Corey Andrew Powell ([00:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=2.36)):

Hello everyone. I am Corey Andrew Powell, and I am so excited to be joined today by Chef Robert Irvine, popular host of the Food Networks Restaurant Impossible. Robert's also an entrepreneur with numerous successful businesses, restaurants, and the founder of the Robert Irvine Foundation that gives back to America's veterans and first responders. So Robert, welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Chef Robert Irvine ([00:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=24.11)):

Very nice to see you. Thanks for having me.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=26.57)):

Of course. Absolutely. Well, listen, I went on Facebook last night to my Facebook family, and I just popped the photo of your book and I said, okay, who watches Restaurant Impossible? And when I tell you it was like you were like, Michael Jackson, like this <laugh> the page lit up and people are like, oh my God. So just wanna let you know you're a rockstar, as if you didn't know.

Chef Robert Irvine ([00:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=45.4)):

Thank you. That's very kind.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=46.99)):

Yeah, you're welcome. And um, it brings me to another point though, actually, just to start with your book, which is about entrepreneurship. We are really all about people, right? The idea that we have to have like a people first society, I think now, and in, and in businesses especially, like to make sure people are good or taken care of by their organizations or respected someone last night on Facebook said he used to work at one of your restaurants in DC and it was one of the best experiences working from the management to just how they were taken care of. And I just wanna say that, you know, you're the real deal because when you hear that from someone who you don't know, they just said that you run a tight ship, but you are respectful and, and your employees really, uh, love working for you. So I just wanna give you that before we get started.

Chef Robert Irvine ([01:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=90.76)):

Oh, thank you. Yeah. One thing, Corey, for me is, is you talk about people, and we can get into this more, more as we go along, but people, for me, are it right? We're in the people business. This world, no matter what business you're in, if you do not take care of your people, yes, I'm tough. I, I make no apologies for being tough, but I'm fair and I'm empathetic and I care about the families of the people that work with me. People don't work for me, they work with me. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. And I think that's the difference.

Corey Andrew Powell ([01:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=119.59)):

Yeah. And you bring up a good point because those people, they're, they're working because that money sustains them. They have a family to take care of. So it's all encompassing. So I definitely, uh, appreciate that. And also in your business too, I read that you mentioned 22% of small businesses fail within the first year. Right. And that's a pretty high turnover in itself, about a quarter of businesses. But then you also mentioned 75% of, of the, the restaurant business. Now that's like a higher turnover than ever before. So what is causing that such a, such a big turnover in the restaurant industry right now?

Chef Robert Irvine ([02:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=154.23)):

I think the restaurant industry throughout decades has, has had high turnover. Not as much as it has now, simply because prior to Covid, people really wanted to work and wanted to get out of home. Now, I think Covid opened up another o o other opportunities for folks that didn't think they had o other opportunities. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, you know, if you look at actors that work, work in restaurants, and you look at a restaurant job, and, and I'm saying this with tongue in cheek now, the restaurant job, you don't have to have many skills. You can learn the skills to be a great server, a great cook, et cetera, et cetera, if you want to. But not many people nowadays want to be in a service industry. I think with inflation, with with salary caps and all the things that happen in our business, uh, hospitality, people are finding easier ways from working from home.

Chef Robert Irvine ([03:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=207.66)):

And I use this in a, in a, in a tongue cheek way. Again, an assistant to somebody from America that's living in, in Africa or India or you know, some other country. Uh, and and great for them, if they can make the money and do the hours they wish, then, then that's great. But it's hurting our industry here. I mean, it's, even it hurting our military. I mean, we're in a national security crisis right now with, with hiring folks because people don't want to join the military. So it's very similar as the restaurant, uh, business, I think.

Corey Andrew Powell ([03:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=238.95)):

Yeah, I just think like the world in general, you're right. There's just like a response to Covid where people are even afraid to be in crowds or around people, and they've gotten acclimated to a whole new way of life. Well, coming back to your particular journey though. So you have filmed over 200 episodes of Restaurant Impossible at this point, which is like insane.

Chef Robert Irvine ([04:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=257.44)):

It's actually over 320.

