

TRANSCRIPT

Ep 086: Karagan Osmann on Turning a Struggle into a Product, the Importance of Customer Experience, and Growing a Community from Scratch

Karagan Osmann: I think like one of the most important things, especially if you like a team, or even just one customer service rep, take the time to help them understand why you're doing what you're doing. And that's like one of the most important like foundational things about customer experience is it's like, okay, so your customer service rep, I understand that it might not be your number one job in the world, but you have the ability where you are right now to make a difference in someone's life, that person writing in might have had the worst day of their lives. So how do you turn it around? You know, how do like what can you do and like, why are we doing what we're doing? Are we trying to make a difference in people's lives and get them to live a healthier life? Remember that and do the best you can like you're here, you're present like you have nowhere else to be, you might as well make the best of it.

Shannan Monson: Welcome to CEO school. We're your hosts Suneera Madhani and Shannan Monson, and we believe that you deserve to have it all. Less than 2% of female founders ever break 1 million in revenue, and we're on a mission to change that. Each week, you'll learn from incredible mentors who have made it to the 2% Club, as well as women well on their way sharing how they defied the odds so that you can do it to your real business now, class is officially in session.

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Shannan Monson: Welcome to today's podcast episode. We are so excited to introduce you to Karagan Osmann. Karagan is the CEO and founder of S'moo @thesmooco on Instagram. S'moo is a women's health brand designed to help women achieve optimal hormone balance and feel their best selves from inside out. I'm really excited to introduce you to Karagan, and let you hear more about her story today. So let's just start at the beginning. How did you start a company? Where did this come from? Why did you think that this was the idea that had to be brought to life?

Karagan Osmann: Well, first off, Hello, and thank you so much for having me. So I created S'moo actually off of my personal experience with PCOS. So PCOS is polycystic ovarian syndrome, and one in 10 Women have PCOS, and almost 50% go undiagnosed. And it's a severely untalked about thing. So I've been struggling with PCOS since I was 14 years old. And the way I found out is I pretty much gained 50 pounds overnight. And when I say overnight, it's not literally but I was an active teenager, I was a dancer, I danced all the time. And just one day, I just started to gain weight. And I went from 120 pounds to 170 pounds. And I wasn't having my

period and my mom was like, we need to take you to the doctor and like figure out what's happening. And so through you know, since doctor visits, I was diagnosed with PCOS. So the thing of is, is normally when you go to the doctor, you're told two things. One is to lose weight, eat better, and then also to go on birth control and birth control will regulate your menstrual cycles and hopefully make everything you know, okay, again. And then pretty much everyone gets that exact same equation. And I was really fortunate because my mom was like, I don't want you to go on birth control. Like I don't want you to put hormones in your body that you don't need. And we took a more holistic route and went to like acupuncture, and I started taking Chinese herbs. And so it started me on a really long journey, just holistically dealing with my PCOS.

Shannan Monson: And I think so many women can relate to I mean, 50% of women going undiagnosed, I think with with PCOS, that's a pretty extreme statistic. But in general, you know, our doctor is not listening to us or not really looking for a solution, just saying, Hey, take the pill, eat less exercise more like that's the generic advice for everybody. I think that's something that we can all relate to and realizing that, hey, we're actually I'm in control here, and I'm gonna find a solution that works best for me.

Karagan Osmann: Oh, for sure. And like it's just not a one size fits all. And like I will start by saying like S'moo isn't a one size fits all for everyone. Like it's not and that it's just, it's a additional answer. And it's a step in the right direction. And it's like, you know, is this are you on that journey of like finding the right solution for you and your body? And so that's really what S'moo is about

Shannan Monson: So how did you go from, you know, solving your own PCOS, and, you know, being on your own health journey to deciding Actually, I'm going to build a company, because there's got to be easier solutions than that. Did you start out as an entrepreneur? Have you done other businesses where you work in corporate? What was that transition? Like?

