

**Gat LeBlanc**



# **YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES**

**Live, work  
and make money  
your way**



Your Business, Your Rules



# **YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES**

*Live, work and make money your way*

*Cat LeBlanc*

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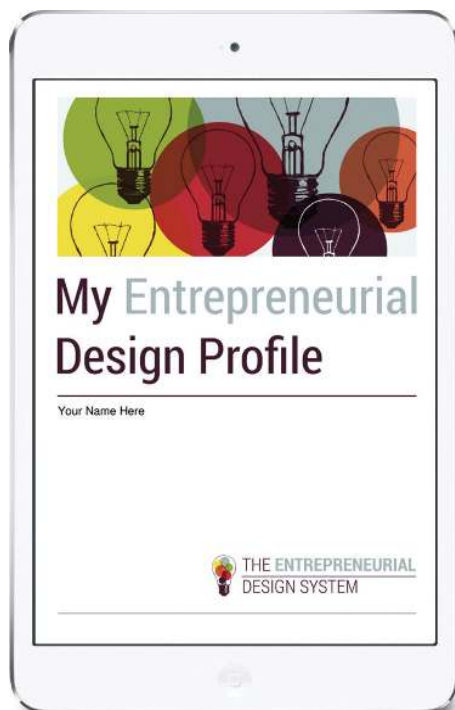


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# MANIFESTO

## Your Business, Your Rules

Imagine a life where you get to make the rules. Where you can sleep in if you feel like it, or get up early and do morning yoga if that's your thing.

Where you work from home in your pyjamas if you choose, or dress up and hang out with people you admire at that hip coworking space in the city if you prefer.

Where work days look however you damn well want them to look and you have more than enough free time to do whatever you want.

It would be a life where you could give back as well as feel accomplished, where things get done how you want them done. It would be a life led truly by design.

Does this all sound like a pipe dream? If it does, let me assure you that it's very real and that thousands of people are doing it already.

*Your Business, Your Rules* is the roadmap to creating all this for yourself, as the unique individual that you are, with less of what you don't want in your life and more of what you do. That could mean less singing to the tune of your boss, and more stepping up as a leader in your own life. That could mean less wearing suits to meetings, and more showing up

## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

for your clients as the real you. Or that could mean less time sitting in traffic on the highway, and more opportunity to create a work environment that makes you feel healthy and happy. In fact, it could mean less of everything that drains you, and more of everything you find fulfilling.

We are in an age where you really can make money on your own terms if you want to (you're here aren't you?) and if you know how (keep reading!).

Too many business books give you generalities and platitudes. *Build an audience! Get in front of people! Make money! Be awesome!* But what these business books often lack is the specific information you need to take to bring it all together, the actual steps you need to make it happen. That is the intention of *Your Business, Your Rules*; not only to set the context of business and show you the choices out there, but also to guide you in making the right choice for you and moving you forward to execute it.

In Part 1, *The Bigger Game*, I show you exactly how this game we call 'business' works so that you can go in with your eyes open with much better chances of getting what you actually want.

In Part 2, *Who's Your Player*, you will go on an initial self-discovery journey so that you're clear on what you *actually* want. We are bombarded with messages about what we *should* want. More stuff, a perfect partner, happy smiling children. Or wait... Was it a double income and no kids? Shouldn't we aim for a fabulous apartment in a top-tier city? Or was it a mansion in the country? With all these 'shoulds', it's hard to keep track.

## MANIFESTO

Let's get to what's important to you so that the game you're even playing is the right one to support this amazing future life of yours. After all, what's the point in winning a game where you don't even want the prize?

In Part 3, Your Gaming Options, we look at which game you could play. After all, you have options. In any area of life, you want to understand your options and choose your path consciously. And truthfully, some of these options are more likely to succeed than others and some of them are much more likely to feel good on a daily basis. Just like some games have better odds. And just like some games you win every time, and others you always get beaten.

For most people looking for freedom and aiming to live life on their own terms, I believe one option trumps all the others. I'll explain why and what that can look like in Part 3.

Finally, in Part 4, Your Business, Your Rules, I'm going to outline exactly how to get your new freedom-based business off the ground — your way.

In short, this book is your roadmap to earning money, having more fun doing it, dramatically increasing your chances of success and likelihood of it suiting your personality, so that you can truly live life on your own terms. It's the game plan that you can apply in a way that gives you the most freedom. It's my take on the easiest way to work for yourself that gives you the most flexibility in your approach and the highest chances of success.

This roadmap works. And more importantly, it enables you to stay true to who you are.



## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

I've honed the process through working with hundreds of clients all over the globe and helping many thousands more through my podcast and blog.

From stay-at-home parents turned web developers, to public relations officers turned energy healers, to teachers turned horse trainers even! From the US, to Australia, to the UK, to UAE, to South Africa and everywhere in between. Wherever you are, whoever you are, we are at a time in history where we have opportunities like never before.

Let's dive in.

# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book contains a roadmap for understanding the game of business, choosing the right game to play and then creating your own game plan. You will almost certainly be arriving at this point with a lot of mixed up information about what you should and shouldn't be doing.

Everyone is shouting at you to join in their game. They all know their game's rules and how to win at it, they say. You probably already thought about taking a seat at the table, but kept on walking.

This book is about explaining the whole business setting; instead of giving you a glimpse of the business world through one narrow model, it gives you an overview of many models by zooming out and viewing the whole.

That's why it's best to read through this book cover to cover first and really take it all in. That way, you can:

- understand how different business models work
- understand where you have the best chances of success
- understand more about yourself and what you want
- then take the necessary actions.

In other words, first understand, then implement. Once the information has landed, you won't view the business world

the same way and you can make decisions with greater knowledge. In short, you'll understand how the games work. 'Games' plural, because there isn't just one.

If you're reading this in certain parts of the world, you might notice some unusual spellings in this book. I'm originally from the UK, so I use British English. Please know this book has been professionally edited and proofread! I am purposely choosing to write in my 'native' English because it's more authentic. It's one of the ways I choose to make my own rules, in the same way you'll soon be making yours.

When you've read through the book once, it's time to play your own game. This is where you can come back to *Your Business, Your Rules* and start building.

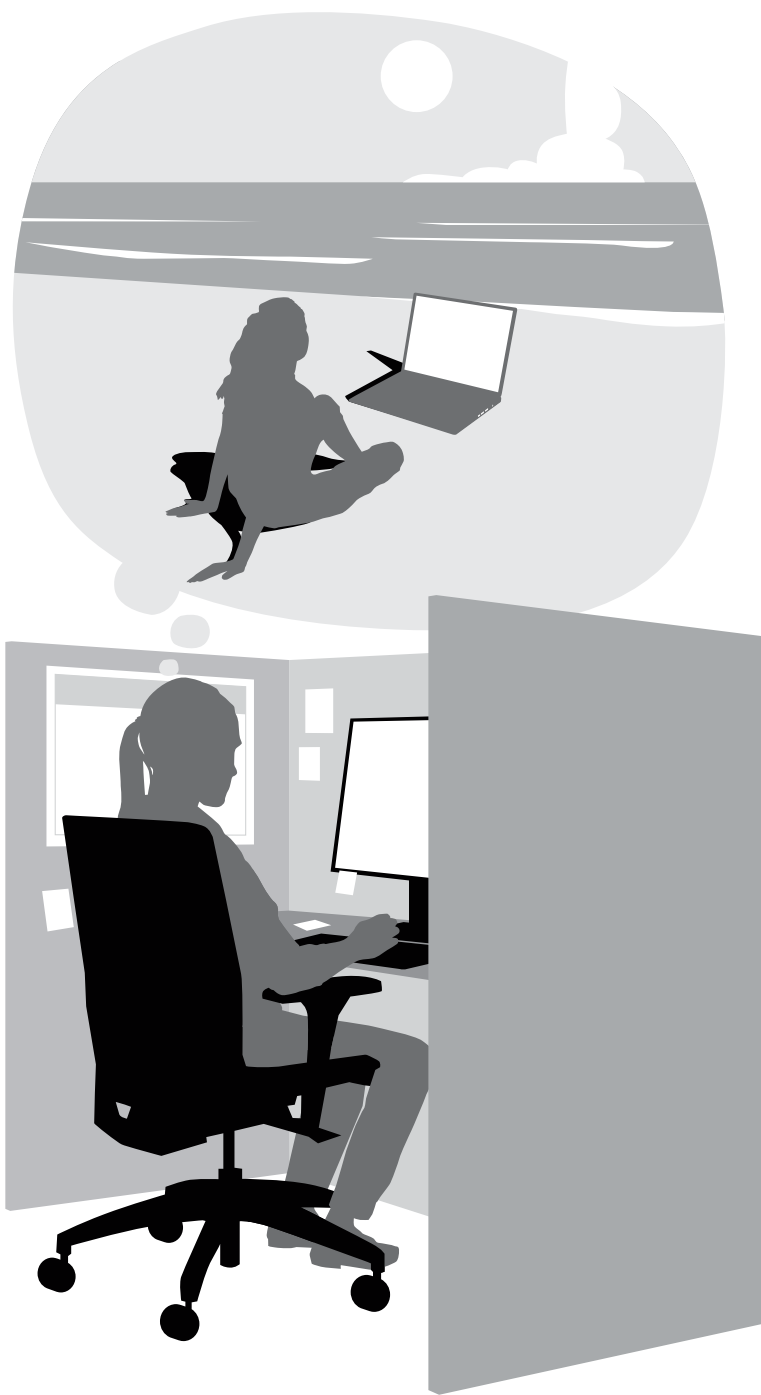
Once you have the bigger picture, you can sidestep the same-old same-old system being sold as 'business advice' to anyone who will listen, earn money in a way that you have chosen freely, and make it all suit your life and lifestyle. It is possible. And it's possible for you.

You've got this. I know you have.

**PART 1**

---

**THE BIGGER GAME**



# THE AIM OF THE (BIGGER) GAME

## Freedom isn't doing nothing

Freedom.

When it comes down to it, it's at the heart of what we all want.

We want choice.

To choose our work, to choose where we live, to choose how much we earn and what we do with our days.

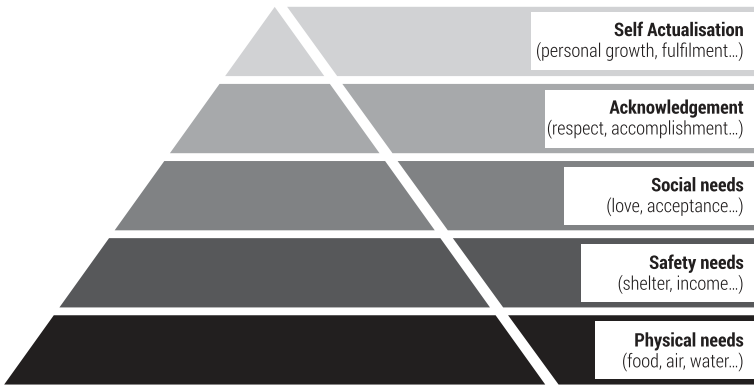
Almost everyone who comes to me looking to start their own business is ultimately looking for freedom. They may express it as looking to do things on their own terms, to work how they want, to live how they want, to earn money that they have control over and to get rid of the pressurised environment that they currently have in their life.

And the word we use for all that is *freedom*.

But I'd like to suggest to you that it's not freedom exactly that you're looking for. Well, it is and it isn't. You see, you could probably sit on a beach for quite a while. Maybe it's the middle of the week and everyone else you know is in their office jobs. And for a while it feels freeing. Successful entrepreneurs

often try this, but do you know what they often find out? There's really only so many piña coladas you can drink before you get bored! This is the same reason some people retire and then don't know what to do with themselves. Many of them end up going back to work or taking on some kind of voluntary position.

I believe the reason is because we're looking more for a type of fulfilment than freedom. Actually, we're looking for self-actualisation.



**Diagram 1.1: Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

You're probably familiar with this pyramid diagram. It's Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and it details human motivations in order of importance, from our basic needs to our highest potential. And at the top is self-actualisation.

But what is this self-actualisation?

The Cambridge English Dictionary definition of self-actualisation is: *"a person's desire to use all their abilities to achieve and be everything that they possibly can."*

Otherwise put, self-actualisation according to Google Dictionary is: *“the realization or fulfilment of one’s talents and potentialities, especially considered as a drive or need present in everyone.”*

Here’s how this translates. The highest level of fulfilling our human needs is not total lack of responsibility. Quite the opposite. It’s meaningful, satisfying, purposeful work. It’s not freedom to do nothing, but freedom to pursue the projects we want to pursue, while having all our other needs covered.

Since so much of modern life ties into our ability to earn money, let’s look at freedom or self-actualisation through the lens of how we choose to make a living.

## **If not freedom, what do we want exactly?**

We want fulfilling work that enables a good lifestyle, work that is fun to do and preferably in an area we care about. In short, the three fulfilment factors we want are: lifestyle, workstyle and purpose.



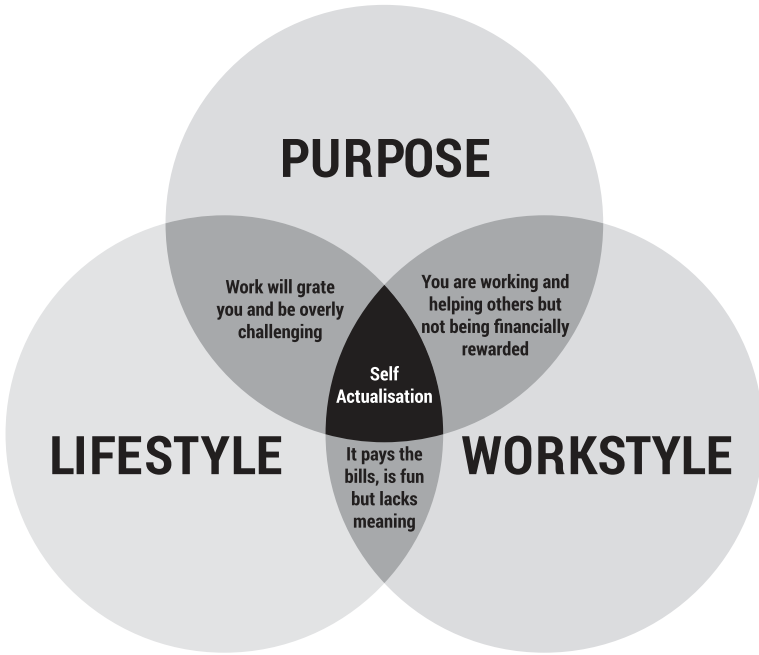


Diagram 1.2: The Aim of the Game

- **Lifestyle:** We can afford to live how we want.
- **Workstyle:** We enjoy our work and it fits with who we are.
- **Purpose:** We do work that aligns with our values.

Lifestyle is what we're talking about when we think of freedom. It means a certain level of time and financial freedom. Your physical needs and safety are covered, and you're earning enough money to have choice around what you do.

## THE AIM OF THE (BIGGER) GAME

Workstyle is about enjoying your work. If you hate presenting, you're not presenting. If you hate technical work, you're not spending all day doing technical work. You are working with your preferences and natural style rather than against it.

Purpose means that you are doing work that has meaning to you. It doesn't have to mean that you are doing some incredibly noble act. It means that there's meaning in the work for you. You take meaning from it.

Building people's websites, as an example, can have meaning because you see people struggling to bring their vision to life themselves. You may be able to create something that is truly fulfilling the vision they have for themselves, enabling them to get their awesome work out into the world.

Here's how lifestyle, workstyle and purpose play out for a massage therapist, Linda, who runs training courses to groups of trainees so that she can make the most of her expertise and minimise her working hours. Her business allows her to make an income beyond what she could earn giving massages, and she can plan the dates in a way that suits her.

She has a therapy room that she hires two days a week, rather than using one of the rooms of her home, because she likes a separation between her home life and her work. This is lifestyle.

She loves the hands-on work of massage, but understands how taxing it can be to do that full time. She thrives on variety and in small groups, which is why she prefers to have a nice mix between serving clients one-on-one and presenting training to other practitioners. This is workstyle.

One of her highest values is teaching people to take care of their physical health. This work has purpose for her, because massage is known to have these benefits. This is purpose.

By having this purpose, lifestyle and workstyle all in alignment, you have freedom to do fulfilling work while having your own needs met.

But what does it look like if you don't have one of these factors?

If you don't have the lifestyle piece, it means you're going to be putting in the hours and helping others but not being financially rewarded for the time you spend and the efforts you make. You're just not making money.

If there's no meaning for you in the work, it pays the bills, it's fun, but it all feels rather purposeless to you. This may be okay for a while. It may even be the place to start, but it's not the ultimate place you want to end up.

If you're missing the workstyle factor, and you aren't working in your natural style that suits you best, it's going to grate against you every day that you have to show up. The work may be too challenging and you might, at some point, quit.

Freedom to do meaningful work is what it's all about with a healthy dose of lifestyle added in. That's the particular kind of freedom that most people are truly looking for and that's the freedom we'll be talking about in this book. That's self-actualisation.

## A word on passion

There is a cultural idea that we all need to ‘find our passion’ or ‘we all are born for one thing’. Before we get deeper into creating the freedom you’re seeking, I wanted to address this notion.

You might know exactly the area in which you want to start your business, but you also might not. In fact, the whole discussion around passion might really stress you out because you either don’t think you have a passion or you have so many you don’t know where to start.

Let me assure you that not everyone is born knowing what they want to do with their lives and that’s okay. If you had asked me before I started my business what my passion was, I wouldn’t have been able to come up with anything that sounded like it had any business potential. Dancing? Learning languages? Living abroad? Not that the last two don’t have potential for some people, but I didn’t have a ‘passion’ for them in that sense.

So, what do you do if you can’t identify a passion to create your business around, as you so often hear? You may well need a foot in the door just to get started. That’s what I did. I started where I could, helping people with business ideas, as I had done a lot of research and owned a business before, and then grew from there. I didn’t know that my passion was building shortcuts and processes for people to create more independence in their lives until I arrived there.

