



## EPISODE 32

### *The Solopreneur to Entrepreneur Series with April Pertuis: “Your Perfect Match VA is Out There”*

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| Gary Vee:   | 00:00 | Hey guys, it's Gary Vaynerchuck and you're listening to the front row entrepreneur podcast with our girl, Jen.   |
| Jen Lehner: | 00:10 | April Pertuis is the founder of the light Beamers community and the visibility accelerator where she helps women use their story to get clear on their purpose, build their audience and grow their brand. I think the name of April's business light Beamers is so perfect for her because as you will hear, she really is a ball of sunshine and light. She completed the front row CEO program and ended up with her perfect match virtual assistant. But what I want you to hear is how specifically April is working with her VA a behind the scenes look at her workflow. So let's just jump right in. Okay. So you've recently started working with the VA. It's been a couple of months now I guess. And I know that things look a lot different for you now than when you, when you first started in business or I should say before you had a VA. and so I want to hear all about that and I want to know what, how you're working with your VA, what sorts of things is your VA doing for you in your business? |

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**EPISODE 32:** Your Perfect Match VA is Out There with April Pertuis

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- April Pertuis: 01:14 Yes. Well first of all, I would totally agree with you. It has totally changed. I'm really so much about my business and just to give you a, you know, a worldview of it, it's just created freedom. I'm an entrepreneur because I want braid on my, my life. And I was getting into the whole of not having very much of it because I was doing all the things and wearing all the hats and getting really frustrated and doing things that, number one, I don't really know how to do and number two things that I don't want to do. And I was feeling really like this wasn't a whole lot of fun anymore. And um, but yet I didn't want to stop doing my business because I'm so passionate about what I do. So I was really in that, that's where I was. And now, you know, having someone in my business that's like a partner and you know, she's working with me and taking things off my plate and we are communicating about, you know, what things, you know, what are her, what's her, where are her strengths and how can those help me, you know, take, like I said, lighten the load.
- April Pertuis: 02:20 And um, so some of the specific things, just to give you kind of what that really looks like for me, you know, my business is, is very much all over social media. I mean, it's really that it's all online for the most part. I have some stuff offline, but you know, a large part of my day is spent managing social media, creating content for social media. I'm engaging with people on social media in addition to servicing my clients. And that part of it, you know, when I wasn't servicing my clients, that part of it was just taking a lot of time and I know how to create content. That's not a problem. I know how to repurpose, but it's all the scheduling and planning and mapping it out and getting it in the right place and emailing and Instagram and Facebook and, and just all the things that, that was where I was getting my system was getting clogged.
- April Pertuis: 03:18 And that is a place where she has come in and she's gone through all of my content. She has sorted it out, made sense of it, put it in categories. We've created a Trello board. She has it laid out for me by date, everything that's going to go out so that I can see it and I can also



edit it. You know, I can go in and change things. I can say, Oh, let's, you know, I'll write a, you know, a little bit better copy or I'll just edit things to have it sound, you know, be a little bit more personable for Instagram or Facebook versus going out to my email or something like that. And it's just made the time that I spend all my content so much faster and efficient. And one of my big goals for 2020 and we actually started this in December, but one of my big goals was really to focus on my email list because I spent a good amount of money last year on Facebook ads building my Facebook or building my email list.

April Pertuis: 04:21

And so I have all these people on my email list that quite honestly they're, they may be not be following me on social media, you know, they're not in my Facebook group because I've set at the bar right now I have about 1700 people in my Facebook group and I have 6,000 people on my email list. So they're all my email lists, not watching me on social media. Right. So I knew that I was missing the boat by not, you know, carefully nurturing that relationship via email. And I didn't just want to email them when I had something to sell them cause that's tacky. And uh, I just wasn't, I didn't have an email plan in place. And now because of her, because of having a VA, having someone to kind of help organize all this content, she is loading the content in my email system as drafts, you know, so they're there for me when I'm ready to like I can schedule it and I can plan it and I can send things when I'm ready. But they're all there ready for me. So she is taking things that I've posted on social media and repurposing them for me into an email.