Karagan Osmann: Yeah, so um, I have been working corporate since right before I turned 19. Actually, I was fortunate enough to work at quest nutrition, which is a billion dollar company that was huge when I started at it and it sent me on a path down the food industry and nutrition industry and I worked at a lot and a lot of different food companies. Throughout the years, and I actually kind of was like segwaying into more of like an entrepreneur mindset, because I was doing some contracting on the side with a lot of food companies, I get offers, and I'd like do some stuff on the side. But ultimately, one time I was working at this company and the founder had, you know, created her own protein bars. And I kind of like there saw, okay, like, I can do this too. Like, if she can do it, I can do this too. So I started to have like, the mindset of like, okay, I wanted to start my own business, but honestly, like, S'moo wasn't something that was super planned, it was authentically, like, just like it was what I was doing. So just to give a little background on that. So I spent a decade pretty much just kind of managing my symptoms on and off, like, sometimes I'd ignore my PCOS, sometimes I'd be, you know all about it and trying to find solutions. But you know, I had started dating my current boyfriend. And I was like, you know, what, I really want to be able to start a family. And I'm just ignoring this, I was a

competitive powerlifter. So like, I was really buff, like, just completely just going all out on powerlifting. And I decided I was like, I really need to get this back under control. So I started to do a lot of research, I started to just stack supplements. And so at a certain point, I was taking 12 pills every single day. And it was seven vitamins and minerals and herbs that were all highly studied for PCOS and hormone balance. And one morning, I literally was just like doing my hair. And I was just like, I really just don't feel like taking like my pills this morning. Because it's exhausting. I just had this epiphany, like literally right then and there. I was like, first of all, I need to make this easier for myself, like I'm going to make this a powder, it's going to be put in my smoothies. But I should consider bringing this to market because there's other women who have gone through what I'm, like have gone through too. And they're just looking for solutions. And they don't really know where to look. And so, like I had found what had worked really well for me. And so like right then and there, I just decided I was going to bring it to market and I created the name and everything right then and there like 10 minutes probably

Shannan Monson: I love it. I think that's there's so many things that I was I was listening to your story, the power of being an intrapreneur first, you know, there's so many things that you learn both that quest and the protein company that you're able to see, okay, here's how you go from idea to a product, because there's a process it's not, you know, magic, it's very, it's very first you do this, and you do this. And when you're able to see it and take some of that overwhelm away, you realize, Oh, actually, that person isn't smarter than me or that, you know, they're not more driven than I may I if they're doing it, I can do it. And I love that you started by you know, being that intrapreneur in the company and and working in different companies and had all that experience to then say, Okay, now this is the moment and I love that it was like lightbulb moment for you. And I'm sure it is for a lot of women and for others. I'm sure it takes time to get there too. But I just think that's really smart that you had already kind of seen the inner workings to know, okay, I have the confidence. I have the skill set I what I don't know, I can learn. Let's do this. So you went from the bathroom, the idea of Smith, what's the first thing that you did walk us through like the step by step process of building this to a now seven figure company?

Karagan Osmann: Yeah, so I'm just like in complete honesty, what I did is I took my like my daily vitamins, and I just decided to take it to my kitchen and see if I could get to a powder form that tasted good. And my smoothies, my coffee, my tea and whatnot. So I actually started being like the formulator myself, because I couldn't afford to do like, get an r&d person. So I literally sat there, I went on Amazon, and I ordered everything in a powder form. And I seriously just sat in my kitchen, I got in touch with all the flavor companies, I had them send me samples of the flavoring, I ordered different protein powders, and I had this little journal and I would just make a couple formulas each day and I will see what would taste better. So then, um, you know, I was going with an unflavored mix. So I was just trying to find like the right balance of like flavoring because there's things like masking agents and stuff that you put in to help, you know, minimize flavors. And doses were exactly the doses I was taking for PCOS, like the recommended daily doses. And then I just was kind of like playing around with everything else. So then after that, then I went to go search for a manufacturer. And then the manufacturer made me a sample and then we went into production.

Shannan Monson: Well, I think that's really smart. And a lot of times we hold ourselves back because I don't have the money for like you said, I don't I don't have the money for r&d. So you could have just said, Oh, well, I have to work for two more years until I have enough cash in the bank to hire an r&d person. But instead you're proactive and made it work and I think there are always ways you know, I had a nutrition company. I'm a former Registered Dietitian. Boy back in the day, it's in many, many many businesses and and we did the same thing with like all of our recipes. We started with one thing first we just had a hot sauce company on here and she said the same thing. Everything sorry. in her kitchen. And I think that when you're resourceful, you realize that actually you do have all the resources that you need in front of you. Like, if you're listening right now you have everything you need is there, all you have to do is figure out how to then take this idea and pass it off to someone else. So you found a manufacturer, can you walk us through what are the like, maybe the three biggest things that you did to take it from a formula in your kitchen, to a manufacturer to what's now a seven figure company that's, you know, well known, you have all these incredible brand reps, and your website is beautiful. It's a really cool branding, like, what are the three things that took you to that seven figure mark?