After working in this field for a number of years, I realised there are three ways of bringing passion into a business.

## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

One, passion could come from the purpose behind the whole business or idea. This is often the case when you know exactly what you want to do.

For example, you've lost a lot of weight using a particular method and you're really passionate about it. It has changed your life and that's what you want to do in your business. You want to help people achieve the same results.

So, that's how your passion can be directly connected to your purpose.

The second way is when passion comes in through your workstyle.

Let's say that you love photography. Being a photographer may not be a scalable business for you, but you still really want to bring photography into your life. Maybe you'd start a business that had nothing to do with photography, but you do photography through your business. For example, perhaps you're highly active on Instagram or Pinterest. You can find ways to bring your passion into your business through your workstyle.

In many ways, this was the case for me. I love to optimise and create processes, no matter what the subject matter. This is where I always nerd out.

The third way of bringing your passion into your business is through the lifestyle that it enables you to have. Let's say your passion is travel, for example. Your business could give you a lot more spare time to be on the road, if you create a structure that means you are location-independent.

## THE AIM OF THE (BIGGER) GAME

Look again at the lifestyle-workstyle-purpose diagram and see how passion brings us back to these three factors of what you are trying to achieve in the first place.

Rest assured, you don't need to know your passion or stay stuck forever if you don't have one.

## It's a value-driven game

Now we know what you want, what are you going to use to get ahead? The winning formula, of course!

Now, you already know that I don't agree with rigidity. The main aim of this book is to present you the context for creating your business by *your own rules*. Yet, in all of this, there's a not-so-secret bottom line that allows you to get what you want, when you work it to your advantage.

And that is:

**PAY = VALUE x NUMBER OF PEOPLE IMPACTED**

Pay is how much money you receive, value is the benefit people get from your work and the number of people you provide value to is the number of people that are touched by your work.

This is simplistic, and there may be exceptions where you are not paid your market value, but in general it holds true whether you're in business or at work.

Knowing what we're working with allows us to implement it to maximum effect. If you think about what you do right now

## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

for a living, or what anyone does for a living, this principle is going to add up.

What if you were a surgeon? A surgeon provides high-value care, but to a relatively small number of people. You can't scale that over the internet.

On the other end of the spectrum, let's say you were doing a form of basic admin work or manual labour. That's something most people can do, so the level of value provided is low and also to a small number of people.

We're going to use this formula to our maximum advantage so we can create a lifestyle, enable you to work according to your workstyle and essentially reach a position where you get to make the rules!

# WHY NOW?

## Freedom over time

Why do we feel so under pressure?

Why do we feel so crap?

Why are we stuck in our morning commutes wondering where the glorious life went that we were promised if we studied hard and worked hard and did all the ‘right things’?

Why does corporate life feel so damn hard?

It’s because, at work, on a minute-by-minute basis, our freedoms are ever-more restricted. We feel increased pressure, whether that’s targets or KPIs or line managers or deadlines. The drive to do and do more is ever-present, creating modern-day stress.

In caveman times, we faced real survival dangers like predators and severe weather conditions. The rest of the time, when we weren’t picking berries and gathering food to see us through the hard times, we would have been sitting around the fire, communicating and connecting with the people close to us.

Of course, we had to operate at a much more basic level. We didn’t have modern medicine or expensive cars, so we spent time getting places and taking care of ourselves. And yet, life was much more relaxed, and in many ways, we had much more choice in those times.



## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

In the next era, humans started farming. However, frequently, at least in the beginning, we still worked for ourselves and had relative freedom over how we ran our lives. If you farmed some land and wanted to arrange your day a bit differently, that was probably okay. No-one was telling you to farm from these hours to those hours. Nobody was clocking you in with a timecard and giving you performance reviews. Of course, it made sense to do the work during daylight but it was your farm and your choice.

Then came the Industrial Revolution, where labour became organised and mechanised. At this point, freedom may have been at its lowest point in history. It was not uncommon for workers to do upwards of 12-hour shifts on assembly lines in dangerous conditions.

Now we're in the digital revolution, competition is global and we are hyper-connected, able to be reached all day every day.

The impact of pressure at work is being pushed down the line of command. While we most likely aren't working in sweaty, dimly lit factories with dangerous machinery, we know the company is tracking our every move on our computer, we have to appear engaged, we need to be more and more available and we take on increasing levels of responsibility.

Think about it. When was the last time you heard about someone who was told it was okay to do less for the same money or someone who was given more money with no additional responsibility? I'm willing to bet that the percentage of people getting a generous pat on the back and a hefty no-strings-attached bonus is approaching zero.

## WHY NOW?

In short, the pressure on us in the workplace has been increasing. For many, it's intense. Instead we're constantly 'on' and that tension is making us feel worse.

## Personalisation is the new normal

Conversely, while in our working lives we are getting more and more restricted, in our personal lives everything is becoming increasingly personalised. Outside of work it's all about us. We're at a point in time where personalisation is the new mass market.

Years ago, if you wanted to buy a book, you had to go to your local bookstore and hope they had one in stock on the subject you wanted. Now you can go to Amazon and choose from hundreds of thousands of titles. Even if there's none in stock, the print-on-demand industry means one can be printed especially for you and shipped to your door.

Google serves you results of sites it already knows you like. These pop up first in your search results and ads. Facebook does the same.

You can buy jars of Nutella with your name on — a favourite of my stepson Cooper!

We can even browse dating profiles from the comfort of our sofa — using different sites when we just want a passing fling from when we're looking for a life partner.

Everything is designed to be as easy as pressing a button and is just how we want it to be.

Except work.

While we become increasingly pampered with possibilities of what to spend our money or time on outside of work, the rigidity of work itself is more and more of a struggle.

We can personalise our desktop, maybe our office space if we're lucky, but outside of those few limited areas, we may feel just like a cog in a machine.

And this is our work context at a time when we are experiencing increased expectations around everything else being just how we like it.

## **Yet the world is at our fingertips**

At the same time, internet usage has expanded to the point where there are over 4 billion users. Markets are opening up that were never accessible before.

When I did voluntary work in Brazil in 1998, I could only call my parents in England three times over a six-month period and it cost over \$100 for each call. I had email, yes, but honestly, I didn't really know how to use it yet! Now I could be in Brazil and work with clients back home. Or I could hire someone in Brazil and work with them on a daily basis relatively seamlessly.

The barriers to entry for building something to make money on your own terms are almost non-existent.

On top of accessibility, more apps are being brought out all the time to make it easier to make money online and this is happening at an ever-increasing rate.

## WHY NOW?

Even compared to when I started my online business in 2013, it's so much easier now. I spent three months faffing around with my website. I could build the equivalent website — well, better! — in a weekend in 2019.

We're increasingly under pressure at work, we're getting everything else our way and now we can see this massive opportunity right in front of our faces to do it our own way and make our own rules.

## Reaching the tipping point

We're at the point where it looks like this:

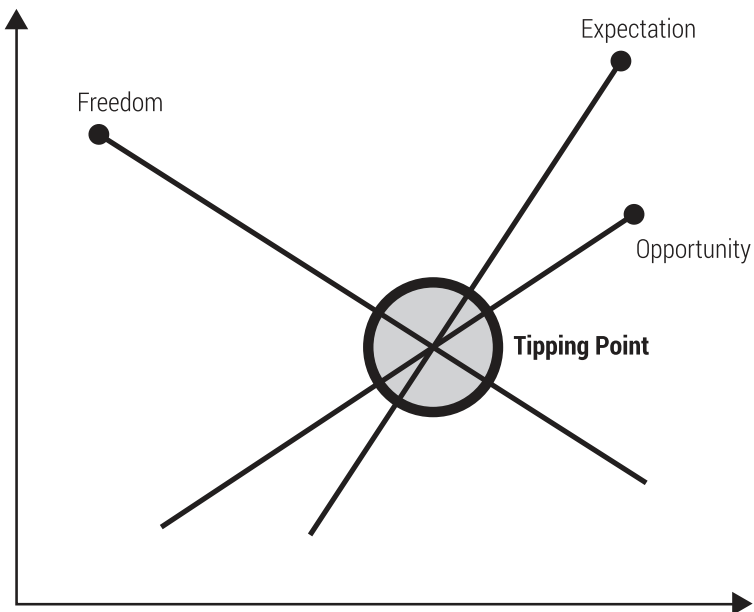


Diagram 1.3: The Tipping Point

We expect personalised fitting solutions, but our traditional careers are not delivering on this. In fact, for most people, work lives are getting worse. Meanwhile, technology is advancing and it is possible for us to reach more people and do more things than ever before.

The door to inflexible time-bound workstyles closes while another door to time-friendly tech-driven businesses opens.

We're ready for solutions.

We see other people starting online businesses, becoming coaches, living in vans for a year, and our minds boggle.

*What if I could do that?*

*How would it feel to be able to decide how I want to work, how much money I earn and who I work with?*

*What might it look like if I had that kind of freedom?*

The level of ease that we have to do this now was unthinkable 30 years ago, and even in the last five years, major advances have been made.

## **We need alternatives, but the right ones**

So, people are experiencing this pressure in the modern workplace and their everyday lives, and are looking for alternatives, but they aren't always looking in the right places.

They went through their school and college years full of hope for the future wanting to secure their position in the

## WHY NOW?

world of work. Usually, the experience of getting their first professional job or at least a job that would lead somewhere was a mixture of exhilaration and relief. They had finally made it to the land of grown-ups!

I can remember the first time I flew for business and some of my work colleagues were on the plane. We were all there in our suits, which felt to me like some kind of costume for adulting, back then. Part of me felt like I had made it and part of me felt like it was all pretend.

A few years into my career and it didn't feel like I was pretending anymore. And while I was fortunate that most of my jobs in the early years were fairly relaxed, I couldn't help always thinking 'there has to be more than this'. It was a constant narrative in my mind.

First, I considered alternative careers. Perhaps I should try something more creative? At age 16, I had to choose between creative subjects like art and graphic design and more 'practical' subjects like maths and economics. Maths and economics won and I always wondered what would have happened if I'd taken the other path.

I looked at interior design. (Hilarious in retrospect. I am currently writing this in my lounge and it seriously needs some design attention). I also looked at psychology. (Surely something more people-oriented would fulfil me more than my IT career.) Neither of these options were looking good or ticking all the boxes, but then I moved to Australia. The possibility of starting a business opened up and appeared to be what I was looking for. This hadn't entered my consciousness as a possibility living in Germany where people have more of

an employee mindset. But in Australia, there was a definite entrepreneurial attitude. Could this be the way I took back control over my workplace happiness and sense of fulfilment?

Perhaps you feel similarly about the corporate world or restrictions of your work. Whether you hate, like or even love your job, there's always a feeling of not having control. Maybe it's the performance reviews, set pay scales, the office atmosphere, the hours or the monotonous commute that never seems to end. Whatever the specifics, there's always the feeling of 'if I could choose something else, I would...'

Then you realise, if you worked for yourself, you actually *could* choose.

We're all looking for ways to regain control over the work we do. Freedom to earn money on our own terms, freedom to live where and how we want, and freedom from the pressure imposed on us by the system, the corporation, the societal expectations we grew up believing.

So, if working for someone else has reached its limit, what's the alternative?

## **Looking for work freedom outside corporate limitations**

I've seen this journey — from the limitations of the traditional workplace to a business that gives me freedom — first-hand through my own experience and also through the experiences of my clients. I also came into the world keen to grow and learn. I wanted to apply this to my career and desire to become a successful adult.

## WHY NOW?

What I discovered over time was that work was nowhere near as exciting as I had hoped it would be. I tended to use it to finance personal fulfilment outside of work rather than to create professional fulfilment. Of course, I didn't expect every day at work to be a riot, the same as every day in business is not, but I did expect to get more out of it.

What became apparent to me was that rising up the corporate ladder was going to be more stress than the financial compensation made up for and there was a ceiling to how much I could earn as a specialist. I got to the point where I had optimised my work life as far as it could be optimised. I had a great job in Germany close to the apartment where I lived, which I loved. I had great friends, six weeks paid holiday a year, a pretty cushy position and enough money to do whatever I wanted without going too crazy.

I considered a career change but nothing grabbed me until I moved to Australia and was introduced to the world of business. That's when I realised how my 'life optimisation' project could be moved forward.

As the world of business opened up, my work world closed in on me. My new job in Australia was far from what I had managed to set up for myself in Germany. The pressure was relentless and it didn't seem like any of the alternatives would be much different. When the regular 80-hour work weeks began to take their toll, I quit. I went into hibernation burying myself in business books to figure out how I would make this next phase work. I researched business models, business ideas, how to do market research, how to gauge profitability. I looked at (and ruled out!) every franchise opportunity going and every type of business I could find to buy. I was under



time pressure, as my savings weren't limitless. I had promised my new partner I was going to sort this out, but what would I do?

Together, we started a brick-and-mortar business out of our carport refurbishing car batteries. Why that of all ideas? It matched our joint skillsets: I did the backend IT work, he did the battery refurbishment. I manned the phones and dealt with customers, while he went to his day job and did some deliveries. What I discovered was... I hated it! I didn't know enough about cars to answer all our clients' questions. In addition, while we had plenty of demand, supply was challenging. That meant we could make money, but scaling was going to prove problematic.

When I reached the point of praying that the phone wouldn't ring, I decided to rethink the whole thing.

What I had done was build a location-based business. (I didn't yet know about the option of location-independence.) And truly, the business was much better suited to my partner than to me.

This experience of starting the wrong business made me increasingly curious about starting the right one. And what I discovered was that there really are more opportunities to do things the way that suits you than there are rigid rules and restrictions. I had been thinking about it too narrowly by considering more traditional business models, but I was about to find out what a business based around freedom really felt like.

# WHERE YOU GET TO SET THE RULES

Here's where we come to the real meaning of 'your business, your rules'. Let's take a look at where, when and how you get to make the rules that guide your business.

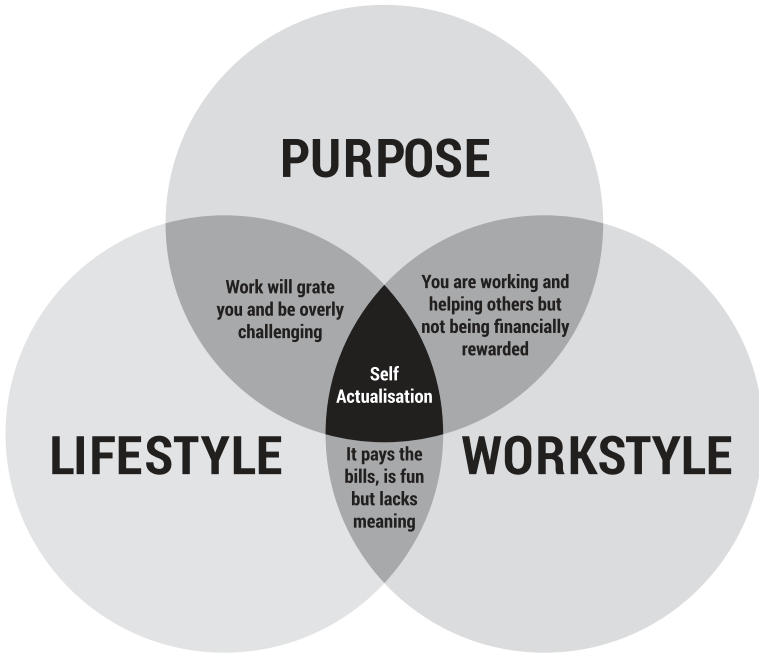
Business has two fundamental concepts or 'rules' behind it — maths and psychology.

The maths is where you work out: 'if I sell  $x$  number of this product or service, can I deliver it and make money?'

The psychology is the human side. We need to create something to sell that people want. It has to be appealing, speak to a real human need and be something people are prepared to pay for.

So, it's numbers and it's people. Those are the fundamentals, the pieces you can't change, the 'rules' so to speak. Outside of that, business is personality. It's you. You get to make the rules and run your business how you want to.

Let's come back to what you are trying to achieve in the first place: the three fulfilment factors of lifestyle, workstyle and purpose, which together equal freedom of choice.



**Diagram 1.2: The Aim of the Game**

Specifically, where can you make the rules? Where you get to make the rules from here permeates through every layer of your business, but to break it down, let's consider four main layers from the inside out: idea, values, tasks and environment.

## **Your Business Idea**

Let's start with your business idea.

Which business you choose to start — your business idea — is deeply personal. It's all about who you are. And of course, you get to set the rules there. Even if you don't have already your

one big idea that you want to set out to achieve, you can be certain that your business idea is still going to be something that fits your experience, interests and skills. It will be about you, your personality.

In many ways, this is the most exciting area where you get to do everything your way and is connected to your purpose for being in business.

## Your Values

Similarly connected to your purpose, you get to decide how your company operates and what principles you will use to make decisions. This is about how you believe things should be done.

In my business, I decided that personalisation was important to me. I didn't want people to feel lost in a crowd when working with me so I made sure all my programs had personal touchpoints.

Think about what will be important to you when you work for yourself. If you already do, consider how you can live your values in your work.

## Your Tasks

The tasks that you choose to do in your business are about aligning your workstyle with what you are spending your time on. This means what you choose to do in your business and how you choose to do it.

One way that I am unusual compared to other business owners I know is that I still choose to do a lot of my own tech. Because it's fun for me. I have a tech background and I like figuring stuff out. For others, this task would not be something they enjoyed doing.

I have clients who are incredible artists and love to do their own design. For me, I choose to outsource this task, because it's not something I'm great at or find especially enjoyable.

As another example, in my marketing, I like to do everything online so I focus on marketing that doesn't involve me needing to be anywhere. On the other hand, I have a business-building buddy who loves to meet people in person, so she goes to a lot of events and networking opportunities. We both choose ways to market our businesses that fit our personalities and that's the way it should be.

So, the tasks you choose to do yourself are certainly an area where you set the rules and can choose to do what you're great at, while handing over the rest to someone else.

## Your Environment

And finally, where you choose to work is also part of your workstyle and well within your control.