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=259.44)):

Over 320 now. Okay. So by the time I read this, your, your bio, you've already surpassed that number that I read. Okay. So over 300 then. And, but in addition to that, as I mentioned, you have all these other things you're involved with as well, and of course your foundation. So at some point, I'm not sure when you found the time to write a book, uh, more or more than one book, but you wrote your new book, uh, which is Overcoming Impossible. And so first we just would love to know, uh, what inspired you to write this book.

Chef Robert Irvine ([04:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=288.4)):

Uh, for 13 years Restaurant Impossible has been running over 320 episodes that I just just mentioned there. That's not your fault, that's our team's fault for not giving that number <laugh>.

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=297.08)):

No worries.

Chef Robert Irvine ([04:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=298.52)):

We've, uh, done over a thousand episodes of TV in general, and every week a couple of thousand people would ask me to help them save their restaurant or their business. So what you see in in, in Robert Irvine in Restaurant Impossible is what Robert Irvine does for Fortune 500 companies on the other side of, of, uh, the coin. So I take care of small mom and pop businesses, but also, you know, the bigger companies, the, the Comcasts, the, the American Airlines, all those kind of things who have the same scalable problems. The difference being is I can only do one restaurant a week, even though we get 2000 applications a week, I can do one. So, um, I was getting a lot of emails and, and, um, asked for help and I said, look, I I just simply cannot get to those folks. But how about I try and put it down on paper?

Chef Robert Irvine ([05:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=350.5)):

And I called, uh, my magazine editor, uh, we have a magazine, Robert Irvine Magazine, uh, Matt Tuthill, and I said, look, Matt, how about we do a business book next? And we, we tell all the pitfalls and all the success stories and all the failures of not only me, but other people to show the, the grit and integrity and the hard work. And if you listen, you can succeed. So that's what kind of prompted the book. It took us a year to write it and because there was a lot of case studies in there of, of the businesses that I started that I failed at and said, failed with capital F and how I bounced back as well as Fortune 500 CEOs and they're favors. So I think it's a really interesting book. It's not a book that says, oh, if you do 1, 2, 3, 4, you're gonna be successful because that's not, that's not real life. And you know that yourself, Corey, right? Yeah. So for me, it's all about three things. It's empathetic leadership, meaning listening and understanding your people. Then it's egos.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=423.15)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yep.

Chef Robert Irvine ([07:04](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=424.42)):

And losing your own ego as in me, um, and leaders. And then the third one is trust.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=430.79)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>.

Chef Robert Irvine ([07:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=431.44)):

And I think they're just three integral pieces of success. And if you, if you have a team, and we started with, with me and, and Justin, and we are at 5,000 employees now. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Wow. So six, and I've only lost three because I got rid of them in 14 years. Wow.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=452.9)):

That's a pretty good track record <laugh>.

Chef Robert Irvine ([07:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=455.79)):

So I feel if you, if you follow this book and you read the book, you are gonna be energized in, in, in so many different ways because it's, normally, I publish the books myself. I self-publish. I showed it to a friend of mine at Harper Collins and they went nuts on it because it's very unusual. So I think people are gonna get all the answers to the questions ready for them to make that next jump. Whatever that next jump is, whether it be with a family, whether it be with a business, whether it be oil, cars, you know, whatever it you decide to do. But I think it's so full of, there's 22 case studies in there of failure, which is great. Uh, and they all go back to those three things: empathetic leadership, egos and trust.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=499.94)):

Yeah. It's funny you bring that up because last night when I mentioned how I talked about you on Facebook, one of the responses I got was from a guy in Boston. Uh, he has a deli called, uh, Benedetti's, I believe it's called Edward Benedetti is his name. So it's his own namesake restaurants. He was like, oh my gosh, I love that guy. And he's also a bodybuilder. And he said, I wish I could ask him some expertise about my business. So now I'm excited to tell him, well, listen, you have to buy the book <laugh>, because it was geared towards, you couldn't answer everyone individually, but he could find some nuggets there probably to help his business. So I'm really glad you you made that point cuz he was, he's a big and he's a bodybuilder, so it made perfect sense. You know, I wanted to ask you as well, the journey that we are all on, it's, it's, it's figurative and it's sometimes also literal, but you individually when you were younger, is this the life you dreamed was possible? Or was this something that's so out of left field to you, your success?