Karagan Osmann: For sure. So I think, number one, the biggest thing is just like my personal story, and I am such a huge believer that when you create your own company, like it's important to be authentic. And I think everything comes a lot easier when you are being authentic with yourself and like actually doing something you love because making smear was so easy. Like it wasn't, it was so much easier than even all the companies that were out there in the past, because the thing is, is like I didn't resonate as well with those, like I resonate so well with mine. So it was just easy. So I couldn't encourage enough to like, whenever you are starting a company, you know, find something that you truly love something that you're passionate about something that comes easy to you that you don't mind working on, because that is part of the key. Also, you know, if you have, you know, some kind of story behind what's bringing you to this, share it and share it a lot. And like, I think that is what makes a difference. Like people want to hear your story. They want to know why you exist. They don't want to just hear you're just making a company to make a company and it shouldn't ever be like that anyways, at least that's my personal view. So first off, I think the authentic second, I would say, customer experience. So me coming from a customer experience background, it was always in the complete forefront of what I did.

Shannan Monson: What do you mean a customer experience background for those listening, tell us more about like your jobs that you had previously, what your responsibilities were? And because it seems like this is the lens that you view the company and I think we all have this as founders, like our unique perspective that helps turn the company into what it is I want to understand better. What were you doing before? And how did you say you can do this better?

Karagan Osmann: Yeah, no, I'd love to talk about that. So starting in class, I actually started as a customer service rep and very quickly grew to be a manager of the department. And I started like my whole career and customer experience, which really is customer service and customer service is I think one of the most like underestimated important departments in like the world like

everyone's like, oh, customer service. But why was so instrumental to me, because the thing is, is I was so fortunate, I don't know if you're familiar with Tom Bilyeu from Impact Theory

Shannan Monson: Yeah, I listen to the podcast. He's incredible

Karagan Osmann: So he was I guess, like, my boss, but like, he wasn't my boss's boss. So he was really cool. Because, you know, at that moment in time, which was, I guess, like, almost seven years ago, customer service was still kind of like robotic, you know, everyone else is like, it's very transactional, you're not really creating experience. And so he was really interesting in that, like, he wanted to make sure everyone who talked to us had the best experience ever. And so that meant like, we personalize every single email that went out like you do not send a canned response. So like, that really set the tone for my career. Because it was there, I learned I had amazing boss, who also helped teach me a lot of things. And it was like, Okay, so first of all, I learned to never send a canned response. Like you don't send robotic responses to anyone. Like we were actually teaching the team to connect with every single person that wrote in. So if they say that they like blueberries, you go, and you tell them why you like blueberries, too, you know, it's like, it's really taking the time to like, give that personal element to every single person. So anyways, that really was like what paved the path for me and I took from quest, I actually moved on to a lot of big companies in the food industry. And what I would do is I would up their customers, especially when they were like startups to be able to scale also, like I was set up their, all of their customer service responses. So they were like, their canned responses that were like meant to be personalized, and give a really good customer experience, if that makes sense. So that was kind of like my role. And what I've done up until this point, before I started S'moo

Shannan Monson: Yeah, it makes a lot of sense. And I think that you're absolutely right. It's totally undervalued. A lot of times, we look at customer service in the business, and it's like the job nobody wants to do and you're responding to customers. And that actually shouldn't be the case. You know, if you're a customer, we talk about customer experience is proactive, and customer service is reactive. So if you're responding to problems a lot and you're constantly on the defensive, then you actually have a problem with your customer experience. So there's a very personal business here. And we very strongly in the customer experience and I want to kind of pick your brain on this. What are a few things that every business could implement to create more personalization, like can you give us some examples, like you said the blueberry example I love the blueberry example. That's exactly how we teach people to respond to DMS. Give us some of your wisdom.