Jen Lehner: 05:33

Okay. That has been huge. Can you tell me exactly what that would look like? Real specifically the re-purposing part. So like maybe a live stream. I

April Pertuis: 05:43

can tell you an exact example. You know, this path. I recently came back from a trip where I had a big speaking engagement and I just, you know, came back and I had a social media posts that I wrote on Facebook. Just really sharing the, and sharing the story because my business is



all around storytelling, so it's very storytelling based. And so it was a really good story. It was a really good share and there were things about it that other people I wanted other people to know because it was kind of like, you know, four years ago, I didn't have these types of experiences. Four years ago, I didn't have this type of business four years ago when I was just starting out in the online space. None of this was a, was not coming in yet. And so it was a way for me to encourage my audience to just keep going, you know, keep building, stay the course, don't give up.

April Pertuis: 06:31

And it had sort of an inspirational message. That's a way to really nurture your audience and give them, give them a shot in the arm when they need it, because we all need that. Right? And so I, I sent her a message in Trello and I said, go grab my Facebook post from today and get it out ready for me for an email. And that's all I said to her. Like, that's all I have to say is leave her a little note and say, go get this and do this with it. And so she did. And I didn't have to go and copy and paste and cut and set up and do the sequence and the tags and all the things in my email list. Right? Like she got all of that set up for me and then she messages me back on the Trello card and she's like, it's ready for your approval in Kajabi, in my email, in my email service provider.

April Pertuis: 07:19

And I was like, great. And so now I have that ready to go. And actually I think we now schedule it to go out. Right. So it was that kind of specific thing where that's kind of the workflow we've been able to build out that just otherwise that would have taken me, you know, it's not that that stuff is hard. I could have sat down and done all of that or I could have spent the hour, you know, going out and reaching out to a client or reaching out to potential new clients or nurturing my audience and having conversations with people, you know, in private messaging and things like that while she's over there doing that kind of stuff.



- Jen Lehner: 07:58 I love that. And you had mentioned to me sometime ago that you were like you, you'll put, she'll put stuff on maybe a Trello board images that you have and uh, she'll get things going for social media or for a post and then you're inspired at that point once you see what she's pulled around a certain theme and then you can go to town to start writing and creating or something. Is that what,
- April Pertuis: 08:26 yes, this has been another amazing thing because she's not just, you know, she's not someone who is just taking direction. She's taking initiative. Okay. So she will go into, she would watch previous Facebook lives that I have done on my business page. She will go back and I didn't tell her to do this, she just did it. And she, you know, I have given her free reign to have anything transcribed that she needs to have transcribed. So we already have that set up. So she'll go and transcribe those Facebook lives and basically pull out the meat. Right. Cause the Facebook lives are very conversational. They're very casual. They're very, Lord knows. I'm saying a lot of ums and all that kind of stuff, you know? And so she just pulls out the meat of what I was trying to say that Facebook live and she will turn it into something for me to use.
- April Pertuis: 09:21 You know, either as an email she'll say, Hey, I transcribe this and I've got this ready for ya. Where do you want to use it? That kind of thing. The other thing that she's done is she's gone and found, you know, old just old social media posts or she'll find things. Actually she's gone into my Canva account because she has access to my Canva account, which is like a graphic design software for dummies. That's basically what I call Canva. And you know, there's been things that I've created in there and then I'll, maybe we'll put them over in my plantarly account, which my planning only account goes out to Instagram. But I had a lot of stuff loaded in plantarly from Canva and things in my Canva account that I've just never had the time to do anything with it. You know, I'll have the ideas for the creating a quote graphic or you know, popping in a picture and I'll kind of put it there.



April Pertuis:	10:11	<p>Like in a bank, like a content bank, like for the day that I get 10 hours and I can sit down and write a bunch of stuff, which those days never come, but they're coming now because she's going and giving me one little, she's spoonfeeding me back my own content and she's like, you know, here I've got this, I found this in your Canva account. Or I found this in plan Lee, I've written some stuff, she'll kind of get me, get it going right? And then she'll say, do you wanna just, you know, sprinkle in April. Like I just have to go in and add what I really wanted to say. Right? And now all I have to do is take five minutes instead of five hours and I just sit down and I write in a very inspired way what that, what that piece would that picture or that quote graphic or whatever it is that I had saved it.</p>
April Pertuis:	11:00	<p>I'm just letting it speak to me. This is actually a great storytelling tip by the way. This is what I teach. You know, you let something like that inspire you and then you just sit down and write. You just say what that is saying to you. And I just write my content that way. But she did all the legwork. She did all the heavy lifting. All I had to do was just sprinkle the April on it. Right. And it's just made creating content fun again. It's made getting my co, my, my Instagram number one, which was about dead cause I just couldn't, I felt I couldn't keep up with it. You know, like the grid pattern and all the things you got to do over there. And I just was mostly focusing on stories, which I still do cause that's where I need to be is in my stories. Right. And so now, I mean she is like, she's made my grid pattern way better than I ever made it. Like she's just, she has time to think about it. Whereas I didn't, I was just slapping stuff up and I felt like my content has gotten an upgrade and it's being more carefully curated and it's being more intentional with the way we speak to our audience. And I'm so happy about that.</p>
Jen Lehner:	12:08	<p>I love that. I'll definitely have to put a link to your Instagram so everybody can take a look. They can scroll down through your grid and see the</p>