Chef Robert Irvine ([09:15](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=555.92)):

Corey? I'm 57 years old. When I was 15 and a half years old, I joined the mans Royal Navy. I signed on the dotted line because I was not a good student. Mm-hmm. I thought it's a sailor's life for me. I loved the ocean. I was a secret cadet at that time. I loved going to bases and I thought service was gonna be my thing. I kind of excelled at leadership at a very young age. You put me in a room or anybody else in a room, there's always a leader that emerges. Um, the answer is no. I felt that I was gonna do it a a lot of time in the military. And my mother was very, uh, instrumental in that. Like, get in the military, you need somebody to, uh, teach you lessons, um, discipline lessons more than anything else. I was not a kind of a, a, um, a good kid, I would say.

Chef Robert Irvine ([10:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=603.4)):

I, I, I didn't do drugs and alcohol and things like that. Um, although that's not true. I did do alcohol, but I feel that I needed, it was, I was bored at school. I think that I loved history, I loved woodwork, I loved sports, sports, but I didn't like anything else. So I would, my mother would go to work. I would, uh, double back and, and drink beer, my dad's beer with my friends. Uh, until one day she picked up the phone and called the house and I answered, and that was a demise of Robert Irvine <laugh>. Um, uh, I joined the military young and it was exciting. It was hard work. I was a young 16 year old sailor heading down into Ascension Islands or the forks on a, on a destroyer with people a lot older than me. It was a wake up call. It was what I believe has set me on the path to success because I used the lessons I learned in the military to run my businesses the same way. So no, I never felt I would be, you know, in 170 countries, a billion viewers, 11 companies and 5,000 employees, and having an amazing charity. And everything I do is based around that charity.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=668.94)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. I know a lot of the proceeds, well, I guess a percentage of proceeds from all your businesses go back into the Robert Irvine Foundation, correct?

Chef Robert Irvine ([11:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=677.53)):

Yes. Correct.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=678.809)):

And so what is it that made that such a pillar for you in your business model?

Chef Robert Irvine ([11:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=686.03)):

Uh, I think almost by osmosis. I, you know, I'd, I'd been in the military. I came out the military, I'd seen kind of a gap. I worked with Gary Sinise for many, many years, 15 years.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=699.15)):

Oh, that's right. Yeah. He was in the military. You're right.

Chef Robert Irvine ([11:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=701.5)):

He's one of my dear friends, one of my mentors. He never served. I did. And I wanted to do more. And, and as I was helping him do these, you know, dinners for, and lunches for military folks at 10, 10 and 15, 20,000 people, he would do a concert. And we were, we were like Batman and Robin, or we still are, I should say. But when you serve somebody a meal, and I, and I truly believe this, and that comes from the heart, it can be a hotdog chicken, you know, whatever it is. If, if it comes from here, people really respect that. And I think food is the international language of hope. It starts all the tough questions and answers and, and conversations. But that's what really started me. After working with Gary for eight years, I wanted to do more. And we started Robert Irvine Foundation.

Chef Robert Irvine ([12:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=748.96)):

You know, Gary builds homes, uh, and, and does other things. I I take care of mental and physical health, uh, because I love to work out. I love the fitness piece. But at, after, you know, many, many times in Afghanistan and Iraq and seeing the, the post traumatic stress and the folks that were coming back, not only with with limbs missing, but but the invisible scars of war and the family scars of war. I wanted to do more. And that's why we started the Robert Irvine Foundation to really, you know, help the taps of the world, the USO of the world, the Garys of the world, because I felt the government was not doing enough to take care. You know, when we, we have young, the 1% of our country, young men and women sign up in our military, we say we're gonna take care of them for life. And we weren't doing it. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. And we're still not doing it.

Corey Andrew Powell ([13:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=796.83)):

Yeah. I've had, I've had that conversation, uh, on this show, often with people who are either in the military or they're working much like you to help provide funds. And it really boils down to the fact that the, there's a feeling that the government is not doing its part to take care of the very people who are fighting and defending us. Um, and going back to every war, I mean, the, the way people came back from Vietnam, of course, I mean, that was like the, the, the pinnacle of that sort of almost abandonment after the ultimate sacrifice. But that's a whole other show, Robert. We can.

Chef Robert Irvine ([13:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=826.27)):

<laugh> We can, yes.