Karagan Osmann: So I think like one of the most important things, especially if you like a team, or even just one customer service rep, like, take the time to help them understand why you're doing what you're doing. And that's like one of the most important, like foundational things about customer experience is it's like, okay, so your customer service rep, I understand that it might not be like your number one job in the world, but like, you have the ability where you are right now to make a difference in someone's life. So like, that person writing in might have had the worst day of their lives. So how do you turn it around? You know, how do you like, what can you

do? And like, why are we doing what we're doing? Are we trying to make a difference in people's lives and get them to live a healthier life? Okay, remember that and like, you know, do the best you can, like, you're here, you're present, like you have nowhere else to be so like, you might as well make the best of it. So like one of the most important things is like I think really communicating over and over and over again to your team, why you're doing what you're doing, and really help them understand why. And I think that's a really like, just important premise to carry throughout your company, even through marketing and other teams,

Shannan Monson: I want to pause and really reinforce this because I think it's really easy to say, hey, here, go do the job. But by you taking the time to end even if you're a solopreneur. And you're the one that's writing emails, in the early days, right? Taking the time, say, actually, you're affecting someone's life, you have the ability to turn a bad day around, you have the ability to take a bad situation and turn it into the best experience ever like, and really, I love that you're reinforcing that. And your team, Hey, your job, while it might not be your dream job in the world is incredibly important. And you can change lives every single day. And really just putting the the mission and the vision on that task that might not seem like the fun, exciting stuff in the business. And I think that's really smart. Okay, so first, training your team talking to them about the why making sure they understand the impact that they're having, even if it's just a little you know, customer service request forms. What else? How can we do customer experience better? I love the blu ray example. I always do that in sales to you tell me one thing about yourself, I'm going to tell it to you right back? Oh, same I have this shared experience because it creates common ground?

Karagan Osmann: Well, yeah. And that's kind of like I guess would be like, my second point is like, you know, yes, you might be a customer service rep for you know, whatever company, but the thing is, is like you still are you and so like find ways to like put you into the customer experience and like have fun with it, you know, so, like, it doesn't like you don't need to not have personality, you know, and I think it's actually cooler when people like have different reps that are just like different people, you know, and like, we're just real people at the end of the day. And so I think that's so cool. And like, you know, throughout my team, one thing that like now that things have developed with Instagram DMs, we send voice memos we don't send, like, we don't even like to do the text. We like voice memos, because you know what, it adds each other's like personalities into it, it makes it more fun. And so I would just say like don't make your team like, you know, formed to just like one brand voice like, yes, you want to be brand, have a brand voice, but you also want them to be able to be themselves and have fun with it, like make friends, they can make friends, like, you know, at the end of the day, like, that's how you should treat your customers i think is also like potential friends, you know, like they are like, I don't think you need to treat them like customers. Like I think you should treat them just like you know, you and I are talking to each other.

Shannan Monson: I want to just like stop and fully upon this conversation. I don't want to create a whole bunch of background noise for the listeners. But yes, 100% I think a lot of times we feel like we have to fit into the brand voice or the brand guidelines or be really formal or professional like whatever we want to talk, we want to talk to humans. I don't want to talk to

them on the other end of a DM or an email that sounds like a robot and I love that you give them permission to be their own human. You know, you don't have to try and sound like me, you don't have to try and sound like the company. Yeah, you need to stay within our brand. But you're allowed to be a real human. I love that. These are really great tips. Okay, I'm gonna recap customer experience here. So the first thing is explaining the why. Why is this important? How is this a valuable part of not just your job, but the company mission and this customer's life? Number two, creating those shared moments, right, like you mentioned the blueberry. And then number three, giving your team the power to be themselves to send voice memos, to have personalities, and to really make friends with your customers. So I love that that is really phenomenal. Go back and re-listen to his last seven minutes of the podcast. That's great customer experience advice. I want to kind of step back into this journey to seven figures. So you said you were really focused on your why your story and sharing that authentically and really customer experience and making sure that's in the forefront. What are some of the tactical steps for someone who's building a food product company supplements? This is a very specific industry. We've got a ton of wellness entrepreneurs that listen, what are some things that you've done to set your brand apart and have helped you to really get traction scale?