April Pertuis:	12:14	scroll down and you'll see the transition that that is coming. Yeah.
Jen Lehner:	12:19	Love it. So, um, what else, what other things are you, um, are you guys working on together and what's coming on down the pipeline? Like what are your, your plans for, for your
April Pertuis:	12:29	team? Well, there's a lot of other little things. They're just these little bitty things like scheduling calls and, and putting the replays and client Trello boards or emailing a client, reminding them we have a call, you know, that kind of stuff. There's a lot of little daily admin tasks that she's doing that has just, once again taken that off my plate and we are creating a system now. We, you know, just actually had a conversation today about creating a Trello board just for us, like to really build out team light Beamers you know, and to have things in one place, like my logo, my hex codes, my affiliate links, my Mazuma link, you know, the number to my zoom link and just all the things that you're constantly having to pull and put in emails or social media post or whatever it may be, or private messages.
April Pertuis:	13:21	And you're like, okay, where do I have that again? And I have to go to zoom and get it, or I'll have to go to Canva and get it and have to go find all these places. And so now she's working on putting all of that for us in one place. You know, just one handy place. And again, that just eliminates time, eliminates the waste of time and it's just creating so much more time to be efficient and productive and focus on income producing activities and focus on, you know, really serving my client and, and nurturing my audience, which is important to me. Um, it's important that I carry on daily conversations with people and I just felt before I was putting out so many fires myself that I would get to the end of the day and I hadn't carried on any conversations with anybody. You know, that kind of stuff is really freeing me up.
Jen Lehner:	14:11	Why do you think Diane is



April Pertuis:	14:16	okay?
Jen Lehner:	14:16	You know, for anybody listening. I mean, you know, cause I know I used to feel this way when I used to listen to Amy Porterfield talk about Trivia and I would be like, well, you know, she just got lucky because she's got, you know, the all time greatest VA in history usually think that too. So
April Pertuis:	14:34	yes, I did. I was like, well yeah, you found your unicorn and I don't have a unicorn over here. That's what I used to think. You know, you found your unicorn good for you. You know, it's not going to strike like that twice, you know, over here. I mean it was kind of a negative way of thinking, but it is, look at other people that have that. And I honestly, I thought that about you. I'm like, I kept saying to you, send me a Nica. How do I find a Nika? You know? And so this is where I'm going to Pat you on the back because your CEO program just walked us through step by step on how to, how to find and hire your VA. and it's the finding part that's so important because it's a step by step process where you put them through a series of tasks.
April Pertuis:	15:20	Well, actually it probably starts in the very, very beginning when you're submitting your, you're posting your job listing, right? You're saying, Hey, I'm looking for a VA that does X, Y, Z. And so it's about tailoring that message instead of just like, I need somebody to help me in my business work 10 hours a week or 20 hours a week. You get really specific about what your needs are. Well, let's back up. Even before I did that, you know, I didn't know what my needs were because I was just in my head. I had everything running around in my head. There were no systems over here. I was flying by the seat of my pants. I was not documenting anything. And I remember there was like a checklist that you kind of put us through for us to sit down and really identify the things that would just be beautiful if we could take them off of our plate, like what do we want to remove?





April Pertuis: 16:11 Right. And it was that process of evaluating your business and you kind of, again, step-by-step walked us through that process and then I could identify what my needs were and then when I posted the job I could clearly communicate who I was looking for, what skill sets I needed. It's a big difference. Do you need someone to do social media posting like I did and helping organize you on the backend like I did? Or do you need a video editor? Do you need an accountant? Do you need, you know, someone to handle all your Gmail and all that kind of stuff. I mean there's like so many different things that maybe you're, you're drowning in, you've got to, you've got to identify the things that you really need help with and then then it's a step by step process from there. Of, of giving them certain tasks and making sure they basically pass the test.