Do you want to be in a coworking space so you can bounce ideas off other people in person or do you prefer to be at home and just reach out to people when things come up?

Personally, I live in a rainforest in Australia. I love it here and I doubt I'll ever move. So, unless I'm taking my business on the road and travelling to other parts of the world for

## WHERE YOU GET TO SET THE RULES

business or pleasure, I work from home. With breaks to get some summer sun or smell the roses. Or take my extremely energetic dog Bowie out for a walk. It's where I want to be so I choose to run my business in a way that allows me to be here.

Now you know a bit about what your choices look like in the bigger game, the wider business world, and what a freedom lifestyle business could involve, it's time to turn our attention inward to you, the player in this game.



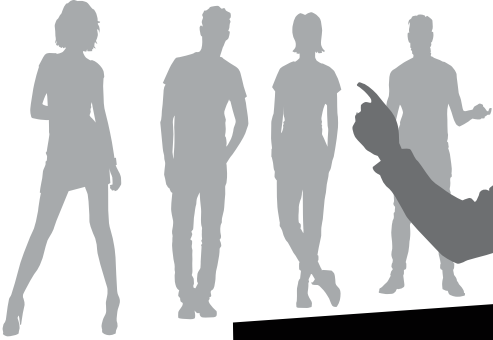
**PART 2**

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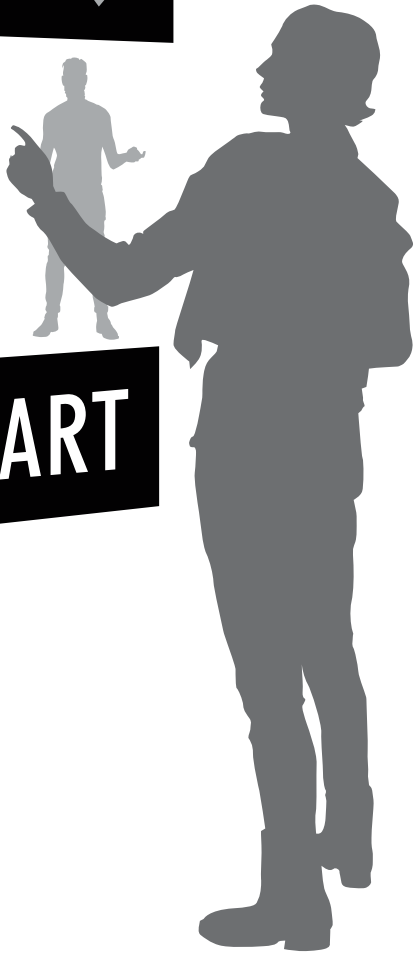
**WHO'S YOUR PLAYER?**



**SELECT  
PLAYER** ↓



**START**



# SELECT YOUR PLAYER

In all of this, *you* are the player in the game. This is *your* life. So, it's really important to understand what *you* want out of it. That means...

Not what other people are telling you that you should want.

Not what you feel you should want.

But what you actually want and what will fulfil you.

Maybe you want a million-dollar business where you work on the beach. Maybe you prefer your own office where you work evenings. Maybe you spend the mornings working and go relax in the afternoon.

Whatever winning looks like, it's you who gets to define it.

## What does winning look like to you?

Maybe you want something different from the typical beach laptop lifestyle. Maybe you want to live in the mountains. Maybe you want to serve a small number of people so you have more mental energy to do deep transformation work with them. Maybe you want to serve a large audience and get your training out more widely. Maybe you are looking for a minimalist lifestyle where you have simplicity in your days,

## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

grow your own veggies, bake your own bread, and only have a small business on the side that earns you enough money.

The point is... what *do* you want?

Don't go into this whole business thing not really knowing the answer to this small but potent question. You must have at least an idea of the vision you hold for what you want your life to look like. Ideally, it should be as true to you as possible, not influenced by external factors.

There's a lot of push in our society to have more. We should want bigger, better. That is not the idea here. The great joy and freedom that comes in creating this type of business is you get to choose what you want. If you don't want to work Fridays, then don't work Fridays. In practice, you may not be able to jump to that end vision when you're just starting up, but the point is that freedom is where you're heading and what underlies this path.

In order to *get* what you want, you need to *know* what you want. So, let's explore what that looks like for you.

# LIVING YOUR IDEAL LIFESTYLE

If you're going to create the lifestyle you desire and make money on your terms with a business where you set the rules, it's important to think about the details so that you don't accidentally end up creating the wrong business for you and do set up something fulfilling. Looking back to the three fulfilment factors we covered in Part 1, the first thing you're going to dream up is what you want your lifestyle to look like.

## **Rule Makers & Rule Breakers Exercise: What Life Could Look Like**

- Overall, how do you want your life to look?
- What are your non-negotiables?
- Do you need or want to be location-independent so that you can travel or are you happiest close to home?
- What income level are you looking to create in order to:
  1. quit your job
  2. live extremely comfortably
  3. be in a position to give back?
- What are your 'rules'?

# WORKING IN A WAY THAT SUITS YOU

When I first started helping people find the right business idea, I got my one-on-one consulting clients to fill out a huge form for me with preparatory questions. I would use this prep to do my own analysis of who they were as a person to figure out their business idea and how we should set up their business.

The main question I would ask myself while analysing their responses was this: what does this person *need* in a business to be fulfilled and happy in their work on a day-by-day basis?

Because all people are completely different. Some business owners need lots of social interaction to be happy. Others prefer the quiet of working by themselves. Some entrepreneurs need to have a broad focus in their business and bring together lots of skills. Others really just want to do one thing and do it well.

As I was doing this pre-work, I would go through my clients' prep and pick out all of the elements that I could see in their personalities. At the time, I didn't have a system to do this; I was just figuring out who they were so we could build something that felt good for them daily.

Think about it like this: if you tell a person who hates being on camera they need to live-stream every day, they are going to

hate their business; if you tell someone who loves presenting that they need to pore over their analytics every day, they'll want to quit on day two.

We've all heard of work satisfaction, but what about business satisfaction? This is often missing in business advice. The assumption is that if we work for ourselves, all the issues we had in corporate — like dealing with bosses and avoiding office politics and having to do work we don't like — go away. But that's not completely true.

Instead, we have to manage ourselves as opposed to being managed by others, whether they did it well or badly. We have to figure out all by ourselves what gets done and by whom.

There are ways of starting a business that fits your personality and running your business so it feels good to you. There are ways of setting up an environment that suits you. It's just that most of us don't know how to do that because we have never had to do it before. We have never had the freedom to choose our business ideas, our tasks, our work environment or even the values that govern our working lives: those four flexible choices where we get to make the rules when we work for ourselves.

So, what do you see yourself doing if you could choose your ideal workstyle? The first step to answering this question is to understand how you operate. That's where I started with my clients: figuring out what made them tick and what they needed to feel good in a business, essentially what would give them business satisfaction. And doing this worked so well for

my clients that I created the Entrepreneurial Design Profile to help more start-up business owners do it too.

I never shared what I was doing because it seemed obvious to me. What else would I be doing? Surely, that's what they were paying me for? Then I realised no other business consultants were talking about this. Almost exclusively, other leaders in the field are pushing one way of doing things — the way that worked for them. No-one is thinking or talking about how to create work satisfaction inside businesses. But it can be done!

When I discovered this, I mapped out exactly what I had been doing to help build my one-on-one clients' businesses so that I could turn it into something that more people could use. Getting it out of my own head and into a format that people could apply themselves made it accessible. And the Entrepreneurial Design Profile was born.

The main reason why figuring out your workstyle is so important is because doing meaningful work isn't enough.

Let that sink in. Meaningful work isn't enough.

We all know we want meaningful work. That's a given, right? That's why we have lifestyle, workstyle *and* purpose in the fulfilment factor model of getting what you really want.

It's the statement I hear most frequently from people. "I want more meaningful work." And yet, we aren't prepared to feel bad on a daily basis to do work with purpose. We make the assumption that getting rid of a shitty boss or office will fix that, but if you start the wrong business, you are just recreating a dissatisfying work environment in another form.

Of course, anything rewarding and worth doing is hard at times. There is no getting past that. I'm not saying being a business owner is easy by any means.

However, if we are to work for ourselves and stick at it long enough to reach all the lofty aspirations we have for ourselves and others through our work, we need to feel good *most of the time* that we're doing it.

You need business satisfaction. And how do you achieve that? By knowing how you operate, how you want to show up in your business, by finding those elements of your personality and harnessing them.

### **Rule Makers & Rule Breakers Exercise: Get Yourself Some Business Satisfaction**

1. Get your Entrepreneurial Design Profile by taking this short personality assessment to understand your workstyle: <https://myentrepreneurialdesign.com>
2. Keep your Profile at hand when creating your business, especially when creating your business rules and making choices on how you work.
3. Pay attention to your strengths and preferences that came up in the Profile, but also keep in mind your dislikes when designing a business that makes money for you on your terms.



# PURPOSE AND MAKING MONEY ON YOUR TERMS

I prefer to not get too hung up on the discussion around purpose or passion, because it can make people feel like they are 'doing it wrong'. That they need to feel a certain way to move forward.

I know I've said it before but I'll say it again: you do not have to have a defined passion or life purpose that you are aware of right now to start a fulfilling business. That's why those fulfilment factors were threefold.

That said, if you know you want to bring something in particular into your work, what is it?

Is there a particular type of work that has meaning to you even if it may not seem particularly honourable or interesting to someone else?

Questions to ask yourself:

- What do you want to bring to the world?
- If you know you have a purpose or a particular mission what is it?

# WHAT ARE YOU PREPARED TO GIVE UP?

Just like in your workstyle section, it's just as important to pay attention to what you do not want as what you do want, so this last section is key.

It's not all vision boards and big dreams... We've done the fun stuff, but knowing what you're prepared to sacrifice is equally helpful.

If you are realistic about this, you are going to have to give up something to start your business. Even if it isn't much. Even if you don't need loads of extra time to get your project off the ground. Maybe it just means you're going to give up one of your Netflix series. Maybe it means you're going to give up meeting your friends on a Thursday night. Whatever it is for you, factor that in.

What will you give up to make space for this business in your life?

If you're really serious about it, which I hope you are, you will probably have to give up a little more than just some of your time. When I started my business, I had limited savings available and had to quit my job at the same time, which is not what I recommend but ended up happening in my circumstances. That meant I had limited funds.

At the same time, I'd just moved to the country and needed a car to be able to get anywhere. The alternative was walking 45 minutes through, essentially, the jungle to get to the bus stop to get to the train station to be able to get anywhere. Of course, I needed transport and I really wanted to buy myself a bright yellow Jeep Wrangler. But the reality was I couldn't afford it as I needed a buffer to start my business. Instead, I bought myself what I've since discovered is known as 'a shitbox' in Australia: a car that is okay to leave at the train station car park because nobody will steal it.

For the first years of my business, I drove around in a crappy, old Toyota. It ended up being a great car, but I was not overjoyed with it at the beginning. Believe me, you get over wind-up windows pretty quickly.

The point is I had to give up *something*. I couldn't have it all right away. In my case, it was a short-term desire for a great car. I had time but I didn't have money.

For you, too, there's going to be sacrifices that you'll need to make in order to have a realistic chance of your business happening. It might be time. It may be money.

Later in the book, I will show you how to start up your business in as streamlined way as possible, but I also recommend checking out the resources at the end of the book for extra support.

### **Rule Makers & Rule Breakers Exercise: Making Sacrifices**

So, something's got to give. What is that going to be for you? Take a moment to make a decision on that for yourself

## WHAT ARE YOU PREPARED TO GIVE UP?

because this has to fit in your life somewhere. And the best way to make that decision is to consciously decide where that is.

How are you going to make space in your life for this?

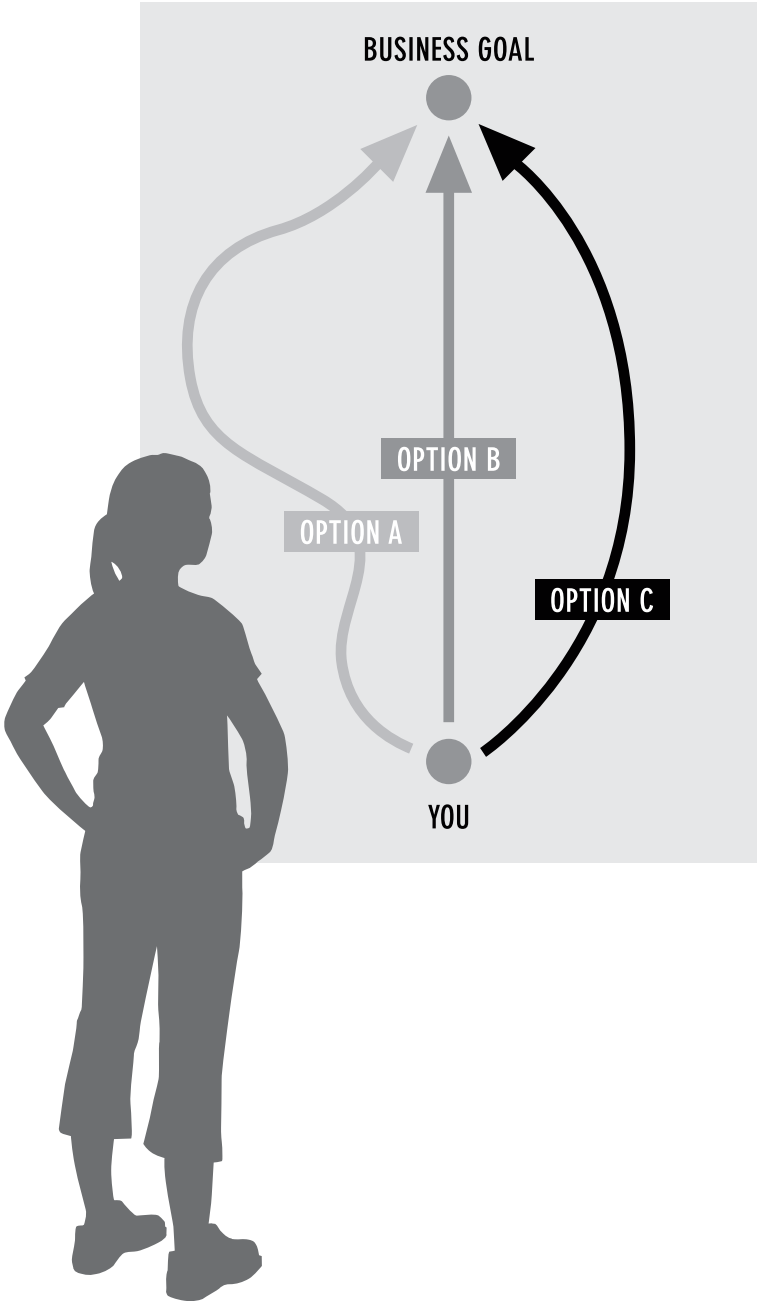
Now you're clear on where your choices lie (the bigger game), and your strengths and preferences (the attributes and requirements of your player), it's almost time to get the game underway. But before you roll the dice and take your first turn, you need to know this... There's more than one board you can play on. And yes, you guessed it. You have a choice here too. Let's take a look.



## **PART 3**

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# **UNDERSTAND YOUR GAMING OPTIONS**



# WHICH BOARD WILL YOU PLAY?

Before choosing which game you want to play, let's explore how gaming works.

Statistics vary, but one that gets restated over and over is that 90% of start-ups fail. Now, you definitely don't want to be in that 90%. You want to be in the 10% of successes.

Choosing what type of business you're going to start is crucial to landing in that 10% of people who win at the game. In making this choice, two really important factors should remain front and centre:

Simplicity and scalability.

Why simplicity?

Because how simple the business you create is relates directly to how likely you are to succeed at it. The more complexity you have, the lower the chances that you'll succeed.

There are lots of ways of making a start-up business too complicated:

- **Multi-player:** Having multiple people involved too early
- **Needing big numbers:** Trying to reach too many customers too early



- **High buy-in:** Starting with your expenses high

The same as taking a test, the harder it is, the lower the chances that you will pass. Or in this case, the lower the chance of actually starting a profitable business that satisfies your needs.

Then scalability.

The idea is to leverage the magic of the internet to reach more people because you know that the amount of money you earn is the value you provide times the number of people you provide it to.

### **PAY = VALUE x NUMBER OF PEOPLE IMPACTED**

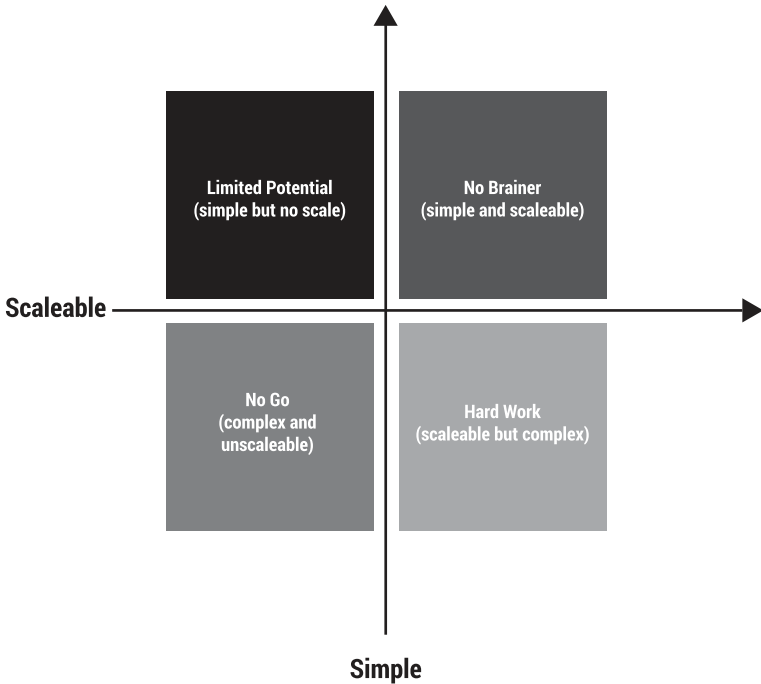
You want to have the possibility of providing your thing to more people without expending more time, so that means the ‘thing’ you’re selling needs to be scaleable. This doesn’t mean the business should start big, necessarily. It means it can go big.