Karagan Osmann: Yeah, so when I first started, gosh, it's like, I look back at my original Instagram posts, and I'm like, oh, cuz, you know, you like, look back, you're like, Oh, I could have done so much better because you see how much you know, it grows through the years. But, um, you know, like, I was very obviously focused on my story from like, day one. And I actually did a lot of just personal outreach on Instagram to people. So like, I honestly was just like, following liking, commenting, like you know, what's the word, I mean, I literally was like, going out of my way, every single day to just talk to every single person on Instagram. And that was actually how we built our initial following. And what I did actually, with mu was, I did like a pre launch in a sense. So like, I started doing the Instagram before we even launched and it was only about like, a couple months before. And so like, I started to get some followers and I would just talk about how like it was for PCOS. And started to gather emails, and I just actually had a few customers who were interested in the product. And it's really interesting, because like, when we launched I remember, I had like three sales, I think that day. And one of them was from someone I knew, actually at Quest who ended up getting pregnant with smoothie, which is like, That's so cool. It was so exciting, because that was like our first ever pregnancy success story. And I just like remember, I was just, Oh, my God,

Shannan Monson: A moment of like someone that's been there for you for the whole journey to where they supported you that they purchase your product. And then for them to have that transformation. I imagine it's just a very full circle moment.

Karagan Osmann:

Oh, for sure. It definitely was.

Shannan Monson: And so were you excited about three sales? Oh, my God pointed that, yes, I want to talk through that I was so

Karagan Osmann: Oh, my God pointed that, yes, I want to talk through that I was so excited. I was so excited. And it's in full transparency like I was packing for my house at that time, like I just like, had the product shipped to my house. And I was packing them. And it was really cool, because it kind of just kept growing from there. I mean, honestly, so much of it was word of mouth. And you know, one of the things that I want to like hone in on for a second, we're starting a supplement brand. And also just a brand these days, like customer experience, one of the biggest things I can recommend is doing a money back guarantee. Because the thing is, is like, I feel like especially with small businesses, people like gawk at that idea. They're like, Oh my gosh, but like, I don't want to have to refund people like it's, you know, it's too much money out of my pocket kind of thing. Like, I'm going to tell you all to just do it, like just do it. Because the thing is, is like there's going to be people who take advantage of it. But ultimately, the good outweighs the bad. And so we always had 100% money back guarantee, like if you want to try it for a month or two, and you don't like it, come back, let me know, and I'll refund you. And so like one of the things that I think actually helped build S'moo was the fact that we had that from day one. And it was obviously me talking to everyone and I was you know, if you don't like it, just let me know. And like, I'll refund you. And of course, there's a trust element. But it helps to have that. Because if you're starting out and you don't have a lot of reviews, and you'll have a lot of testimonials and people talking about your product, you have to have something that gives people that extra step to be like, Okay, I'm going to trust you. So like one thing is always be available and present. I was responding people every single day, don't go Mia for a week. So respond to them daily, you know, stay engaged, answer their questions. And then like be, you know, honest and truthful with your return policy and offer returns if they're not happy. And I think honestly, that goes such a long way with customer experience. And also just making sure people pass on good things about your company. And just overall word of mouth, I think that's a really helpful thing to help you grow, especially starting out in something like a supplement industry.

Shannan Monson: So it really helps to mitigate risk too right. So if like I'm on the consumer, I this is cool, it looks pretty on Instagram, she seems cool, but I don't know if it's gonna taste good. And it takes away that little bit of that risk aversion in the purchasing process and actually increase its conversion, money back guarantees statistically have a massive increase on conversion. And it also kind of forces you to make a good product. Nobody with a crappy product says I'll give you your money back if you don't, right, because if you don't have a good product, and nobody wants to return everything, but it really says that, hey, when the quality is here, and I stand behind it. And also if you don't agree that the quality is there that I still like it's just a level of trust that it's hard to give in other ways. And I sure push you to create a better product because then when you do get those refunds which happen, you get feedback, too, right? Like I didn't like it because of this, this or this and allows you to really make more sales quicker, which allows you to iterate quicker, which you're talking about a lot and entrepreneurship, you know, your first product isn't going to be your seven figure product, it's going to be version one, and you have to get feedback and you can't get feedback if you're not making sales. And so I love that you said that, okay, we actually built an email list. We built a like waitlist kind of hype around the brand before you actually launched. You didn't do all the work to build their product and then go out there and be like, hey, Anybody want to talk about

women's hormones? You already knew something that people were excited about? What is there anything in particular that like, what advice would you give to a fresh entrepreneur? Or maybe yourself, if you could start over and do this again, what one piece of advice would you give,