Corey Andrew Powell ([13:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=827.75)):

Yeah, we can rabbit hole that one really easily. But you know what I have noticed though, you mentioned something that, uh, I wanna bring up. You did talk about how some of the lessons that you're bringing forward in your book, they aren't just business related. They can literally be applied to life. And that's what I've noticed a lot when I've interviewed successful people, whether it be entrepreneurs or CEOs. And so you have a few of those examples of those lessons in your, in your book I wanna touch upon, uh, as well. But please go ahead.

Chef Robert Irvine ([14:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=856.35)):

I, I, I've had the distinct pleasure, and I'm gonna throw this question at you in a second also cause we're gonna reverse a little bit. Okay. Talking to many, many successful CEOs, actors, coaches, all those kind of people that I deal with, um, in life. And I always say, so, so tell me, what is your idea of, of balance in life? Because, you know, we, we hear these stories, oh, you've gotta balance work, um, home life. And I always say there is no such thing as, as a balanced life. Because if you want to be a successful entrepreneur, it means you have to work all hours God sends to make, to make your businesses work. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. So how do you set those, those boundaries up? You know, I'm on the road 345 days a year, 150 of those around the world with our military in, in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Poland, Spain, all those kind of things.

Chef Robert Irvine ([15:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=911.95)):

I have a wife, Gail Kim, uh, professional athlete. I have two daughters, uh, one's 24, one's 22. Now, how do I fit that into that lifestyle? So it's really interesting. Number one, this house that I'm sitting in, I'm here 11 days a year. Um, I, it's where my clothes say, uh, the rest. I'm, I'm in a hotel or I'm on a plane, or I'm somewhere. The rules that I make in the book and the rules that I make for myself are the phone every day morning. If I'm away from my wife and kids, I call them every morning and I send them videos and talk to 'em every night when they're here to my house or we are home, the phones go away. They're in a basket at the front. I turn off the internet. They cannot allow anything in here. It is just communication.

Chef Robert Irvine ([16:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=960.44)):

Because when I grew up, my father was in the army and my brother was in the army. I had two sisters, uh, uh, and my mother. And we, every Sunday was our time to sit around the table and eat and talk and communicate. And I think the communication that we have in our business is the same communication we have in our family, except sometimes it's better in our business. It is in our family, and we have to really make that work. And, and around a plate of food, funny enough. Um, I've had some of the toughest conversations. I remember doing a show in, in Alabama not long after the George Floyd incident, and somebody was, uh, Molotov cocktailing a black family's restaurant that I was fixing. Mm. I made a pot of soup and stopped them, and I sat down with them like, so I get, you're angry.

Chef Robert Irvine ([16:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1010.06)):

You're all angry. We're angry. I got goosebumps. Now we're all angry and it needs to be fixed, but this is not fixing it. And it's amazing. A bowl of soup, it took me 35 minutes. I'm like, just sit down. And that bowl of soup stopped that anger and we could communicate. And it was as simple as, I really get goosebumps now. And it was as simple as a bowl of soup. So, so for me, the lessons in the book and the, and the time that you spend together and the communication losing this, I'm better than you. I make more money than you. The ego things, I don't care how much money you make, I, I get a lot of money away. Why? Because I believe I feel good about it. It's not about, business is not always about making money. Business is about communities. And how do you help the person below you or above you get better?

Chef Robert Irvine ([17:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1066.1)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, my job is to make sure every one of my employees that work with me can move up. Nobody wants to stay stagnant. Listen, I was a dishwasher for years, right? I, I don't wanna stay washing dishes. And if you do, that's okay, but then I need to, you need to communicate that, and I need to understand that. But not many people I know want to stay stagnant. So I think knowing your employees, not just, I don't care whether you're a Boeing, I don't care if you're American, I don't care who you are, you better know your employees because if you know what the struggles are and you can help those struggles, you get a better employee.

Corey Andrew Powell ([18:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1103.22)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah.

Chef Robert Irvine ([18:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1104.59)):

It's, it's, it, to me, it's common sense. Although people say it's all about money. No, it's, it is with bigger companies because they feel that, you know, if if we pay more money, we lose more money in the bottom line shareholders. I think the reverse of that. I think if you pay the person to do a job that do a great job, which generates more leads and more money.