So, when you’re looking at what type of business you want to start, the best way to approach this to look at:

1. Difficulty of getting started. (Go for the simplest business to start.)
2. Level of scale that can be built in. (Start something that is repeatable and you can leverage later.)

Another way of considering these two factors is in this Simplicity-Scaleability Model. Take a look.

## WHICH BOARD WILL YOU PLAY?



**Diagram 3.1: The Simplicity-Scaleability Model**

Based on the likelihood of a simple scaleable business being more likely to succeed, you want your chosen business model to be in the top right quadrant, where your business of choice is relatively easy to start and can scale. This is the no brainer quadrant, which doesn't mean that the first iteration of your business can scale immediately necessarily, but that there is a path to scaling.

If you choose something complex but scaleable, you are seriously inhibiting your chances of getting it off the ground and reaching the place you want to be — living life your way and making money on your terms.

If you choose something simple to start but with no possibility of scale, you likely won't create the lifestyle you are looking for because the business has little chance of growing to the level where that is possible.

## Set yourself up to win

I want you to succeed. I want everyone who reads this book to succeed. Or at least the highest proportion possible to start the right business and create it in a way that you make money on your terms.

One of the major driving factors behind writing this book is that so many people I have met choose to start the wrong business, one that doesn't align with their goals. To them, it seems so hard to start that they just choose something — anything — in an attempt to get the lifestyle.

It's really important to come at this from the perspective of giving yourself the luxury and freedom of time and space to get your business — the most fulfilling one for you — off the ground in the first place. And the best way to set yourself up to win is not only by choosing the right tasks and environment within the business, but by choosing the right *type* of business to start.

If you're reading *Your Business, Your Rules*, I believe that you're the kind of person who doesn't want investors breathing down your neck. You don't want to create yourself a new 'boss' that way. And you don't want to muddle through more difficult situations than you need.

## WHICH BOARD WILL YOU PLAY?

It might sound like I'm stating the obvious by saying you need to start the right business to win the game. Of course you want to win at this game! But in most areas of life, including business, the media and wider society peddle the opposite idea. Instead of stories of everybody winning, they perpetuate an idea that 'only a chosen few succeed'.

In the media, founders of venture-backed start-ups are idolised. We want to be the chosen one who other people give money to, investing in making our amazing new idea reality. This is a mirror of many other aspects of life. Only a few people are picked for the sports teams. Only one person can be the team leader or manager at work. We are used to waiting to be chosen. We are used to only a few people getting to move forward in the game, pass Go, and collect \$200.

What I am saying to you is this: you get to choose *yourself* here. And if you're going to choose yourself, why not also choose a game you have a much better chance of winning?

Working for yourself truly is a journey of self-development. In a few years, you'll be capable of things you never thought possible in the past. Getting to that place comes through the problem-solving you'll be doing every day as a business owner, working out how to move forward and grow.

Give yourself a fighting chance. I'm all for inspiration but you are taking on a challenge. You might as well go in with your best foot forward and pick the most winnable — simple and scaleable — game.

# PICKING YOUR PLAY FOR MAXIMUM FREEDOM

## The ‘Get A Good Job’ play

When it comes down to it, not everyone really wants to start their own business. Being an ‘entrepreneur’ sounds glamorous and exciting. And in many ways, it is, but it truly isn’t the path for everyone. Yes, running your own business means getting most of the rewards, but it also means making all the decisions. Once you get past the cool factor, it’s not impossible that being an entrepreneur isn’t actually for you and that’s okay.

If you like security, place a lot of value of having a certain amount of money coming in regularly, or need reassurance from other people to buffer you from challenging situations, then maybe a good job is a better and completely realistic option.

Business isn’t for everybody. There is a level of responsibility and stress that comes with making all the decisions yourself. So, consider this... If you aren’t happy where you are, is a career change a great alternative direction for you than going into business for yourself?

If we come back to the winning formula behind everything, the value you provide to the number of people that you provide it determines pay.

**PAY = VALUE x NUMBER OF PEOPLE IMPACTED**

The more skilled you are and the more people you serve can dramatically change what you get paid, which will then also enable you a certain lifestyle in your free time at least.

You may not be able to work completely in your preferred workstyle and you won't have as much freedom inside a company as you would creating your own. But you can find something that is meaningful, aligned with your values, and pays you well. If that's what you want to do, that is a completely valid option. You don't have to start a business!

On the model comparing business options, the 'get a good job' play is in the top left of our Simplicity-Scaleability Model. It's likely your easiest option right now, but it is unlikely to scale beyond a certain point. Don't discount this.

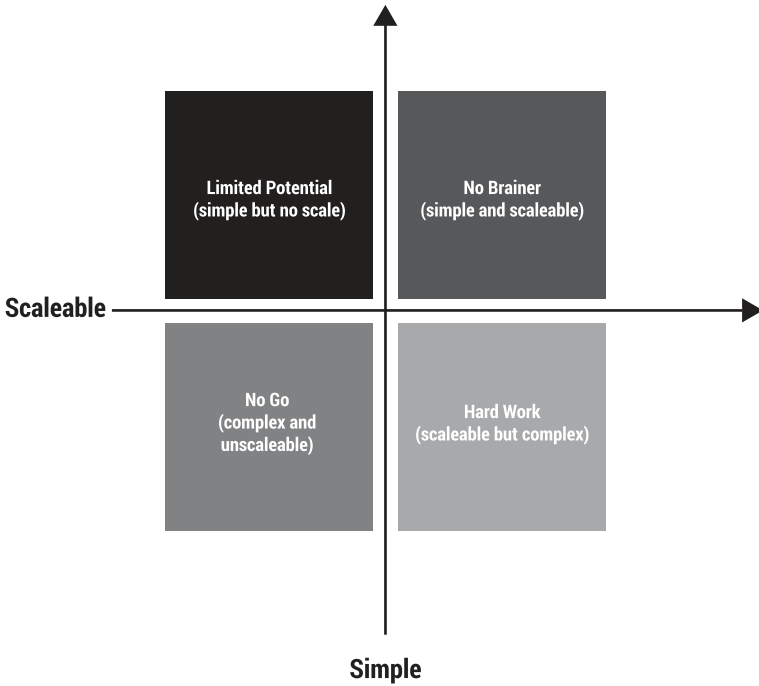


Diagram 3.1: The Simplicity-Scaleability Model

If, though, you feel you are an adventurer at heart and working for someone else is not the path for you, or you consider yourself at least curious about working for yourself, keep reading.

## The ‘Pick Me!’ Start-up play

Often, the way that entrepreneurship enters our consciousness is through the media. TV shows like *Shark Tank*, *Dragons’ Den*, *The Apprentice* and even industry-specific competitions like *The X Factor* (music) or *Project Runway* (fashion) have been extremely popular.

Entering into this kind of competition is a high-risk game. High risk, high rewards. That's why these shows have great viewing numbers. Every competitor that makes it to air on these shows has high stakes and opposition. People's goals are pitted against each other and there needs to be a great deal at risk for it to make entertaining TV viewing.

Now, that's fine for entertainment, but we're talking about your life here. It's not that these shows don't create real businesses. The people on reality TV are real too! It's just that, as a strategy, there is a miniscule chance of success compared to other models.

Did you know that 98% of people who apply for venture capital will be rejected? Take that in for a moment. 98% of business owners with a dream, who go for this option, get a 'no' before they even start! And that's just the ones who took the time to apply.

Add to that the statistic that most of those types of businesses *still* fail — about 75% in the US, according to Harvard Business School senior lecturer Shikhar Ghosh — and you'll soon see why venture-backed start-ups aren't exactly top of my freedom list for business models.

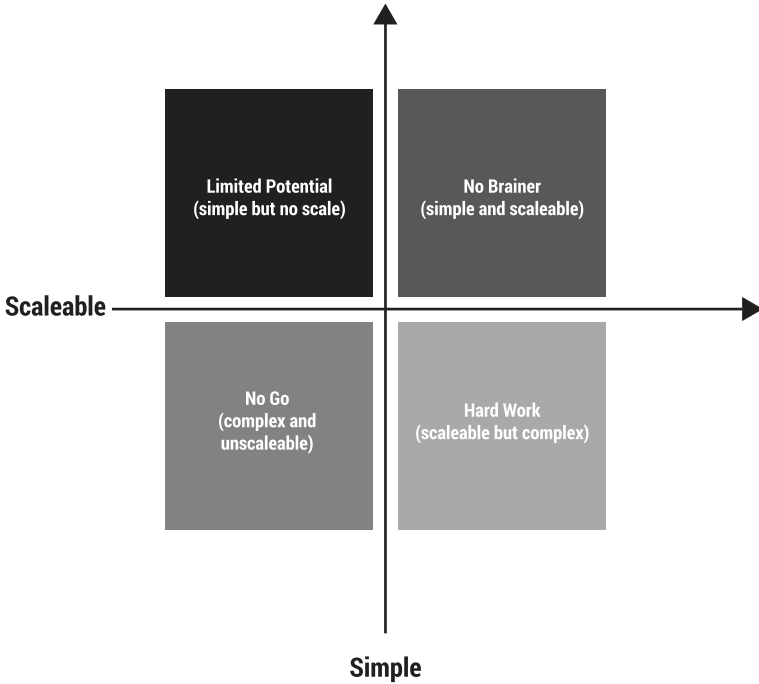
Indeed, the failure rate Ghosh reported to *The Wall Street Journal* is far higher than industry-reported failure rates.

Why do they fail? Because businesses that need external funding to get off the ground are likely to be larger and more complex, maybe with higher start-up costs or multiple people involved (remember the list of complicating factors?) and so on.



## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

Where does it sit on our Simplicity-Scaleability Model?  
Down in the bottom right quadrant here:



**Diagram 3.1: The Simplicity-Scaleability Model**

Using venture capital implies the business is more complex, meaning the likelihood of you winning this game is much lower. Statistically speaking, you have a 2% chance of getting funding, then once you are past that hurdle, a 25% success rate. Overall, that means 0.5% of these businesses make it. Urgh.

Plus, what do you get when you use someone else's money? Someone to answer to AKA another boss in different clothing. What does it mean if you get funding?

## PICKING YOUR PLAY FOR MAXIMUM FREEDOM

It means:

- You have to report to an authority figure who gives you money.
- You have to explain how you are creating value with that money.

To me, that sounds too much like a job! Sure, it means doing something exciting and high-risk, but do you really want to answer to a manager by another name? In general, reporting to someone is exactly what we want to get away from. Plus, you can't really be location-independent if you have to go to the office to keep your investor happy, right?

The narrative around venture capital is not geared towards the highest percentage of people succeeding either. It's spoken about as though it's exclusive; that only a tiny percentage of people can access it and succeed.

The venture capital route is nice if all that really is you, but let's face it, it isn't most of us. And who wants a boss by another name anyway? Certainly not me. And since you're reading a book called *Your Business, Your Rules*, I'm going to bet that's not you either.

If you have a huge idea that is impossible to start without a major cash injection and this world excites you, it is an option and may well be the path for you. If your aspirations are big but focus more on the freedom side of building a business, let's keep going because there's more ways to play.

## The ‘Traditional’ Business play

If angel funding is out of the question or does not appeal, what other options could you consider in the inner ‘how I am going to escape?’ turmoil?

The ‘traditional’ business game could also be called the local business game. Lower on sex appeal, this option brings up the idea of a stable income and ‘proper’ business in people’s minds. No-one can suspect you don’t have a business because you have the best proof of being a business owner out there — a real store front.

This is the type of business we all understand — a cafe, a yoga studio, a coworking space, a shop. It’s solid. It appears dependable. It feels like a real thing. It has at least four walls, comes with keys and an address, and it gives you the sense of being a real business owner.

But will it give you the freedom you are looking for?

For me, freedom is unlikely with this option, because the solidity that ‘feels’ good when it comes to showing other people you have a ‘real’ business comes with a cost.

It comes with a set-up cost for a start. You need to buy or rent the building. If you are taking over an existing business, you need to buy the entity from the current owner. Not only is there a set-up cost, but it’s also like an extra mouth to feed. It needs water, heat, maybe even staff to show up and take care of whatever needs to happen in the building. You’ll need a fit-out, signage, the list goes on.

## PICKING YOUR PLAY FOR MAXIMUM FREEDOM

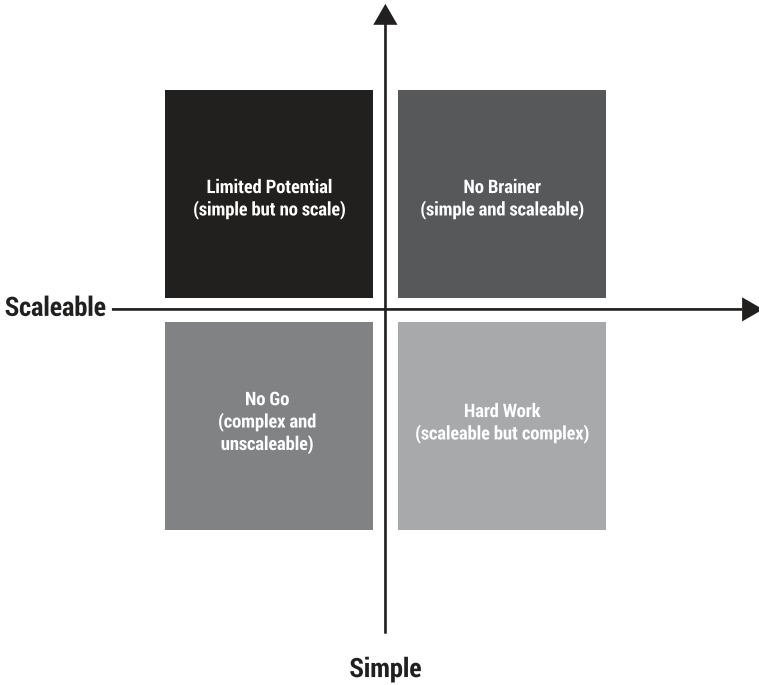
It comes with additional complexity and cost. As we talked about earlier, the bigger and more complex the thing you try to start, the more moving parts there are to go wrong. The higher the overheads of the building and staff (if there are any), the less likely you are to succeed.

While this is not the same as buying yourself a boss, you could liken it to buying yourself a job in terms of the level of freedom you get.

For some people, this is truly what they want. And of course, this type of business is scaleable. You can have multiple branches, or sell franchises, or move to bigger premises. Yet, the complexity remains.

Let's check out the Simplicity-Scaleability Model for the traditional business. Again, we find ourselves on the bottom right quadrant:

## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES



**Diagram 3.1: The Simplicity-Scaleability Model**

If the lifestyle element is important to you, you risk overcomplicating matters by taking this path.

Humans tend to do this. We think that it has to be hard or complex to achieve something amazing. The truth is it isn't easy. If it was, everyone would be doing it! However, in terms of being successful, always remember that complexity is your enemy and you don't need it to create that 'something amazing'.

## The Online Impression-Based Business play

So, where does that leave us? How about starting a blog, a podcast or a YouTube channel?

This really does sound like the dream, right? You write or record yourself on a subject you're interested in and the cash just flows in. No showing up at the office, no rules, no-one telling you what you can and can't wear.

Unfortunately, this is still often not the 'golden egg' it appears to be.

All these types of businesses are based on you getting paid for impressions. Either for views or downloads.

Let's look at the numbers:

Tech business owners have reported that you would need 100,000 visitors a day to your blog to make \$100k from ads with a click-through rate (CTR) of 1% and cost per click (CPC) of \$0.25. Advertising rates, at the time of writing, vary from \$25-\$50 per 1000 listeners on podcasts. And according to online calculators, you would need to have yearly YouTube views in the millions to earn what would be considered a minimum salary in most countries.

Can you do this? Of course, you could. And people do.

Just be aware that the number of viewers you need for advertising to be your main business are beyond huge. They are gigantic. Way beyond what most people, including

people who are making a lot of money in their businesses with different business models, are achieving.

Is this simple? Not really. Getting to those traffic numbers is going to be a huge challenge for anyone, not to mention a huge investment of time.

Is it scaleable? Well, it requires scale to even work, but to answer the question more fully, for most people it's not scaleable. The effort to get off the ground and reach the point of earning a modest income is, for many, not worth it.

## **The Online Physical-Product-Based Business play**

What about if you wanted to sell physical products? A lot of people like the idea of this because it seems hands-off and doesn't involve much contact with the customer. You remove yourself as the 'face' of the business, because they simply buy and receive an item from you.

While, of course, there are successful businesses out there doing this, it would not be my top recommendation because handling physical products comes with additional costs — shipping, manufacture, storage and so on. Another downside is price competition.

If you are creating a new product, either making it yourself or organising manufacture, logistics, testing, packaging, these add significantly to the complexity of the business. Complexity from many moving parts creates areas for potential mistakes. The risk of hold-ups, manufacturing

## PICKING YOUR PLAY FOR MAXIMUM FREEDOM

issues, delivery problems, faults and additional layers involved means this model often doesn't add up to success.

If you are buying an existing product developed by someone else and selling it on or doing dropshipping, you will have to deal with the inevitable price competition that comes from being on the internet because you are selling the exact same thing as everyone else.