Karagan Osmann: So my piece of advice would definitely be to scale slow. And the reason why I say that, so like, I've had a lot of jobs for 25 year old. And I'm super fortunate for all of them. But I've been a part of a few things where, you know, I, there are startups, and they wanted to scale too quickly. And I learned a lot from those. And the thing is, is, I actually think is part of why like S'moo been successful is like, you know, I really took it slow with scaling. And I'll explain that a little bit more. So when you start a company, especially if you've worked in the corporate world, or bigger companies, it's very tempting to just like, want to go big really quickly, and just like be like the big dog and like, have the big ad agency helping you and everything. And I'm telling you just don't do that. So you know, for pretty much the first year and a half. So like I'm talking like we're on a two year anniversary. Now, it pretty much was just me doing the bulk of the business. And we actually just made our first like two full time hires six months ago. And like, just for reference, like we became a seven figure a year ago, it's not like we've been like super small, like, it's been a lot of work. And it's been really tiring. But the thing is, is I wanted to make sure that we were in a sustainable place before I ever even brought someone on to offer them a full time job. Because I don't want to be in a place where like, I'm telling you six months down the road, like this isn't gonna work out. So like, for me, it was really important that I was in a place where I felt it was very secure. And like I could bring on some full time people to help me. And so that was one thing. But the other thing too is I kind of advise against going with agencies, especially when you're starting out, I think it is very good as just an entrepreneur to learn each part of the business first, and be involved in every part of the business before you pass it on to someone else. Because otherwise you just don't understand it. And ultimately, if someone leaves your company or anything, you're left high and dry. But like in the case of it's like somewhere, relieve me today, I know how to handle every single part of the business. And I think that is actually like key. And I think it's really important that don't try to scale too quick. I don't think especially if you're just bootstrapping the thing, like I did, I think you know, start doing everything yourself, and then slowly portion off parts. So what I did, and just to give a little bit more context. So for the first six months, I was like completely just me, then about six months into it, what I would do is I would make like mini contract positions that were like mini retainers, I had one of my best friends, she did our social media for, like \$500 a month, but you know, like something very minor. And so she did the social media, she got it on her resume. And she's now actually full time with us. So now she's got her full time position. And it's been like, you know, a year and a half of that. And then I hired my sister, and she did blogs for us. And so she wrote two blogs a week for kind of the same thing. And what I did is I worked out a commission deal with her like, I'd be like, okay, you make these blogs, I'll give you so and so commission off of the emails. So the thing is, is like I put it into really small portions, instead of going like, Okay, I'm just gonna give you like this big salary right off the bat, like I made sure that it was like achievable. And I slowly scaled up as time went on, and then eventually came to the point where I had like a lot of contractors, I was like, Okay, now I can consolidate. And of course, I'm not saying it's like the best fit for everyone. But I do think that like, it's good to just

always like kind of check yourself, check your ego, make sure you're not going beyond your means. And just like err on the side of caution, always, you know. And the other thing too, like, I didn't really take anything from S'moo for a long time. And I actually worked three jobs on top of S'moo for the first year. Because I did contract work, I actually had a full w two job and everything, I did everything to make sure that my company was fine first. And so I just kept putting anything we made back into the company. And I think that's really good practice, especially in your first couple years just to like keep putting it back in, keep putting it back in. And don't be tempted to like take it out, of course if you need to, like you know, find ways to of course, but I do think it's always good to just kind of like check your ego take things slow, and that would just be my biggest advice.

Shannan Monson: I agree. I think it's phenomenal advice. We've done the same here at CEO School. I've done the same in my past businesses. There's really no reason to hire employees right off the bat. And I think there's this concept of like, I'm not a real business until I have an office and employees and that's not true. The minute that you create that LLC or you know, form whatever type of company it is your real business and the fact that you work a full time job or three side hustles to help pay for it doesn't make the business any less real. And by doing that, it gave you the opportunity to make sure that actually, you had the cash coming in to make smart decisions and also be able to test them. We talked about this with contractors a lot. You didn't waste \$60,000, in your first year on a social media person who maybe wouldn't have been any good. Instead, you got processes in place, he's made paid a small amount of contractors, you made sure that what you were setting up actually worked. So I think that's really, really, really good advice. I have to go back though, because he just casually dropped, casually dropped that you're currently 25. But this is a two year old company. So I'm doing math. You started this company at 23. I'm not even sure I was done with college at 23. You built it to seven figures in a year. So I want to do you go to college, you started working at quest at 19. No, you went right. So I want to hit because there's so many women that feel like, you know, do I have to go get a degree to do this, you know, to these young entrepreneurs, I love this story. I'm like, No, don't do it. Tell. Tell us more about how you did it.