Corey Andrew Powell ([18:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1125.35)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>. Yeah, absolutely. Yes. I've actually seen that whole, like, beholden to shareholders. They kill a lot of businesses because the shareholders just only care about like a dollar value, not the actual culture building, which is something you also speak about now. You talk about, uh, the idea of, uh, I think it was, I'm just, yeah. The, the foster the traits of authenticity and trust into your culture. And I think that's a big one because I just interviewed Lee Cockerell, who was the former vice president, uh, executive at Disney World. Yeah. Um, and he has a very similar quote, which is, cultivate the culture you want, or you get stuck with the culture. You got basically <laugh>, you know, and you have a very similar approach to that, building the culture authentically.

Chef Robert Irvine ([19:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1167.59)):

1997, I was in Jamaica actually, 96 for a year. 1997, I got offered a job with Donald Trump at Trump Taj Mahal as the executive sous chef. They were doing 784 million a year on the casino floor, 15 million on food and beverage. Donald Trump said, I wanna increase the, the revenue in food and beverage. So I said, okay. So for four months I sat undercover jeans, t-shirt, uh, committed six at night, went on six in the morning. Our first year we fired 300 people because they were not good people stealing and, and drugs and, and all the other things that go on in big establishments. And then we started to build a team, and I asked the president Rudy Prieto to put in a, um, a, a hotline called the President's Hotline. It was a phone system where they could complain and get their voices heard. Uh, it broke in the first couple of, uh, weeks I was there.

Chef Robert Irvine ([20:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1219.99)):

Oh, wow. And it was all bad about me, how everybody hated me. I was not a good human being, yada, yada, yada. After we fired those 300 people, our revenue, and, and by the way, and had multiple meetings of those 1,132 people, our revenue started to decline. It got to 80.3 million in food and beverage from 15. We bought in equipment. You can't ask somebody to do their job without giving them the tools to do their job. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, we trained them to do what we're asking 'em to do. We give them uniforms and we give them a, and we give them experiential hope by being next to them. I cooked 5,000 eggs on a Saturday morning with the cooks to prove that we could do it. And I think the, the, the leadership, again, I go back to leadership in everything I do. You can't ask somebody to do something unless you do it alongside them to prove that it can be done

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1280.4)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>

Chef Robert Irvine ([21:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1281.02)):

And give them the tools to do it. Yes. And I never forget that, um, I left Trump after four years because I, I really felt I'd done an amazing job and, and couldn't grow anymore. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> or grow them anymore. Right. And I went to a casino down the road and did exactly the same thing. People made more money because they were trained better. They could, they could, uh, accelerate in their, in their career path. I just think that that's the, the, the cool way in Jamaica, uh, 1997, before I even came to, to Trump Taj Mahal, I was working for a renaissance. And one day I I, and you know, this little guy, young kid in, in Jamaica and a big hotel, two hotels put together. Nobody showed up for work when it rained. But I still had 2000 hotel guests. Why does nobody come to work in Jamaica when it rains? Well, there's no transport.

Corey Andrew Powell ([22:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1331.92)):

Mm-hmm.

Chef Robert Irvine ([22:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1332.05)):

There's no, so I get on the phone, I call by why we not have buses to pick the people up, take them home, different shifts. Eventually after a year, we got it. You know, and again, people see that you care about them. And the reason I'm telling you these stories, not because Robert's, you know, this superhero, it's because it's common sense ideals of taking care of one another. I don't care who you are, what you are, where you are. But if I'm asking you to do a job and you can't show up because there is a problem, then let's fix the problem.

Corey Andrew Powell ([22:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1360.869)):

Yeah. Yeah. It goes back to the empathy thing that you mentioned earlier, right? Because, um, no one thinks about infrastructure for, from a company <laugh> as being a reason why your people might not be coming to work, but just being conscious enough to ask, well, why are they not showing up? That shows up. The interest has to be there, the genuine interest in the people, right? You also have some practical entrepreneur, I guess, tips if you will. And I, I really wanted to ask you about this one cuz I watched Shark Tank, like, I'm obsessed. And so when I watched that show, this one comes up how accepting seed money, <laugh> seed funding from family and friends can sink your business before it opens. And, and I see this on the Shark Tank, so please share your thoughts on that.

Chef Robert Irvine ([23:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1405.27)):

I am a, and by the way, I love Shark Tank too. Um, Lori and Lori and Mark are, are friends and, and

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1410.97)):

Oh great, great.