April Pertuis: 17:00 You know, they've got to qualify, they've gotta be, they've got to um, to show that they can perform for you because otherwise you're just going to keep hiring people. And this is actually what I had done. I had hired two VA's prior to this VA, the one that I have now as a result of using the CEO system. I had to hire two VA's before just like, Hey, do you have some extra hours available? Yes, I do. Great. And then I would get a VA on board and they were like, well, what do you want me to do? And I'm like, I have no idea. Like I don't even know what to give you. Right. I just, can you just read my mind please and make some magic happen in my business. Right. That's what I was hoping would happen. And as a result, I was spending a lot of money on VAs that were getting me nowhere. And it's not the VA's fault, it's not their fault at all. I just didn't, I didn't go through a process that really clearly communicated what my needs were because I couldn't communicate what they were. Right. And so your system really does get you in that framework of, of, of evaluating your needs, identifying what you need, communicating what you need, and then hiring for what you need and when you hire that way you get people like I have now that are doing the things that I need, which that's what it's about.



Jen Lehner:	18:19	<p>Yeah. It makes me so happy to hear. And you know, and, and it's something that, and I know, you know from being part of the community, but we hear it, we hear it a lot. And, and the, and that. And I think that's just a big misconception is that if you hire, especially if you hire overseas, if you hire from somewhere like the Philippines, that you're going to get lesser quality work and because you're paying such a lesser rate, but it actually is not true. It's just you have to be able to eliminate all the time wasters before. Yeah. You, you definitely have to eliminate all the time wasters before you ever even think about interviewing someone. So I think that's what one of the things that's really good about the process is that like, you know, it just gets you directly to qualified people before you ever interview and spend any time. I tried to make it anyway as automated as possible so that the, the right people are there, are there to be interviewed. And so, you know that that is something I hear a lot is like, well how do you know that? Like, you're going to get people who are trustworthy, your capable, everyone's like, well, before they ever go into Skype, so many things have already happened. You're,</p>
April Pertuis:	19:33	<p>you really have, you put them sort of through a ringer, you know, like you've really given them a lot of test that they had to pass. And you know, with each step of that you gain the confidence that this is the person that's going to be trustworthy and do a good job. And, you know, here's how I look at it too, about the whole thing in the Philippines. Because, you know, I, I did have that Pang of, of kind of guilt, like, really, is this okay for me to pay someone so little by American standards. Right. And I felt guilty about that, but I did my research because I really wanted to, I never want to be, I don't want to get involved in like slave labor or any of that. Like that's just so against my principles. And this is not what this is at all.</p>
April Pertuis:	20:21	<p>It's different. Like the economy is so different there and that, you know, their living wage is different than our living wage. And so \$20 for us is, is, is way less for them. It, you know, it's a lot, it's like \$2, right? And so for them to, you</p>



know, get paid for \$5 an hour is great to start and it gives you room to then maybe move them up towards an American pay scale. And, Oh my gosh, I, you know, I've already given my assistant a raise, a \$1 raise. And she cried when I gave it to her because that \$1 is going to go so far. And for her and her family and we were on zoom and you know, I just told her that, you know, she was doing such a good job and that I was so thankful for having someone to come into my business and help me this way.

April Pertuis: 21:19

I mean, basically I needed a business wife, you know, I needed someone to come in and organize and boss me around a little bit, just tell me what to do in terms of like the schedule and that's what she's done with my social media issues, organized it, she's got it all scheduled and she'll come in and say, Hey, April, now it's on you. I need you to do this. And then I can take, take it from there and just, you know, having the direction and, yeah, well I'm just saying, you know, so I, I've now feel really confident and paying her, I'm now paying her \$5 an hour and I can't wait to like just keep surprising her with those, with those raises, you know, and I now see it differently. I am actually giving a woman in a foreign country that doesn't have all of the things that we have in this country of the United States. I am now giving her an opportunity and I feel really good about that and I'm excited and I, I just feel like it's, it's, I feel connected to someone across the world, you know? And it's, it's really just a shift in perspective.