Karagan Osmann: So I don't know. Why would you said that maybe like emotional like the coolest like most like special journey to me, because so like, I went to CU Boulder, which is like the ultimate school I was so excited to go. And I got there and like, I don't know, for the life of me, I was like, This just isn't me. Like I just don't want to be in school. I don't I don't know, like, I have no excuse other than the fact that just wasn't the right fit for me. So I actually dropped out to be a ski bum like I was like, I want to ski Peace out. And so I moved up to the mountains, and I just skied for like six months, which I think was really good for me. Because there when I was skiing, I actually like would go to GNC every single day. And I would pick up these quest bars. And like I remember, like this one day laying in my bed and being like, ah, I really want to work in health and fitness. Like I was always in the fitness and I like had actually been like into these quest bars. And I actually thought I wanted to work at quest. And it was just so weird, because like I wasn't like really conscious of it. But I do remember that moment very clearly. And it was just a couple months later, I literally just one day decided I was going to move back to LA because my mom had moved me out here in high school as from Colorado originally. So I was

like, I'm gonna move back to LA because I want to work in health and fitness. And like that was where everything was. So I moved back and I had this idea I want to work at class or something like that. And at the time, I'd worked at Whole Foods and the vitamins section. So I was always in the vitamins and supplements. And I would always talk to the demo reps that came in, I ended up becoming like a demo rep, which was like my first like little side hustle. So like, I would work like eight different demo rep companies. And I would just like optimize my hours. So I worked constantly and I made really good money at like 18 So anyways, one day I was out on the Venice Beach boardwalk working at this bodybuilding show. And this guy from quest came up to me and I was wearing a watermelon body suit. Like I'm talking like a skin tight body suit that looked like a watermelon. And he's like you're slinging watermelon water. And I was like yeah, and he's like, okay, I want them. And then he had a shirt that said quest on it. And he's like, he's like, I like love you like I want you to work at Quest. And he was just like, he worked with one of the executives there. And he's like, I'm gonna do everything I can to get you in the quest. So I kind of went through a lengthy process going into quest, I actually interviewed for a sales position at 18. And I was actually told that I didn't speak well enough to be a part of it, which is really interesting. But luckily, I had someone who really pushed for me. And I ended up getting in as a customer service rep. They kind of just took a chance on me. But I will say it wasn't easy. Like I actually was interviewing there. And I went through a lot of interviews. And one of the things that they had me do before I even had to go to the executives interview. They had me put together this like roadmap. So I had to actually like make like a roadmap poster and like I spent like a whole day on it about like, why I actually wanted to work at quest and like what, like where do I see it leading me like what was my ultimate goal? And I thought that was so cool. Because like it made you really think about like, Okay, why do I want this job? like do I just want it because I want to work out quests or like is it because I want to make a difference in the world. And so I had a just a really lengthy process to get hired there. But when I got hired, like a month later, I started to move up. So I got promoted to like customer service, lead and then supervisor and it just started my whole career there because like Quest was just such a name brand. And so like from there, I've made so many connections and just throughout the years I just kept getting jobs from everyone I met a quest like literally every single job I've ever gotten was from quest and just like what I did there, so it's really cool because it shows how important networking is like at 18. I interview that question I started working at quest two days before my 19th birthday. And then I moved my way up. And then like, now I'm here. And I literally, like contribute almost everything from my time at class because I really took my time and like, I make good use of it. Like, I didn't sit there and just be like, I'm a customer service rep. Like, I went above and beyond every single day, and like, it got me noticed. And they've taught me a lot of people that like knew me routed for me Got me other jobs got me other opportunities, and like everything led to another. So just like if my advice to anyone, if you decide to not go to college, like, take whatever job you get seriously, you know, and like do your absolute best and like, try to really find a way to make a difference at that company. And I promise you, it'll pay off, I promise.