Chef Robert Irvine ([23:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1411.56)):

They're just great human beings and give great advice for me. I don't believe you should accept any money from any person in any business, period. I have not from day one. Um, I've maxed out credit cards, don't get me wrong. I took out loans as much as I could loan, but I believe the minute you introduce families into a business or money from families, there is a conflict of interest.

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1439.05)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>

Chef Robert Irvine ([23:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1439.7)):

and knowing that you're not gonna be able to pay them back. Most of, most, I say 90% of the time not. I just feel it creates friction, um, between families and friends. And it doesn't help a business if you've got a great solid business plan. And look, I've done it on three companies. I've maxed out. I wrote a check that I never had, by the way, when I started Fit Crunch eight years ago. I wrote a check and I, I wrote the check and I said to my bank, please just cash it. I promised we'll figure it out somehow. And we did, thanks to my, my, uh, bank manager, Linda, and it worked out. Could it have gone south like some other one? Absolutely. Um, but I had such a, a, a good feeling of the product and, and where it was gonna go. I didn't worry.

Chef Robert Irvine ([24:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1487.23)):

So I have never taken money from families or friends. I just think, uh, my wife doesn't work with me. My children don't work with me. I think it's very tough to leave work at work and I just had my big meaning in Phoenix where I have my top 50 executives. My wife was there, my two children were there not to work, to listen to what I'm doing. So they understand the companies, they understand what goes on so that they're in the loop, but they have no power to do anything if, if that makes sense. And I don't mean that in a negative way. I just find it very hard to separate work and family, me personally. So, uh, I don't have them involved. I tell them what's going on because I think that's important. My wife has her own career. Number one, my kids have their own career and I don't want them to feel any way that they're entitled to anything because all these other people are working for something that yes, eventually they'll benefit in some way, shape, or form.

Chef Robert Irvine ([25:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1546.54)):

But I'm not the guy that leaves big things for, for kids. I, I'm a big believer in when they were kids. My, my kids were homeschooled. They went to fire stations, they went to soup kitchens, they went to church kitchens, they went and they still do to this day. And both of them, uh, one is a pediatric, uh, speech pathologist in John Hopkins and the other one is a, a, um, public defender in Philadelphia. Mm. And in the service business of taking care of other people. And I think that growing up and, and my passion for people rubbed off on them and they're, and they're doing their own things, you know? So Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([26:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1583.65)):

I think that's really important too because people often, when they're successful as you are, and they have, you know, whatever the success may be that comes with it, the, the fame or money or travel and houses and all that, and the kids can be pretty rotten, spoiled brats. I mean we, we see a lot of examples of that. So it's, it's refreshing to hear that you consciously were like, not my kids. That's not gonna be.

Chef Robert Irvine ([26:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1606.8)):

Well, I don't have big fancy houses. I don't have planes, I don't have big fancy cars. Uh, I wear jeans and t-shirts and, um, why? Because and why are they all the same or black and blue because they travel. You know, I always laugh because the top 50 Fortune 500 company CEOs are very similar. You know, they have the same suit, the same tie, the same uh, uh, or t-shirt, and it stops the thought process of what am I gonna wear today? Well, you know what you're gonna wear so you can focus on other things.

Corey Andrew Powell ([27:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1638.96)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, it's very Steve Jobs.

Chef Robert Irvine ([27:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1641.119)):

Yes. Yea, exactly.

Corey Andrew Powell ([27:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1641.869)):

I mean, look at, yeah, he didn't amount to much that guy.

Chef Robert Irvine ([27:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1644.48)):

I can't be dapper like you, but that suits you.

Corey Andrew Powell ([27:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1648.84)):

Wow. Robert, thank you so much for joining me today here. Your book, uh, Overcoming Impossible. It comes out February 14th, which I think, you know, just saying could make a great Valentine's Day gift, just putting that out there. Uh, but I'm not sure this may air actually after Valentine's Day. But in any event, we are really happy you join us today here on Motivational Monday. So thanks for being here with us.

Chef Robert Irvine ([27:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1668.119)):

Well, thank you.

Speaker 3 ([27:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/NK6VPIscXzgCBVBQi6P-YgyKHHLSxNgfx0BP3Z4-6H0IbcmrXPY1yqyiDu2kPEQ_z15e6nV54wUML8_3zpu365VlaUk?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1669.359)):

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