Considering scalability and simplicity, selling physical products is firmly in the bottom right quadrant:

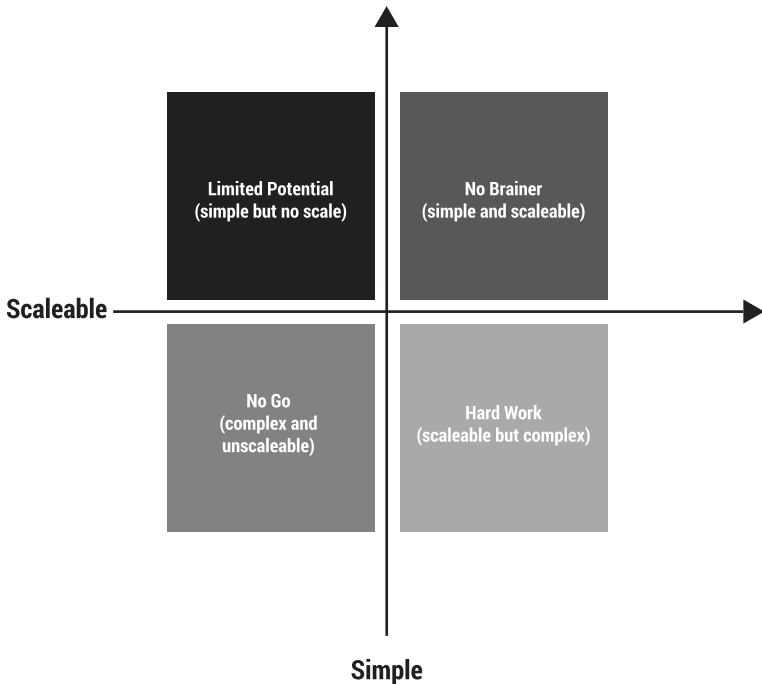


Diagram 3.1: The Simplicity-Scaleability Model



If you're feeling despondent at this point, don't worry, because there are business models out there that sit in the no-brainer quadrant. There is a way to get off the ground that is simple and scaleable! In fact, I'm about to share it right now.

## The Online Service-Based Business Play

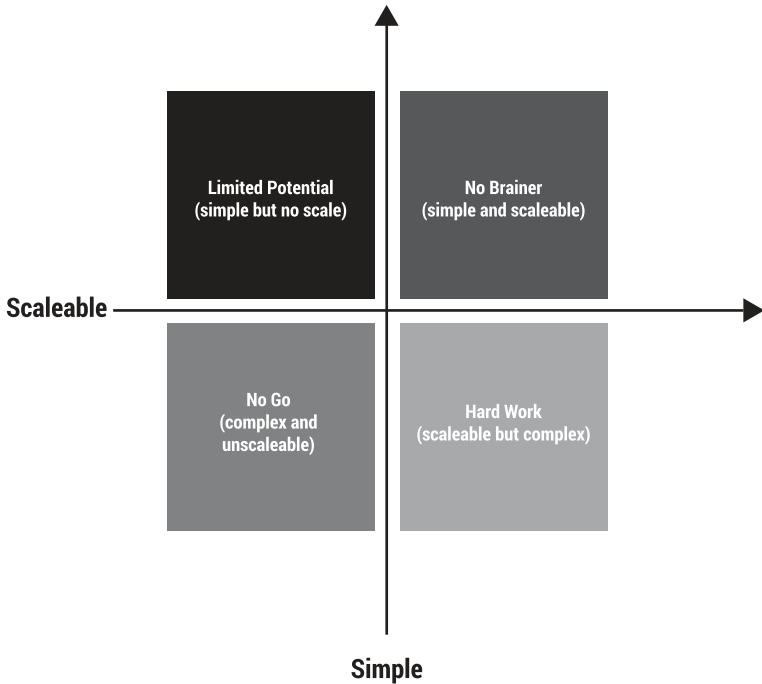
By now, you might be thinking, *Goddammit! How do I get to the top right?* Let me assure you... we're there! It is not a myth! Your patience has paid off. The investment you've made in reading about these risks will pay off too.

Let's turn our attention to the online service-based business. It is simple. It is scaleable. It is in the top right quadrant where the no-brainer businesses lie.

That could be coaching or consulting or some kind of 'done-for-you' service like social media, web design, dog training, illustration, SEO, accountancy services... anything that people need done for them by someone with the skills to perform the task.

Why are these service-based businesses in the top right? How are they simple and scaleable?

## PICKING YOUR PLAY FOR MAXIMUM FREEDOM



**Diagram 3.1: The Simplicity-Scaleability Model**

When it comes to starting up the business, all you need is yourself. No-one else, no office, no signage. In the beginning, you probably don't even need business cards! You just need a) someone who needs what you do and b) some time to spend doing it.

I can hear your objections already! 'But I don't want to trade my time for money.' Right? And I agree. But what you do want is a successful business that allows you to make the rules and live on your own terms.

Offering a service gives you this. It enables you to start with the lowest level of complexity, financial investment and risk, which

means you are giving yourself the highest possible chance of having a successful business in the first place. You jump into that 10% of people who succeed in starting their business.

Once you have it working, you have two options for scale:

1. bringing on other people to deliver the service
2. scaling into group programs, online courses and membership sites.

It's the easiest way to start.

- No need to borrow other people's money.
- No need for expensive premises.
- No dealing with physical products.
- No trying to find thousands and thousands of people to follow, read or watch you to make money.

You can just start. With what you already have. Right now.

On top of it being super simple to start, you get to make money *while* you grow your audience and reputation, and scale your business at the same time as bringing money in.

Coming back to what you're aiming for in the first place — lifestyle, workstyle and purpose — this option allows you to have all three of those fulfilment factors. Right from the start. So, if an online service-based business gives you the most freedom and the best chance of success, the question now is: what kind of online service might you offer?

# WHICH TYPE OF ONLINE SERVICE- BASED BUSINESS?

A service-based business is going to give you the maximum scale potential and the least complexity of all the business models. But now what? Where to start? There are so many people doing so many things already, right? You could start an online course, you could start a membership, you could do a group program, you could do one-on-one work. What do you decide to do first?

No matter what your experience at work, try looking at the income potential that you have right now *as a beginner*. The real question is: how easy or how quick is this going to be to start?

The reason your income potential is that of a 'beginner' when you're starting your business is you'll spend some time getting the first 10 people to say 'yes' to you and what you're offering. Once you have those first 10 people, then you'll be on to the next 10, and the next 10, and you can grow from there. But right now, each sale you get is going to be some work. It's unlikely that clients are going to fall in your lap because you've got something amazing unless you've done some groundwork already. There are literally two billion websites out there.

This may sound tough, but I'm being real with you here! When you start out, you haven't got an audience, so your options are limited.

In the online space looking at service-based businesses, you have one-on-one, group programs, ecourses and memberships.

One-on-one work could be in the form of coaching or consulting or a done-for-you type of service. Group programs are about selling training or information with an element of personalised guidance built in. Ecourses are online training programs and membership programs most frequently use the format whereby members pay a low fee on a regular basis for access to a training repository.

If you take my statement that the reality is that you're going to need to put every effort into your first 10 sales as true, what will give you the best and quickest income potential? Remember right at the beginning when I said the parts of business that you can't change are maths and psychology? Well, let's just look at the numbers and work this through.

With a membership site, for example, you might set the price at \$27/month. If you get 10 people, your income will be \$270/month or \$3,240/year, which doesn't have the potential to replace a salary or to live on.

This option will likely take a really long time to start because in most cases you have to create a lot of content for people inside your membership.

Similarly, ecourses are only slightly less work and have a limit on the price you can set realistically, especially at first when

## WHICH TYPE OF ONLINE SERVICE-BASED BUSINESS?

people don't know you. If you start by selling an ecourse to 10 people and charge \$200, you'll make even less, just \$2,000.

Not great money, right? You want to be earning a living!

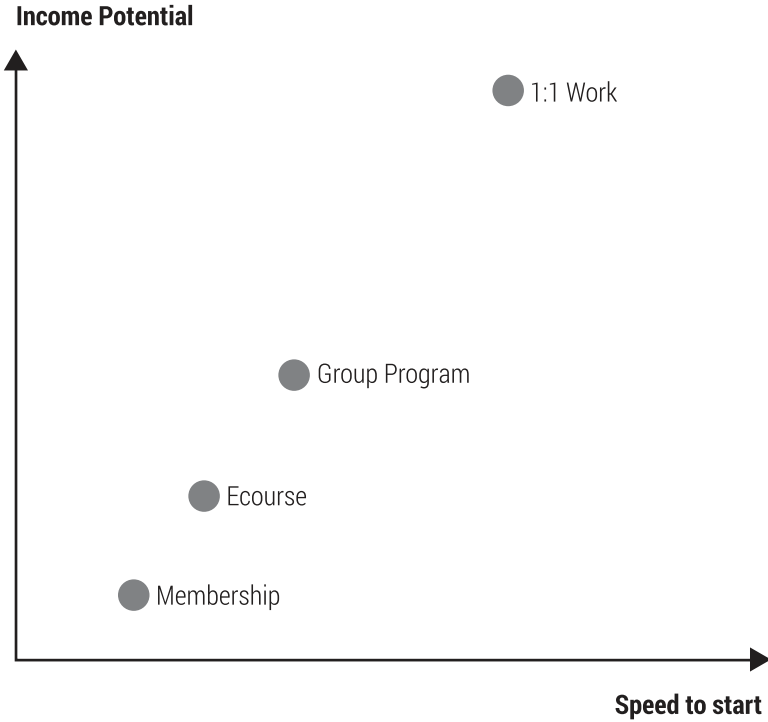
A group program generally has more interaction, so you could charge more for it, but you'll also still have to spend a long time preparing and creating content or training, because this online offering is not completely one-on-one, so clients need to be able to take in your expertise without you being there all the time.

If you charged, say, \$500 for a group program, you will still need to do a large amount of upfront work and receive \$5,000 for 10 sales. It's certainly not terrible but you will need to find 10 people who want to start at the same time to solve the same problem. The reality is more likely that your first 10 people won't be ready to buy all at once.

Ultimately, one-on-one work is the fastest way to start your business. Why? Because you decide what your product is and can pretty much go right ahead with it. You also get the highest income per client.

Depending on how long you are working with a client and what you are offering, it's completely feasible to charge a four-figure sum to each client.

This diagram compares income potential from the first 10 clients.



**Diagram 3.2: Income Potential From First 10 Clients**

With the one-to-one offer option, you have a real possibility of replacing your corporate income in the first year.

I know what you're thinking here. *But I could sell that ecourse or group program or membership to way more people.* And yes, you would be right. But how do you get people? You get people by either paying for advertising or doing other work that enables you to find them.

There's no magic formula or bypassing this. Either you will need to invest time so that the right people find out about

## WHICH TYPE OF ONLINE SERVICE-BASED BUSINESS?

you or you'll need to pay for advertising and build out what is known as a sales or marketing funnel to turn your advertising dollars into sales. A sales or marketing funnel is a series of pieces of content or experiences that prime your prospects to buy. As a new online entrepreneur, creating profitable funnels is extremely challenging. These are advanced techniques that I only recommend using later if you want to avoid burning a big pile of money with little results to show for it.

Contrary to how it might appear, you won't have limitless traffic or huge numbers of people coming to look at your stuff. You'll need to have at least a basic marketing plan in place to get clients, which is why we're looking at the first 10 people.

In short, I recommend one-to-one work to get you started, because this will enable you to replace your corporate salary so that your business actually gets off the ground.

What I'm saying is: don't overcomplicate it! Let's get you up and running right away. Don't spend months building things that you don't have the audience size to sell to profitably. Believe me when I say that 99% of the people you see running successful online businesses started by doing one-to-one work.

## **Business model income potential over time**

While I recommend starting with one-on-one work, I am not necessarily recommending you stay there forever.



# THE LEVERAGE LADDER

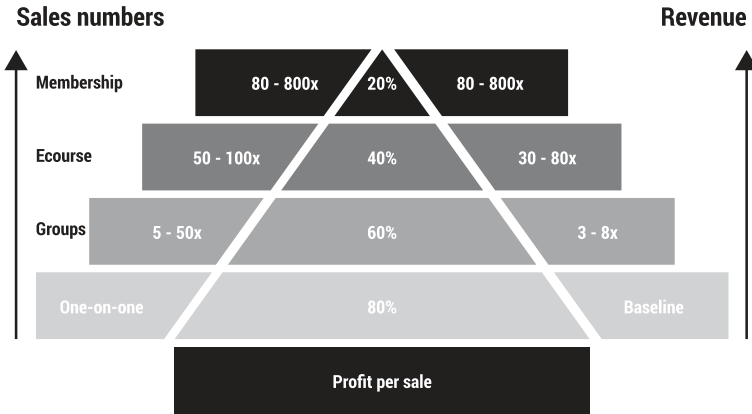


Diagram 3.3: The Leverage Ladder

As you can see on the Leverage Ladder table, one-to-one work is at the bottom, then group programs, then ecourses, then membership. Other products such as books would be the top layer of the ladder.

As you move up the Leverage Ladder, you bring in more money in total, sell to more people and your percentage profit per person is smaller.

All of these models work well for different stage businesses. Let me show you what I mean here:

1. One-to-one work is the highest possible price point and requires the lowest number of people to replace your corporate income. It also requires close to no pre-prepared training material, meaning no delay in getting started and earning money. This is why it's recommended in the beginning stages.

## WHICH TYPE OF ONLINE SERVICE-BASED BUSINESS?

2. Group coaching typically is priced lower than one-to-one and requires you to find a higher number of people willing to work with you and all start at the same time. As people are going through as a group, you need a good amount of pre-prepared training material. Therefore, the prep time is longer before you can get started. You also need to spend money or time on marketing to get the numbers required to replace the pay you get from a job. Usually, the price point is lower than when you work one-to-one and your profit per sale is less. This is recommended when you've worked with some clients, have more content and are more confident working with people in larger numbers.
3. Ecourses sell at a lower price point still so require even larger numbers of people to buy to be financially viable and substitute a salary. Also, you need to create a large amount of training material, meaning you are potentially months away from having something customer-ready. Further, your profit per sale is less, as the unit price is less, and because you'll need to pour money into finding people if you don't have the numbers already. Suitable for when your business is more established.
4. Membership sites are the next level where you need even higher volumes of people and a large amount of training material to supply members with on an ongoing basis. If you don't have a large audience already, your income will be severely limited. Meaning, use this model when you have a large number of people to sell to and lots of material already developed.

Going back to one-to-one work, here's why I recommend starting at the least leveraged level of the ladder:

1. It's the quickest way to start earning money.
2. You don't need to build anything or create materials.
3. You earn the most money possible per client while you grow your audience.
4. You get paid to learn what your audience wants from you, to hone your skills, while you prepare for more volume-based business models.

This last one is hugely important. In fact, I recommend you step through these business models as your email list and audience become larger and you create more content and products. Go from one-to-one, to group, to online program and later membership site.

You may feel nervous about working one-on-one with clients in some form, but don't worry, because everyone feels this way. This means you are normal! The first time I had a client I felt like I used to before job interviews. Luckily, I don't have to go to job interviews any more, but that doesn't mean one-to-one client work can't be daunting at first.

Here's the thing. The best way to grow a business that can scale is by working with people. There is no better way to learn. And remember you are choosing an idea that plays to your strengths that people want help with, so you are already in a place where you can help people from day one, even if you don't believe it yet.

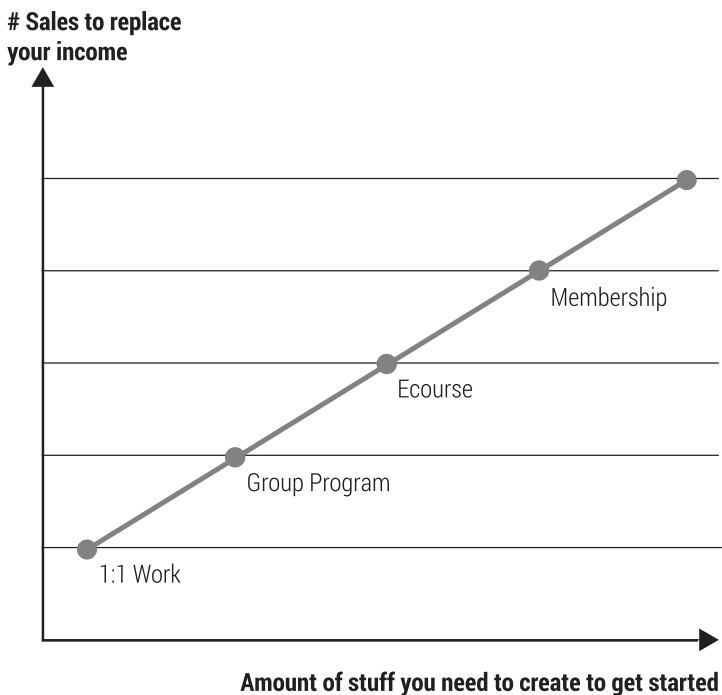
It's why many big companies that take their growth seriously send senior managers to work on shop floors — so the

## WHICH TYPE OF ONLINE SERVICE-BASED BUSINESS?

decision-makers can understand the business and their customers. Start by understanding your customer, then take it anywhere you want.

Creating your first one-to-one service means creating a concept to test (which I'll abbreviate for the remainder of this book to 'ACT') with your first 10 clients. You don't have to be married to your initial idea or offer. You are just at the dating stage.

What kind of service might you provide one-to-one? Anything like coaching, consulting or professional services such as web design, development, virtual assistant services, doing work for other people.



**Diagram 3.4: Online Service-Based Business Models Ease of Start Comparison**

## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

The strength of these types of services is that you are in a situation where you can make the most money with the fewest sales and least lead time to get your business off the ground. Why spend a year working on finding 20 people to sell an ecourse to and spend three months working solidly building it and make maybe \$4,000 if you're lucky, when you could start coaching in the next few weeks and make that amount in less than a quarter of the time?

Another convenient aspect of one-to-one is it's usually well paid, while you don't have to bust your balls for months creating videos and workbooks. One-to-one means you just start. Just start. Right now. Magic, eh?

# GETTING YOUR MIND ALIGNED WITH ONE-TO- ONE SERVICE PROVISION

The thought of providing a service either as a coach, consultant or another kind of service provider can feel scary. It feels like being on the front lines, whereas creating a product or a hands-off service like an ecourse feels more like being in the safety of the operations room — you're much less likely to have to deal with conflict or difficulties.