Shannan Monson: When you said, and now I'm here, I got full body chills. Thinking of this 18 year old, you know, was wearing a watermelon bodies who that's nobody's dream job. I want to I want to honor you for seeing the traditional path saying that's not for me and finding a way to

carve your own. That's not easy at all. I can't imagine number of people are saying you should be doing this or you should be doing that, or what does she think she's doing? working a customer service job is just kind of looked down on right. And not only was that your entrance to what got you here, it's probably what like you just said one of the most important parts of how you built this company the way that you did, yeah, it's just really cool. And I think, you know, for our young entrepreneurs listening, if you don't know what college is for you, or maybe you, I felt this, I still not sure why I went to college. You know, it's it's a beautiful path for a lot of people. But there's no, just like you said, the beginning of interview, there's no one size fits all for everything. And I just want to honor that. So I'm incredibly inspired. I just assumed you were older than 25. So I definitely think it's a very inspiring story for everyone, regardless of age, but I just want to honor you for that. Tell us more about how we can get smooth vitamins where to find you online. What's the if we're just starting out? What products should we start with? Yeah, so raving fans,

Karagan Osmann: Thank you so much. Yeah, so you can find us online, we have a website, it's <https://thesmooco.com/>. But with three flavors, we are planning some new products coming soon. But our first product is called over a good and it is definitely going to be always our staple product. So that was our that is literally the product I was talking about the 12 vitamins I was taking each day, and we've had tons of success with it. But I definitely suggest if you are coming over to S'moo, join our community. So we have a community, you could actually access it easier by going to smoobabes.com. And we have an amazing Facebook group and also a mobile app with 1000s of women who take smoothies or just on a hormone balance journey. I always encourage anyone, even if they don't want to take S'moo, just join because there's amazing women on there. And it's really cool to see just like everyone kind of power together and give each other hope and just root for each other. And so it's just an amazing community. And I'm so so blessed to have it as a part of S'moo. And so I definitely recommend joining our community to find out more as well. But we're I love that and Facebook and all that.

Shannan Monson: Love it. It's so community centric and driven by the people. And you know, from day one, you said that right? Like I just started following people, friends. So that's the kind of business owner I want to buy from right like I want to go have have girlfriends, it sounds like so can you leave us with any parting advice or words of wisdom.

Karagan Osmann: I mean, more than anything, it's funny because I actually have like a lot of friends who will kind of like they want to get started and they just like don't know where to start. And like the number one thing as like cliché as it can sound is like, literally just do it. And one of the things that like I am always told us like, Oh, I don't have enough time, or you know, like, or this or that or I don't want people to like attack me like just go for it. Because like haters are gonna hate. Don't worry about what anyone's gonna say like, it's gonna happen regardless. But to and if you don't feel like you have time, I'm a huge fan of something that's called the five minute theory. And it's literally dedicate a minimum of five minutes a day to the goal you're trying to achieve. And if you do more than five minutes, that's awesome. But you just have to do those five minutes. And I promise you, the thing is, is most of the time if you just make the time to do those five minutes, you'll get somewhere and that's like where you have to start so even if it's

like okay, first of all, building out email flows, I think is the hardest thing and timely like so. If you need to build on that, you know, flow, build one email a day, you know, like make it achievable, put it into micro goals, micro versus macro goals. I'm like all for that. So, my number one advice would just be like just go for it make little time for each day. Just check one thing off your list each day and I promise before you know you'll be on your way.

Shannan Monson: Minutes a day, guys. Alright, go follow Karagan and @thesmooco on Instagram. Thank you so much for coming on the show incredibly inspired by you excited to share your story with everyone.

Karagan Osmann: Thank you so, so much. And thank you for having me. It's been so much fun.

Suneera Madhani: Thank you so much for listening. We hope you enjoy the show. Follow us at CEO school on Instagram for show notes, inspiration and exclusive behind the scenes that you won't find anywhere else. We also have an absolutely incredible resource for you. It's the seven lessons we learned building million dollar businesses. These are complete game changers and we want to give it to you absolutely free. All you have to do is leave a review of the podcast, why you love the show, screenshot the review and email it to Hello@ceoschoolpodcast.com and we'll send it your way.