at ErinMWaters.com/DoItAll and it's just a collection of tools and tips that I think are helpful in getting started to truly doing it all and being able to clear that to-do list so that you have time to spend on things that you enjoy. I hope you enjoyed this episode today. I thank you so much for tuning in and again, you can grab that tool kit www.ErinMWaters.com/DoItAll. Till next week. Bye, bye.

Welcome to the School of Sellers

What is the School of Sellers?

We are a group that is committed to helping teacher sellers in all stages of their business. We like to provide tips, tools, and resources that aid in building your business while making it feel doable every step of the way.

Connect with the School of Sellers!



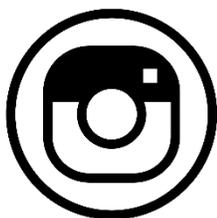
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