Jen Lehner: 22:28

Yeah, I totally agree. And I love that you said that you can start here and this, this is like what I want people to hear like loud and clear is that the reason this works, the reason that this works to grow your business so quickly and to really truly scale like no other, no other strategy is going to help you scale as fast as this is because you're leveraging the exchange rate. But like you said, then you can grow them. You know, as they stay with you and they grow with your company, you can bring them up to USA rates. And that is the idea is that we are hiring virtual assistants who stayed with us for years that become a



part of our business that take ownership in our businesses. And I know Diane already, um, has done that in your business and, and that, that is sort of the thing is that yeah, like it is what if you start a VA out at \$5 an hour, it is or \$4 an hour.

Jen Lehner: 23:30

It is an okay starting livable wage, but there is plenty of room to grow and other ways to compensate as your business is growing. Other ways to bring value to them and that is for example like giving them access to all the courses that you've created so that they can learn or that you've purchased with permission of the course creator. Um, like have them log into the, to the, to a certain course through your last pass so they can learn new skills and you're both benefiting. They've, they've increased their skill set and they're not going to bring that value into your business. You know, I have, we're trying to get Neeca here, she, we're just waiting on her visa and I know a lot of people will do that with their overseas VA's, whether they're in the Philippines or Indonesia or whatever to come and spend time in the U S and you know, or buy a computer for their, for their VA.

Jen Lehner: 24:26

I mean there's other ways to compensate your VA and show your love and appreciation until you get to the point where you know you're really have scaled and they can scale with you and that rod, his wife, you know the entry level, like if you were going to have a full time VA in the United States, it's cost prohibitive for most solo preneurs, even solo preneurs who are doing pretty well. Even if you're making six figures a year, if you're going to have a full time VA at \$25 an hour, you've just completely eaten up all of your whatever profits that you've made.

April Pertuis: 25:00

already within two months, she is at 30 hours a week. I'm already giving her 30 hours a week and that's what I'm paying her and I would give her 40 hours a week. But she, she, she's the mom of a young son and she, you know, still sort of staying at home if you will. So, you know, she's good now with 30 hours, but I've let her know the minute you want more, let me know because I will give you more



and I can't, I would not, you know. Yeah. I mean I'm doing okay with my business and I'm hitting that level. But like you said, it's, it's um, that starts to eat into your, that's a significant pay in, you know, to hire somebody full time, 40 hours and then the U S and it's like, okay, well I don't want insurance and benefits and all that.

April Pertuis: 25:46

I don't, I just not at that level yet. I'm like, I look forward to getting to that level and I will gladly pay those things when I get to that level. But I needed something that was like a leg up that puts me on the path to get to that level. Right. And this is it. And I can also see how, you know, as we grow, and obviously I bring on other assistants and other team members, which is exciting to even think about that because I mean there was a time where I could barely think about having one person on my team and now that I have one person on my team, now I can start to vision what does it look like when I have five people on my team? And that's becoming a reality now. And I could not have visioned that before. So you have to just start with the one thing and you know, create some systems in your business so that you really get to get back in the driver's seat of your business instead of your business running over you like a freight train. And that's how you feel at the end of every day, which is exactly how I felt. And I'm really starting to breathe so much easier now because I have someone that is, you know, taking just so many things off of my plate. Like I kept saying and it's just been awesome.

Jen Lehner: 26:55

Oh, well April, thank you so much for sharing your, your story with us and I can't wait to check back in with you. Um, this time next year.

April Pertuis: 27:04

Oh, I know. Like it's going to be, I can't even imagine it's going to be so cool to see what all has unfolded because of having health, you know, and it's just like women, like we always say, well it takes a village to raise kids. Well, you know what, it takes a village to have a business and if you're over there not building your village, you know you're going to burn out and you're not going to, you're



not going to sustain that. And it's the same concept. And so I'm excited to be building my village.

Jen Lehner: 27:34

Awesome. Well we're going to leave it right there cause that's a great point to end on. Thank you so much April. I really appreciate you spending time with us today and um, I'm going to take you up on that check in for next year.

April Pertuis: 27:45

Yes, let's do it.

Jen Lehner: 27:49

If you'd like to connect with April, head on over to [lightbeamers.com](http://lightbeamers.com) links to all the resources mentioned today. Along with all the show notes can be found at [jenlehner.com/april](http://jenlehner.com/april) and if you'd like more information about Front Row CEO, head over to [frontrowceo.com](http://frontrowceo.com) see you next time.