Because one-to-one feels direct, your mind is going to give you extra excuses as to why you aren't ready. You might feel comfortable enough writing a blog on a subject or making an online course, but if it comes to helping one other person solve a problem, that feels too high pressure.

Let's talk some hard truths here. If you aren't confident enough in your advice to tell it to one person, it's highly unlikely that multiple people are going to be interested in it. It's normal to be nervous. The way through this and the way to get really good at what you do is to practise your craft with people in a scenario where you have flexibility to adapt.

## The 'I'm not expert enough' thought process

Speaking of getting really good at your craft, you may well be thinking at this point something along the lines of 'I'm not expert enough'. We are used to other people deciding if we are good enough. If we got a certain grade at school or if we have done a certain number of years in a job, we are deemed worthy. Now, yes, there are some professions where this is necessary. However, in general, in online services businesses, the whole point is you get to choose yourself. In other words, no more waiting to be chosen.

In many cases, there is no qualification specific to the special blend of skills and talents that you bring to the world.

Using my own services as an example, when I started this consulting business, I helped people with business ideas. I wanted to do this because I had done a lot of research on business ideas and business models in starting my previous business. I saw people were really stuck with this. They just had no idea where to start. In preparing to work in this area, I researched what kinds of qualifications I could get on top of my Economics degree, which had not really covered business, and I even looked at an MBA, but that was geared towards those preparing to work in a big company which was irrelevant for me. Even the Entrepreneurship MBA only had one relevant course for my chosen business idea.

What did this mean? There was no-one who was going to come along and 'give me permission' to consult on this. I just had to try working with people to be sure I could help them.

The moral of that story is to give yourself permission to try.

# ONE-TO-ONE AND BEYOND

What is possible when you start with a one-to-one form of online service-based business? Growth can happen! And there are some inevitable stages of a new start-up that we all tend to move through. I call this the Online Business Growth Ladder and I use it to explain to my clients what their trajectory can look like and what they need to focus on at each stage.

This is what it looks like.

Business Growth Level	Income Range (Monthly)	Your Focus
CEO	\$30k+	Scale
Pro	\$10k-30k	Systems
Hustler	\$3k-10k	Sales
Starter	\$0-3k	Setting up
Dreamer	\$0	Starting!

**Table 3.1: The Online Business Growth Ladder**

Looking at this normally brings out one of two responses in people:

1. Bring it on!



2. Ooohhh. Do I have to go all the way to the top? I can't even imagine that.

Maybe you're looking at The CEO level and thinking, *Holy shit! Do I have to do that?!* And the answer is: no, of course not. Maybe you'd be totally happy to earn \$50,000/year doing something you really enjoy. Once you have the sales you want in The Hustler level, you move into The Pro and you're exactly where you want to be. Not everyone wants to be a millionaire. Most people don't. A lot of people want to be more lowkey and that's totally cool.

And yet, the human condition is to always want more. More growth, more achievement, more love, more everything. Almost certainly your business helps people. Not all of this help has to be delivered by you personally, though. When I started my business, my goal was to reach the level where both myself and my partner could be at home. For us, that was around the \$10K/month mark. We're now past that goal and I have new goals. Namely, I want to help thousands of budding entrepreneurs quit their jobs and lead a life of independence, purpose, freedom and flexibility.

As you and your business grow, your goals may grow as well. However, it's usual to start at level one on the ladder, choosing an income goal that feels like a stretch but is also manageable.

Before I explain the levels of the Online Business Growth Ladder in more detail, let me first answer the burning question: is this set in stone? Of course, with a title like *Your Business, Your Rules*, you may guess the answer to this already. No, it's not rigid. We are all individuals with different income

and lifestyle goals, which is why each level has an income range. Depending on your goals, you may be below or above the range at any given level of business.

The amounts are set as monthly, because when you are doing things right, you move relatively fast. You could progress through three levels in a year, so it doesn't make sense to use annual income as a measure in start-ups.

This ladder can help you see where you are right now and gain perspective on what's coming up in future. Often, it may feel like things are 'wrong' or not how they should be. Sharing the growth path helps you realise you're exactly where you need to be. If you are struggling with your business, it opens your eyes to what you need to work on to move forwards.

Let's unpack the different levels.

## **Business Growth Level 1 — The Dreamer**

- You've known you want to be your own boss for a long time.
- You may even have had a few attempts, tried working with an MLM or gone freelance as a consultant.
- You know it's possible, but you haven't had a real, serious go at starting your own thing yet.

You know it's out there but you haven't fully committed to yourself and your future freedom. Why not? Most likely because there are a lot of decisions to make to get started and

because the road ahead can feel so vague that it's too hard to know what steps to take first and next.

The key for you here is to commit to making it happen.

Commit to yourself that, when you are on your deathbed you aren't going to be thinking, *If only I'd been brave enough...* As the quote goes, we only regret the chances we didn't take.

## Business Growth Level 2 — The Starter

- You're choosing your niche.
- You decide what you sell, who you sell it to and how you sell it.
- You create a process to make sales.
- You put a marketing plan together.

Essentially, you have all the pieces that a functioning business needs. You know what you are doing, in what form you are selling it, how to explain the value you provide so people buy what you're offering and how to find people who might be interested in the first place.

Many people feel they have done the first three bullet points, when really, they haven't. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, it's the introspective part that gets skimmed over. And secondly, it involves figuring out sales. Everyone wants to rush straight to the marketing because that is what we see other people doing. But any marketing you do won't have an effect, unless the steps before are done well.

Most people skim over this level and try to get straight into the next level — The Hustler.

## **Business Growth Level 3 — The Hustler (or The Struggler if you mess up The Starter)**

- You are out there getting clients.
- You are honing your craft.
- You tweak your offers and sales process.

In case of confusion, I want to point out that I mean hustling in the sense of being out there looking for clients, not in any other sense!

The issue at The Hustler level is most people want to skip The Starter level, but what they don't realise is that the better your work is in the earlier stages, the easier it is to find clients that want to work with you. Otherwise, you can end up struggling which is why I put The Struggler as an alternative name for this level.

Doing a ton of marketing and looking for clients won't help if your niche, messaging or offers aren't solid, or if you don't know how to sell. If you are spinning your wheels, it's time to look at whether you did what was required at The Starter level thoroughly and deeply enough to make the business work.

If you think you are doing All The Things (social media, blogging, live video, podcast interviews, newsletters and

on and on) and you're not seeing results, you are not alone. Roughly 90% of people who want to start an online business think of a (usually not well-defined) niche and then start throwing a website together. Then they spend the next two years struggling and trying to fix what they did when a little strategic guidance would have enabled them to have a smoother start.

They've drunk the Kool-Aid and think starting an online business is easy, then are surprised when it's hard to find clients. Their mindset suffers for it. They buy courses on Facebook ads, they do more training on marketing, they change their copy endlessly. If this is you, focus instead on creating a solid business foundation that clearly offers value to the right customers. Then you can build from there.

At this point, you can start thinking about group programs, online courses and so on, but your business will work better if you wait until you're at The Pro level, not necessarily in terms of your overall income but for your business to continue operating relatively smoothly and revenue staying somewhat stable.

Once you are consistently getting clients, you move into The Pro level.

## **Business Growth Level 4 — The Pro**

Yeah, you're a pro! This is where you will:

- Have a somewhat reliable stream of clients.

- Start to outsource more.
- Become ready to scale.

This is the stage where you've 'made it'. Business is much more stable than the early days.

Before I run the risk of sounding like it gets super easy from here, I do want to make clear that the hustle never really ends, because as a business owner you want to grow and improve your business always. You'll never stop being on the look-out for new opportunities. However, the hustling does feel much less acute.

Some people make it to this stage within six months, but more likely you are looking at a period of a year plus to feel really comfortable. That's because working for yourself is a huge mental adjustment and there are lots of new things to get used to.

It all comes down to your niche — by definition, some things are more in demand than others — and whether you are doing the right things at each stage of business. You can absolutely stay at The Pro level comfortably *forever*. As I mentioned before, not everyone wants to hit a million in revenue. If you're game, though, up next is The CEO level.

## **Business Growth Level 5 — The CEO**

This is the ultimate!

- Your business is fully systemised.

## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

- You have leveraged revenue streams.
- You are stepping into the role of a leader.

If you know already that you're in it to win it or you are looking to make a bigger impact and help more people, this is what you are aiming for.

Here, your business is fully systemised. You likely run a small team, have several revenue streams and leverage them all in some way.

You are stepping into the role of a leader or CEO, which I'm sure you can agree with me is pretty exciting!

Now let's talk about the how to make this all happen in a business that gives you a lifestyle in alignment with meaningful work you enjoy and making money on your own terms.

# LEVERAGING DONE RIGHT

You've already met the basic Leverage Ladder earlier in Part 3, where I explained the order in which I suggest you progress through the online business models. It may still be tempting to jump straight to a leveraged product and skip one-to-one. I get it. Lots of people want passive income. You are probably one of them. Who doesn't want money while they sleep, right?

But let's approach this from a purely logical perspective. What is passive income really?

It's income that you get from something you do no additional work for each time you sell a unit.

How do you make passive income in an online business? You make it by creating online products that are made once and sold many times over. Many people think of an ecourse or a membership site when they think of passive income.

What do you need to earn passive income then? Of course, you need to have created something to sell and then sell it. Right? Well, kind of...

That's the story marketers will tell you — just make an ecourse, a book, a membership site and sell it. Set up some Facebook ads if you haven't got an email list and off you go.



The truth is you need more than that.

1. **Strong process:** You need to know your stuff well enough so that you can create a high-quality product that you know for sure your clients will be able to follow (without you if it's passive) and get results from.
2. **Good sales skills:** You need to have strong enough marketing and sales skills so that you can sell this product. It will be harder to sell than anything personalised.
3. **People:** Then you need people to sell the product to. If you don't already have a community of people that know, like and trust you, you are going to need to pay for traffic and the traffic will need to be warmed up.
4. **Healthy margin:** The lower the price point of what you are offering, the smaller amount of wiggle room you have to make a sale at a profit. Generally, prices increase as you gain more experience, so this works inversely to that principle.

If you are new to online business, you likely:

- haven't yet tested your process or even worked out your process fully with clients
- don't yet have the sales skills to get a good number of yeses
- don't yet have a lot of people to sell this to
- don't yet have the experience to charge higher prices, meaning you have less margin to make a profit.

## LEVERAGING DONE RIGHT

If your idea of fun and success is to spend several months creating a course, book or membership site to make \$1,000 in your first year and not much profit, by all means listen to the marketers selling you that online course on making online courses! But if that sounds less than desirable, keep reading!

Hopefully, you're convinced by now to hang back on the leveraging until you've reached The Hustler level at least, if not The Pro. Once you are ready, this is how the Leverage Ladder is going to help you leap to CEO and when I suggest you move through the different online business models.

### THE LEVERAGE LADDER

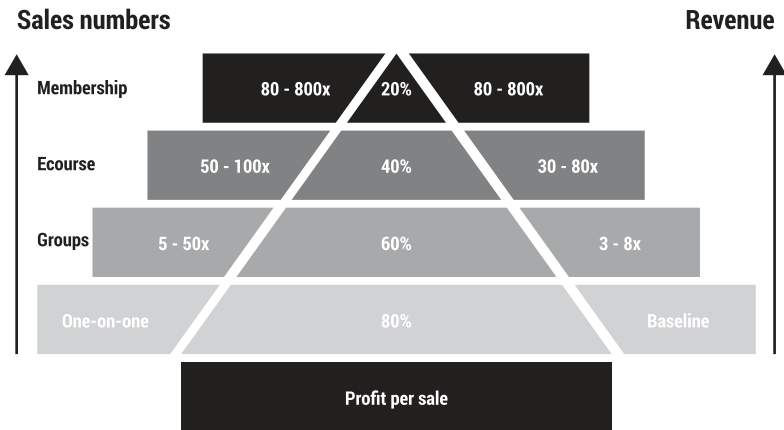


Diagram 3.3: The Leverage Ladder

**One-on-one:** First, you want to create a baseline in your business and start earning some money. As we know, the easiest way to do this is with one-on-one work. This where you move from The Dreamer, someone who wants to start a business but hasn't yet, to The Starter. In the beginning, you

*don't have leverage.* Your income isn't leveraged. Yes, you are trading time for money at this stage, but you have to start somewhere.

**Group:** Once you are maxing out the number of people you have in one-on-one services, it's time to group people. By this time, you are becoming The Pro. You are figuring out your process. You will have experience of where the pitfalls lie and systems in place for what you need to explain over and over.

You create a group experience and get more people working with you, each paying less than the one-on-one rate. You will have some leveraged elements, like maybe a video for each stage of your process, but you don't have to have every single stepping stone mapped out as you are still there to support your clients. You are starting to leverage your time.

You may be able to take 5 to 50 times the number of people in a group program than you can take one-on-one.

Your sales skills are also improving, as you've been in business a while. Your community will be growing at this stage too.

**Ecourse:** Then you'll reach the stage of wanting to automate or leverage more. You'll create more videos or worksheets and take some of the support time out of your group program to create an ecourse. You'll charge each person less than a group program so you'll need higher numbers to duplicate your income if you plan on phasing out any other products.

Again, your community is larger, which means more people to sell to. Your sales skills will be improving since you've sold one-on-one services and a group program already. Your

process, which is how you get people results, is even more refined.

**Membership:** Next maybe you want to create a membership site — at a lower price point again, a lower profit margin, and a higher volume needed to make the income you want.

Each time we go up a level, it is more leveraged and increasingly close to true 'passive income' where you aren't expending extra effort for each new person coming on board.

# PROFIT PROTECTION?

Passive income is completely possible, but if you want to make enough money to make it worth building the products in the first place, I recommend doing it once you've got your process down pat, know your way around internet marketing and have the community to sell it to or are skilled enough to run traffic at a profit.

To protect your profit, I'm also saying to do it gradually.

One-on-one, then group, then ecourse, then membership. Each layer of the Leverage Ladder gives you new insights and experience. Each layer allows you to see how you can further serve your clients without investing more of your time.

These levels will help guide your path to growth through the model I consider has the most freedom in business. Now we're going to look at how you will make your business a success with the right mix of motivation, mindset and strategy. Always remembering, you can do this your way. It's your business. You get to choose what this looks like.

Let's get into how you're going to win this game in the final part — Your Business, Your Rules.

## **PART 4**

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# **YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES**



**IT'S  
YOUR  
RULES!**

# HOW TO WIN

## Three Success Factors

There are three crucial game plans that you'll need to employ at different times or sometimes simultaneously to become a successful entrepreneur. And these work together. Sometimes you'll be using one, sometimes you'll be using another. As you get momentum, you'll switch between them easily or you may put them to use all at the same time.



Diagram 4.1: Three Success Factors



## Business Strategy

The first is obvious. It's the business strategy you will use to keep you on track with your results. If you don't know what you're doing, you are going to get stuck, in the same way that you aren't going to get your spreadsheet done if you can't use Excel.

People underestimate this factor because they think, *Hey, I've gotten this far in life. I'm sure I can work this out!*

Generally, people who back themselves to start their own business have been at least fairly successful in whatever they did until this point so they can feel overconfident at their ability to get it right.

In my experience with clients and what I see happening in the marketplace, business is a different beast to anything you've taken on before unless you have already been in business. It's a different game altogether when you have to ask for money directly for something you'll be delivering.

With a job, you have to sell yourself at the interview but you're done after that. The deal is pretty much sealed. As an entrepreneur, you'll need to keep sealing the deal over and over again.

Plus, there's all the different pieces that come with being an entrepreneur, because you will wear all the hats at the beginning. You'll be the social media manager, the accountant, the salesperson and the consultant.

Given all the things you *could* be doing, it's really good to know what you *should* be doing. For that, you need a business

strategy. You don't need a 20-page business plan, but you do need to know how to create a concept to test (ACT), market and grow from there.

## Mental Flexibility

Once you know what you should be doing to get started, what else is there? The second important success factor is mental flexibility.

What do I mean by that? By mental flexibility, I mean the ability to pick yourself up, reflect and move ahead even if something doesn't go your way.

Carol Dweck, who was instrumental in the study of mindset, called this a growth mindset.

*She says, "In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work — brains and talent are just the starting point.*

*In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits."*

This idea of how you think about your own abilities is crucial. To explain, let me tell you about one of the worst days in my business and how I responded to it. I'm laughing as I write this, but I'm pretty sure I was crying at the time!

The first time I did a live webinar during a launch for my group program Ignition, it took me weeks to get ready for it. I was wracked with nerves and I did no fewer than seven trial runs, because each time I did one, there was some new tech snafu that I had to work out. I spent ages building up to it —

prepping my material and myself, because I was petrified. This was back in 2015. I had 500 people registered by promoting it everywhere for a few weeks and I only planned to do that one webinar.

So, I ran the webinar and I surprised myself at how well I was able to present considering my nerves. I got all the way through, had lots of great feedback in the chat. It was cutting-edge content and attendees were really impressed. I got several messages from friends about how great it was and then I checked my inbox for sales afterwards... *nothing*. NOTHING.

Not a single sale. I couldn't believe it. As far as I could tell, everything had gone really well. After over a month of build-up, I was on my knees with exhaustion and felt publicly humiliated because I had made such a big deal about this promotion.

At that point, I had two choices: drop the launch, maybe even drop the program, act like nothing had happened, and stew over the fact that no-one bought my program; or pick myself up.

I spent the rest of the day licking my wounds. Then I asked the only person I felt could tell me what went wrong and what to do next. My mentor got straight back to me and let me know I needed to do two more webinars. She told me the changes I should make. I trusted her opinion, even though I'd rather cut off my own arm than run two more webinars. I did what she said and the launch worked out pretty well in the end.

I believed I could still change the outcome and that what had happened in the past wouldn't necessarily repeat itself. I can't overestimate the importance of this. You don't have to be super confident going in, but you do need to be prepared to grow.

## Drive

The final factor for making a success of this is having drive. This is different from simply 'being motivated'. You have to know deep inside yourself that you want to be an entrepreneur and do this type of work. If you have that drive inside yourself, you'll keep going when you experience temporary setbacks. You'll learn new strategies when what you've done so far hasn't worked.

Without drive, at some point, you won't find it important enough to do the work. Life will take over.

No-one can give you that drive. And no amount of 'inspiration' is going to 'motivate' you into action. Drive comes from within. It comes from truly wanting something different for your life and being prepared to do the work to get it.

Strategically, it's not that complicated in many ways to build a successful business, but there will be growth involved and you have to really, deep down in your soul, want to make it happen.

So, if you want to live a life on your terms, that's the piece I am very much hoping you brought with you. I can help you with the mindset. I can help you with the strategy so you have a way to direct your energy. But you have to really want

the outcome. You have to have drive. It literally ‘drives’ your business growth (or lifestyle improvement, if you want to look at it that way).

## **And a bonus one... patience**

You’re also going to need a healthy dose of patience. I know, so boring!

While you want to create a lifestyle, one that is based around freedom, it’s not going to happen overnight. In the beginning, you probably are going to work more than you want to for less money than you want to get it off the ground. In the same way that nobody starts out truly an expert, you’re going to have to build the way you want to go.

Don’t expect everything to be perfect right away. Know that this is a long-term game. Or at least, a medium-term game!

Realistically, you’re looking to get where you want to be, where you have everything down pat and feel super comfortable, in about three to five years, which is no time at all in the grand scheme of things, but it’s certainly not overnight.

All in all, know where you’re going, set off in the right direction, expect to do some hard yards, but know that once you’re there and enjoying it on a daily basis, everything you get is truly worth it.

Now, let’s talk strategy to make it all happen...

# THE S-WORD

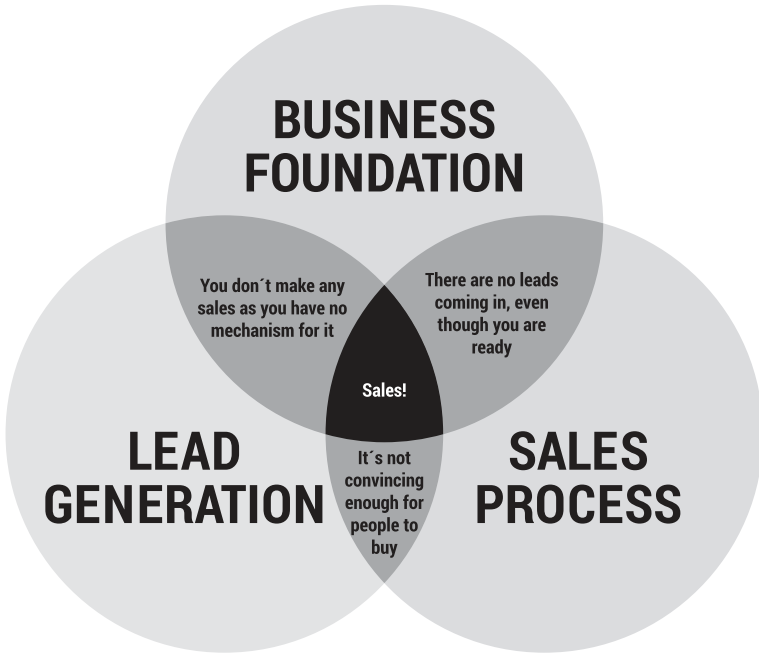
So, let's get into the strategy to build your business.

If strategy sounds intimidating, don't worry. All strategy means is a plan of action to get to your goals. It's about taking the right action steps, in the right order to get to where you want to be.

## **Making the money**

Money... now we're getting somewhere! Here are the three things that need to be in place to make money in business. At a core level, there really are just these three, which I call The Money Three.

Let's rewind to how and where we get to make the rules. We know that business is a system. It needs to work in terms of the maths (*can I make money selling this many things?*) and it needs to work in terms of the psychology (*does my service fulfil a human need?*). But what do the working parts of this system look like?



**Diagram 4.2: The Money three**

From a high level, the working parts of the business system are:

1. a solid business foundation
2. a sales process
3. a lead generation process.

In simple terms, you need:

1. a convincing thing for people to buy
2. a mechanism for the sale to take place
3. a way for people to find out you exist.

## Foundation, sales process and lead generation

Working from the bottom up, it operates like a funnel, which is why people often talk about sales or marketing ‘funnels’. People find out about you because of your lead generation, which is your marketing efforts. A proportion are interested enough to end up in a sales interaction of some form. This is your sales process, where they find out about your convincing ‘thing’ to buy and — *ka-ching!* — they buy it. Money in the bank. Happy customer.

When we’re starting out, though, this often doesn’t work as smoothly as we’d like. Typically, this comes down to having no business foundation, no mechanism to get the potential customer to buy.

So, what do we do when something isn’t working? Our natural response is to ramp up our marketing. *My ‘thing’ isn’t selling. I need to get it in front of more people!* This is where online entrepreneurs get sucked in to finding the latest magic trick — learn Facebook Ads, hammer Instagram with posts, figure out how to make video. Yes, more stuff!

Here’s the real question to ask yourself if you’ve already started your business: if you met someone in the street who was your ideal client and they asked you what you do, could you answer that question and explain your offer in a way that would get them to seriously consider buying it? Put another way, if you have a website, does the wording make a compelling case to buy your ‘thing’?



If the answer to this is ‘no’, hold off on the Facebook ads and all that other stuff, because in online business, we are competing on a completely different playing field to the way traditional business would make money in years gone by. In the pre-internet days of selling services, you might have an office. Depending on where it was located, you’d get foot traffic or people would drive by and see you are there. Given that you may have been one of only a few accountants, for example, in town, purely by being there, you would get some business. You wouldn’t need to be especially skilled at sales or be any different from any other accountant. Being there would have been enough.

On the internet, traffic can be scarce for small businesses. It takes a while for people to find you and even more for them to stick around. Now that all consumers have access to a computer, they can go anywhere in the world to look at any business they choose. If it doesn’t fit with what they need, at a touch of a button, they are on to the next one. By using Google, they can transport themselves anywhere instantly.

So, these days, simply being there is nowhere near enough. This is why we need to be so compelling. We need to have absolute clarity on what we’re offering and be able to sell it convincingly. Because if we aren’t clear and convincing, our potential client is gone in a click.

While this might on the surface sound bad, in my view, this actually presents an incredible opportunity, because most people won’t bother to do the work. And by ‘the work’, I mean set up a solid business foundation — knowing your niche, understanding how to communicate what you do, creating amazing offers, and mastering the sales process.

## THE S-WORD

The sales process is learning how to communicate the value of what you do so that other people get it and are interested in how your solution can help them move forward with their life.

Those are the two pieces to work on before anything else — your business foundation (what you sell and why people should buy it) and your sales process (communicating the value and moving them to act).

If you do these two well and *then* start marketing (generating leads), your efforts will pay off.

If you aren't clear on what you are doing, your marketing efforts won't get you anywhere because people will just keep clicking.

What does this mean for you? Clarity means spending time defining your niche, honing the communication of your ideas and your offers. Do these first then work on your sales skills. This is the equivalent of preparing your store for your grand opening before you send out the invitations. Make everything spick and span and pretty damn inviting, because that's when people will buy.

When you have The Money Three in place — foundation, sales process and lead generation — you've got a well-functioning business. Congratulations! You're on your way.

## ACT: the alternative to a business plan

In the world of entrepreneurship, there are two extremes when it comes to how to start: either take the leap and learn to fly on the way down, or have a solid and detailed business plan and not do anything until you have that fully mapped out. My take is a little different.

Traditional businesses should have traditional business plans. If you are starting a brick-and-mortar style business with a premises or staff from the get-go, yes, I would recommend creating a business plan so that you have a good understanding of the financials and what it's going to take to make the business work. You'll also need a business plan if you want to raise funds.

In the online service-based business world, we're unlikely to be looking to do either of those. You're probably looking for the location-independence of an online service-based business, which means no set location. You're also probably building a streamlined business where, at least for the first couple of years, you won't have staff. Freelancers hired as needed, yes. Staff, no.

While we are not traditional, we're still *a business*. Your costs may be minimal. Your costs may simply be some of your time. And although you don't need to worry about paying for staff, office rent and so on, the online world is complex and competitive. Therefore, if you are starting an online service-based business like a coaching practice, consultancy or another type of service, it's close to impossible to know what will land

with your potential market until you try it. You can't plan to sell  $x$  number of your premium packages within the next year, because you just don't know yet if anyone wants that.

Remember, you won't have foot traffic. It may be slow to start. It is possible to build quite quickly, but your growth will unlikely be linear.

In short, a traditional business plan is no use to you, other than it being a tool to organise your thoughts, because you can't predict how much you will sell of what service. Simply put, you can't plan what will happen with your business before you've started it. You are literally just making it up!

Not only that, but you actually don't need a traditional business plan. A framework to follow, yes. A business plan, no. Even in more traditional businesses, the efficacy of creating a business plan up front, which has been the standard approach for decades, is in question. William Bygrave, an entrepreneurship researcher, studied several years' worth of Babson graduates to find out how much better those who started businesses with a formal business plan did than those who didn't. The result? "We can't find any difference."

There were some advantages to writing a business plan, but the key finding was this: *"...writing a business plan ahead of time, before you open your doors for business, does not appear to help the performance of the business subsequently."*

All of this can be summed up by the adage: no battle plan survives contact with the enemy.

You just don't know what will happen until you try it. Then, by definition, you'll need to change your plan.

## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

So, if a traditional business plan won't help you, what do you need instead? A concept to test.

This concept forms the business foundation pillar of The Money Three that we saw earlier and could be:

- the niche
- the messaging around the niche (why you are different)
- some offers.

Here's what happens. You pick a version of your business foundation and test it in the marketplace without investing a ton of money. You find out if it works and you build from there. If it doesn't work, you make adjustments until it does. Once it does work, you create the sales process and marketing around it.

This is the process I use with my business start-up clients. It is what enables us to get results so quickly. Instead of deciding on a business idea, then spending months building a website, deciding a logo, printing business cards or whatever, only to find out it didn't quite land with the people they were trying to reach, we create a concept to test first.

This test concept can work first time. Often, it needs adjustment. Either the angle (messaging) needs tweaking or the offer needs to be changed. It might need a slightly different audience. Whatever it is, we alter the concept until we get it right. Only once we know it is working do we invest time and/or money building a website and getting all the business assets in place.

No business plan can tell you that upfront. A concept is a best guess. And I believe guesses should be tested before going all-in, especially when this is about your livelihood. It takes contact with your market to find out if your idea has legs. You do that by creating a solid concept to test. So, how do you create a concept?

## Idea

What follows in this section is my ACT Business Idea Generation Process. This is all about getting your best possible business idea to test with the knowledge that it will grow and evolve. It doesn't have to be 100% perfect from the very beginning. It just has to be your best guess at what you might do. Choosing your business idea this way gives you freedom because you're not coming from the perspective of this being your one and only shot at success. You don't risk everything just because it isn't perfect.

The whole ACT Business Idea Generation Process gives you space and freedom to try things out and grow them once you hit the sweet spot.

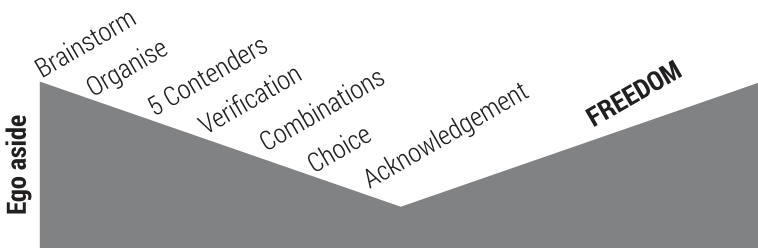


Diagram 4.3: The ACT Business Idea Generation Process

Your idea is your business cornerstone. From this place, everything grows. It's like the birth of your business. Exciting stuff!

### ***Ego aside***

In order for this to progress, you have to put your ego aside. This may come as a surprise, but putting your ego in a box or pushing your negative thinking to one side is the first step. There's no place for it here! If you go in with judgment about whether you are 'expert enough' or think 'it's been done already', all you'll do is shut yourself down before you even start.

### ***Brainstorm***

Next, you brainstorm. The reason for brainstorming is to get all possibilities out, without censoring yourself or deciding whether or not it's the best fit. Later, you'll narrow down your ideas and go through a process to pick one. This is why we had to drop the ego and negative thinking, right?

The key to effective brainstorming is to think of how you could benefit someone else. List how each of your skills, interests, experiences or passions could help people.

You're not thinking at this stage about what form you'll deliver the service; whether it's a one-to-one service, group experience or retreat. You are thinking about the core benefit that is being transferred; for example, helping successful women find a life partner, helping business people get their taxes done, or helping school teachers create lesson plans.

## ***Organise***

The next step is to group your ideas. Already, your ideas will likely be around certain themes, maybe technology, health, communication and so on. Organise your ideas in a way that makes sense for you. This is different for each person.

You may not need this if you've only got a couple of ideas, but if you have pages of them — and the more the better — then you'll need a way to look at them all together and make some decisions.

## ***The Five Contenders***

Once you're all organised, you pick a maximum of five contenders and do a round of idea verification. Of all of the ideas you have, there will be a subset that interest or attract you the most. Maybe there are just two you are trying to choose between. Whatever the number you are mulling over, create your shortlist.

## ***Verification***

There are 10 areas to rate to do initial business idea verification. These are the tried and tested categories that I use with my clients. Give each idea on your shortlist a rating out of 10 for each area. Add up the ratings and this will give you an overall score for each business idea.

### 1. Enthusiasm

Is it something you really enjoy or feel passionate about?

In order for you to be willing to put in the effort, get over the inevitable roadblocks and make this business



## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

work, you need to enjoy the work you are doing and feel connected to it.

Does this mean you'll enjoy every part of it? Likely not. Yet as you progress, you can take on people to do the parts you like less.

1 = You can't stand the idea of doing this in any way, shape or form no matter the context of your work environment.

5 = You feel okay about doing this but you're not jumping for joy.

10 = You would happily do it for free.

### 2. Skill

Is it something you are good at?

This is not the same as being an expert. As long as you are good enough to be able to help others, you have enough skill and a potential business idea.

1 = You would consider yourself a beginner.

5 = You have a reasonable amount of experience.

10 = You have a long, proven track record.

### 3. Lifestyle Fit

Does this idea lead towards the lifestyle you are looking for?

Coaching and consulting businesses can later be leveraged by creating digital products.

## THE S-WORD

Done-for-you services can be leveraged by creating an agency or moving into digital products.

Does this idea, after the initial year or two of work to get it really pumping, move you towards the lifestyle you are looking for?

1 = Absolutely not.

5 = There are parts that fit and others that don't.

10 = Hell yeah!

### 4. Workstyle Fit

Does the idea you are choosing fit with how you like to work?

Some people love to be creative, others like to get stuck into the figures. Does this business idea suit how you like to work and what you need to feel satisfied 'at work'? Refer back to your Entrepreneurial Design Profile to answer this.

1 = Not at all.

5 = It's a reasonable fit.

10 = Sounds like a dream!

### 5. Client Desire

Do your potential clients have a burning need and desire to solve this problem?

The harder it is for your potential clients to live with the problem, the more easily you will be able to convert customers.

Is not getting your help hurting your customers' lives? If not, this raises the question as to whether your market will be willing to pay.

1 = They don't see the issue.

5 = They wouldn't mind a solution but they aren't going out of their way.

10 = They lie in bed awake at night wondering how to solve this problem.

## 6. Client Readiness

Do your clients have some basic knowledge about the type of services you are thinking of offering and is it within their comfort zone to try them?

As an example, it's going to be hard to sell more alternative types of coaching to people who have highly traditional viewpoints.

1 = They don't believe in this type of service, or have zero knowledge of it and doubt that it would work for them.

5 = They have an idea what it is and know it would likely help them.

10 = They know what it is and are actively seeking it out.

If your audience is not ready for your type of service, your steps from here could be to look for an audience that is ready or reconsider the type of service you plan to provide.

## 7. Client Finances

Do your clients have the resources to pay you?

If you choose a target market that doesn't have financial resources, while that may make you feel good, it's going to be hard to make money. Of course, you do need to make money if you're going to call this a business.

If your market is charitable organisations, for example, no matter how badly they need your services, they are going to have strict budgets and maybe a hard time justifying the cost of hiring you.

1 = They don't have any spare money.

5 = They can invest if it's a priority.

10 = They have ample finances to invest.

Next steps from here, if your audience has no money to pay for your services, are to move on to another audience that can afford you.

## 8. Client Reach

Can you get your services in front of these prospective clients?

## YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

If you are able to reach the audience you are targeting, you have a much higher chance of success. For example, if you don't know any movie stars, targeting this group would be a bad idea because they generally buy through connections. How much media does your potential audience consume? Do you have access to the places where they spend their time?

Bear in mind that it is possible to reach almost anyone using advertising platforms, but still, you don't want to make your life difficult.

1 = They will be extremely difficult to access (celebrities, government officials, Fortune 500 CEOs).

5 = I know they use particular social media platforms and I'll be able to get in front of them.

10 = I am already integrated into this group of people. I move online and socialise offline with them.

### 9. Client Numbers

Are there enough of these clients to sustain a business and enable adequate volume of sales? You can go too niche here!

Statistically, about 1-2% of people who are on your email list, in regular contact with you, will buy. Generally, a maximum of 10% of people who visit your website will join your email list. Have you got the numbers to make it work while still serving a specific market?

## THE S-WORD

1 = These people have a very specific situation, and are few and far between.

5 = There is a good number of people with this issue.

10 = A large amount of people suffer from this problem (needing to lose weight, looking for love).

### 10. Reality Check

Can you find someone else in the marketplace making money with this idea?

While assessing this, make sure not to compare your beginner business with someone who is several years in, as business models that work in established businesses may not necessarily work for a beginner. If you know an established person has done well in this field, look at how they started out.

1 = I can't find anyone.

5 = I have found some people but I am not sure if they are actually making money.

10 = There are lots of people doing this successfully online. (Note: this is not a bad thing!)

YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR RULES

Check	Element	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enthusiasm	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Skill	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lifestyle Fit	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Workstyle Fit	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Client Desire	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Client Readiness	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Client Finances	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Client Reach	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Client Numbers	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reality Check	_____

**Table 4.1: Business Idea Checklist**

Once you have your main ideas rated, each with a number that reflects their marketability and personal fit, you may already be ready to make a choice.

### ***Combinations***

Before making a final decision, it's a good idea to look at combinations of ideas that you came up with in your initial list or shortlist.

Often, people looking to start up a new business have two ideas and can't choose between them. When I work with clients like this, frequently we find there is a way to combine what they like about both ideas into one concept.

As an example, once I worked with a lady who couldn't decide between building websites and coaching. She loved tech but also really wanted to coach women to get their business started. The business she ended up starting was a combination of the two. Both were centred around helping women get their businesses started. For some clients, she made websites; for other clients, she coached them on getting started including the tech elements.

Consider if any of your ideas can be combined.

### ***Choice***

Now you make your choice. And next comes the good part...

### ***Acknowledgement***

You acknowledge that you are *choosing* an idea to test. You aren't married to the idea. It isn't an all-or-nothing decision. It doesn't have to be absolutely perfect in its first trials. You aren't going to pour your life's savings into it and spend months building it before you have any idea if it really works.

Instead, you are going to do some simple tests to check people are willing to pay for it.



## ***Freedom***

How freeing is that?

This test method allows you to not tie yourself down too soon and gives you freedom. Freedom to try something on to see if it fits. Freedom to be less attached if you need to change something. Freedom to even get something wrong and still have time and space to revise it and get it right.

It puts your mind at ease. What a freaking relief, right?!

## **Messaging**

Did you know that 75% of buying decisions are based on emotion? We like to believe that we're logical creatures but we're not as logical as we think. People make decisions emotionally and then rationalise them logically.

If you are to sell your services online, you need to be able to build an emotional connection with your buyers. In the simplest of terms, this means your ideal clients must see that you *get* them, you *understand* and *empathise* with their problems, and you offer a correctly positioned *solution* that feels like it is made for them. With this, they'll buy from you.

The way you achieve that by being crystal clear on who you are selling to and then get to know them inside out. After that, you will work on how best to present your solution to that ideal client.

Apple is a company that demonstrates this incredibly well. Do they sell the most technologically advanced phones? No. Did they invent the tablet? No. (The first tablet came out in

1989 and used Microsoft operating systems.) How did they make it 'the new thing'? By knowing their customers and positioning their solution correctly.

## Crystal clear client profile

Who really needs the solution that you have?

There are some business experts who believe the best way to go about understanding your ideal client is to go so far in depth that you name them and their children. If you know someone who really is the personification of your ideal client, that's great. Otherwise, my experience shows it's best to look for what your ideal clients have in common. They are not all going to be the same.

Creating an ideal client profile to become crystal clear on those clients you are seeking out gives you a focused guideline of who you are aiming to reach. You will familiarise yourself with their hopes, dreams, secret fears, what they really truly deep-down want and what keeps them up at night.

This level of understanding is important because people buy solutions to problems, their real problems, so you need to know what those problems are. People don't buy pictures; they buy the contentment of having a beautiful home and the pride of guests coming over and complimenting their place. They don't buy career coaching; they buy the opportunity to do work they love. You didn't buy a book to read; you believed in a gateway to a better life for yourself and your loved ones.

When you understand what your people really want, you are in a position to explain how you have what they want and how you can solve their problems.

### ***Helping everyone***

But what if what you do *could* help everyone? This is an issue that coaches and practitioners often have when they do broad work that has multiple benefits for anyone. Think yoga or healthy food or therapy that reduces stress. In this scenario, they truly can help everyone. And because they can help everyone, it seems wrong to not try to do that.

What you are doing when you're clarifying your ideal client is making a decision to aim for a particular group of people. If someone else wants to work with you, you don't have to turn them away just because they don't fit the profile you drew up! If you choose to define your market as female and some great guys want to work with you, absolutely go ahead!

The reason for narrowing down to a specific type of client is so that you as a business owner can do some marketing. And marketing has a cost — either time or money. You have a finite amount of resources that you can put into marketing. If you make your marketing generic, no-one will listen. Would you respond to an ad that said, “Hey, come and get help with your career, love life, business and health issues. I can help with everything!” You probably wouldn't. Imagine following that person on social media or getting newsletters. Would you wade through all the stuff they sent out on career, love life, business and health that isn't relevant to you? Again, you probably wouldn't. Who has time for that?

By trying to appeal to everyone, your marketing efforts don't appeal to anyone. Therefore, your time and money are wasted. If you want your marketing to yield results — and as a business owner you need them to result in sales — you have

to be specific. We're in an age of mass personalisation. People don't respond to generalities.

Know that you *can* work with whoever you choose, but a viable business that is able to scale beyond word of mouth must have a target market.

### ***Point of difference***

After you know who you are serving, the next important step is to figure out how you are different and why anyone should work with you. At this point, a lot of people freeze and think, *But I'm not special!!!* I would argue otherwise. And I'm arguing with experience here!

There is a reason you've decided on this business idea that you're testing. It means something to you. Usually, there are multiple threads in a person's life that lead them to wanting to become a business owner and create something for themselves. Even if you don't have official qualifications in this area, you likely have a lot of relevant experience.

Make a list of three to five points of difference that you have and why your ideal client should work with you. This is your unique value proposition.

These could come from:

- your life experience
- your qualifications
- your work experience
- your method
- your workstyle

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- anything else that differentiates you.

There are literally hundreds if not thousands of ways of presenting a similar outcome.

Let's take weight loss as an example. If you were a registered dietician, your unique value proposition might look like this:

- registered dietician, officially qualified and multiple years of training in the field of nutrition
- experience working in a medical environment, therefore highly trusted
- training in the biology behind nutrition, therefore a deeper level of understanding
- can work with people with specific health issues
- uses peer-reviewed research, not personal experience or anecdotal evidence, which may not have a sound basis.

For some people, for certain types of ideal client, this is exactly the right person to work with for their weight concerns.

A health coach might have a unique value proposition more along these lines:

- personal experience with emotional, stress eating and previous yo-yo weight gain and loss
- fitness and health coaching qualifications
- holistic methodology because just being given a food plan isn't the answer; for many people weight issues have an emotional element that needs to be addressed.

## THE S-WORD

For another type of person, potentially someone who feels less trust towards the current medical system, this would be the right person for them to go to for their weight concerns.

We could argue which one is 'better' but it's more about the fit.

How are you a fit for your ideal client?

### **Rule Makers & Rule Breakers Exercise: Your Unique Value**

Fill in your points of difference below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Offers

Now that you know what you do at a high level, who your ideal clients are and how you are positioning yourself, it's time to create something to sell.

Ever heard the advice, 'Ask your potential clients what they want and sell that?' I don't recommend this. People want solutions to their problems. Since they are not the experts — otherwise they would have solved the issue, right? — they need an expert to present a solution that's going to work.

Recently, one of my business friends asked her highly active audience what they wanted. They answered a monthly membership support group. She offered that... and only one person signed up!

When you understand your clients' deepest hopes, fears and dreams, you can design solutions that you, as the expert, know will solve their problems and design them to sell.

I recommend creating two offers at first: a small, easily accessible offer so people can test the waters with you and a larger package for people who know they want a more complete solution.

### **Rule Makers & Rule Breakers Exercise: What's Your Offer?**

Answer the following questions:

- Where is my prospective client at right now? What problems are they suffering with?
- Which problem do I want to solve in this offer?
- What is the outcome that I am aiming to create for my client if they buy this offer?
- What do I need to provide to solve this problem?
- What does that look like in terms of sessions or other deliverables?

Use your answers to these questions to put together your offers.

## Let's get testing!

When you use the ACT model of testing a concept, you aren't married to your idea. You try it out, in relative privacy, with a few people, and see if you like it and they value it. No months making a website. No building an audience for years and hoping you made the right choice. You find out first. Usually saving yourself thousands.

Once you have something working, that's when you build out a website and a lead generation strategy.

So, how will you test this? You'll look at all the ways you could potentially get in front of two or three of your ideal clients who might want to test out your smallest offer for free in exchange for a testimonial. The purpose of doing this is to have an initial trial run to see if the offer works how you want it to. You will see how you feel delivering the service and also get feedback from a client perspective.

I recommend doing two to three of these test clients, because when people aren't paying for the offer, you may end up doing a run-through with someone who is not particularly motivated. You'll want to have at least two people to trial it so you have more data to go with.

How could you find these people? At this point, it's tempting to think you need your own platform, but you don't. If you were to create your own platform — like a Facebook page or website — it would just slow you down. People won't find it yet anyway and you don't know what you want to write until you finish the testing phase. It's much more efficient to go to where



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people are already congregating rather than trying to get their attention and asking them to show up at a different party.

Where are your ideal clients already hanging out? Are they in particular forums, Facebook groups, LinkedIn groups, on Instagram? Are they in local groups? Where can you get in front of them to put a simple shout-out for your test service? Something like...

*### FREE <NAME OF OFFER> 2 TEST CLIENTS NEEDED ###*

*Hello! I am looking for 2 people who are interested in a FREE <name of offer>.*

*-Are you a <ideal client> suffering with <problem this offer solves>?*

*-Do you wish you could get <result offer gives them>?*

*I am a <what you are> who helps <who you help> to <result you get>. <If you can talk about your track record or relevant qualifications, do it here and add that your website is currently being developed>.*

*This package will <tell them the result> and leave you feeling <explain what relief or whatever feeling you would expect them to have afterwards>.*

*If you are interested in having one of these 2 packages, please send me a private message or call me on XXXXXXXX. <However you should be reached>*

*It will be first come first served. In return for this package, I will ask you for your honest review to turn into a testimonial for my new site.*

*If you are looking to save yourself hours of frustration and are ready to <insert result>, please shoot me a PM or comment below!*

If you're wondering whether it can really be that simple, yes, it can. When you write this request well, make your offer interesting and results-oriented, you will find people to test it.

This — this test client phase — is your first step into business. Not building a website, not buying stationery, but actually getting your work out into the world and seeing how it goes, how you feel, and importantly, what you would want to change before going live!

## **Sales, sales, sales**

You've tested your offer in exchange for a testimonial. Now it's time to either go for a discounted or full price sale.

Let me guess what you're thinking... *Now it's time to build my website and let the sales roll in.* Sorry! It doesn't work that way. Even the best offer in the world won't sell itself. This is where a sales process comes in. The best way to get people to buy is to have a structured conversation to find out whether you can help them.

One of my mentors tested this properly to check the results. He used the same offer for two sets of prospective clients or leads. He put one set of leads through an automated sales process with emails and a sales page and invited another set of leads to speak with him on the phone.

By building the connection with his potential clients in a one-to-one setting and allowing them to experience his knowledge

first-hand within a sales conversation framework, he had five times the sales. Five times!

Are alarm bells ringing in your head right now? *BUT I DON'T WANT TO SELL TO PEOPLE ON THE PHONE!!!*

I didn't either. I still don't 'sell' on the phone. But here's what I discovered a sales call really is: a way of meeting awesome people and helping them solve their problems on the phone. Something I love doing! Once you get good at that, your business will thrive. And I can show you how.

The one big question I get around this stage from my clients is: how do I get clients without a website? You will have a website at some stage, but it's not a good idea to build one until you know for sure your business will make money. You need to get the offer right and sell it first.

Here's where you offer a couple of free sessions related to your niche. These are not the same as test clients. This is a conversation where you offer your potential client some value. Then, if appropriate and if you have their permission, you also have a conversation about whether or not it makes sense to work together. This is not a free coaching session. It's a conversation that is designed to help your potential client. It may then lead into a discussion about working together. Again... if appropriate and if you have permission.

This session could be:

- a brainstorming session of some kind
- a review such as a website review or messaging review
- a strategic session related to your niche

- a kickstarter session.

You can name it however you want and you can offer it in exactly the same place as you got your test clients. If you prefer, you can tap into somewhere new.

Look at who your clients are, where they hang out on the internet or in real life, and how you have access to them already without building anything. In almost all cases, it is relatively easy to reach people and make a couple of sales, ensuring you have something viable. Reaching your leads might be through social media platforms (no, I don't mean asking your Facebook friends), other groups, contacts, or forums. There are lots of options depending on where they spend time. This is a much safer route than building a website and wondering where everyone is. Get a couple of sales first, then build out your online marketing machine.

## **Permission to make your website!**

Once you have a concept that's working, and you've earned money with your business, it's time to build your website.

I recommend having a super simple layout with a homepage, about page, contact page, work with me page and blog/podcast/video page if you are creating content. If you have enough already, you could also have a testimonial page. If you only have a few, these can be interspersed through your website.

If you're selling consulting or coaching rather than done-for-you services, you will also want to have a sales page for each offer that you've created.

Your website will be your online home so it needs to speak to your ideal client's problems and desires, communicating your work and how you are different.

## Lead generation and marketing

Now you've tested your idea in the marketplace, had a couple of paying clients and made the decision to move forward, you create your marketing plan. Or more specifically, your lead generation plan.

Lead generation is a type of marketing, but I would prefer the term lead generation at this stage of business, because what we are looking to do is create leads. We're not really looking to build brand awareness. We're not really looking for brand-based marketing activities. We're looking to do activities that will create leads for you, to find people who may be interested in buying.

Then you will want a proportion of these leads to sign up for a sales conversation or join your email list.

This is where we come back to the concept of Your Business, Your Rules. The lead generation activities you do are totally up to you and should be suited to how you want to work. Refer back to your Entrepreneurial Design Profile to help you decide.

### **Rule Makers & Rule Breakers Exercise: Lead Generation Your Way**

Let's explore some options. Do you prefer to make automated webinars? Do you like to network? Do you prefer to be on social? Are you a writer? Do you want to blog? Are you more suited to an audio format and enjoy recording something like

a podcast? Are you somebody who's looking for a relatively small number of clients? If so, could you look into a strategic partnership?

Choose something that's suitable for you and your business. And don't let other people tell you how to do this. Make a choice that's a match for the target clients that you want to get and for the business that you are running.

Remember, you get to do this your way.

## Master plan

The final building stage for getting the basics of your business up and running is creating your master plan.

So far, you've chosen an idea, created the messaging, put together some offers, tested them, made some sales (hopefully), created your website, and now you have a lead-generation plan. Next, you'll map out what you need to be working on week by week to keep growing your business.

Your lead-generation actions absolutely need to be happening each week in order to keep a flow of interested people coming into your business. If you're doing a podcast, that needs to happen every week, fortnight or whatever rhythm you've decided. If you're blogging, that needs to happen on a certain rhythm too. If you are working with strategic partners, you need to be setting aside time to build those relationships.

You're also going to need time to deliver your client work and to hold sales conversations. I recommend writing down what's going to have to happen on a weekly basis and putting that into a master version of a weekly plan. Wherever pos-

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sible, batch tasks so you can be more efficient with the time you have.

Here’s a sample suggested weekly plan:

<b>Monday</b>			<b>Tuesday</b>		
<b>Daily Focus</b>	<b>Planning &amp; Admin</b>	<b>Client Work</b>			
<b>Task</b>	Create weekly plan dependent on your schedule this week	Sales conversations			
<b>Insert time blocks for tasks if you wish</b>	Create & schedule social media content	Client calls			
<b>Lead generation every day</b>	Lead generation	Lead generation			
<b>Wednesday</b>		<b>Thursday</b>		<b>Friday</b>	
<b>Content</b>	<b>Client Work</b>	<b>Projects</b>			
Create your content	Sales conversations	webinar planning, writing new option etc.			
	Client calls				
Lead generation	Lead generation	Lead generation			

**Table 4.2: Sample Suggested Weekly Plan**

Strategy, done! It’s hard to believe that all this is only one of the three success pillars. Let’s talk now about your mental fortitude and flexibility.

# MENTAL FLEXIBILITY

Having a strategy is a practical pillar, but what about the emotional or mental patterns that will impact your business? Also described as ‘mindset’, there are some known issues that will come up when you start taking action and building your business.

Rather than sitting at home wondering why you can’t seem to get into action with certain tasks, why everyone seems so much more motivated than you, or why others appear to be making less of a mess of it, or worse why they are further ahead than you, I’d prefer it if you knew that all of these thoughts, true or not, are likely to come up for you before you start. I’m here to forewarn you!

Once you are aware of these normal thoughts, you can recognise them and see them for what they are — your subconscious trying to keep the status quo — the easier it will be to take steps to move through it.

## The Identity Paradox

You want a new identity as a successful, location-independent business owner. At the same time, you’ve spent at least the last 20 years building an idea of who you are. You have stories, qualifications and prestige connecting you to your current identity, which you may well not want to lose.



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The thing is: the more successful you are currently, or the more you identify with your current role, the more it feels like you have something to lose by creating a new identity.

Your thought process is literally stuck in a triangle like the one in the diagram below. This is called a Penrose triangle. You are stopping yourself moving forward because part of you is very much attached to your current 'identity'. It's completely natural for this to happen to new business owners.



**Diagram 4.4: The Identity Paradox Thought Process**

If you look again at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, your desire to become a successful business owner affects every single level of what is important in life: from how you pay for food, where you get your income and how to ensure you have shelter, to your social needs and what people think of you, to

self-actualisation which is what you are ultimately trying to achieve. It can feel confronting to ‘change’ a part of our lives that affects us on so many levels.

The good news is you aren’t ‘throwing away’ your old identity. With the ACT model of creating a concept to test, you are building a new identity, with virtually no risk, on the side. You are figuring out what works and then growing it. Only when it makes sense for you to do so would you step into your new identity as a business owner full time. It doesn’t have to be all or nothing. You might have felt it was, but when you look at it logically, it really isn’t. Nor is it immediate. You can change step by step, bit by bit, and every piece of your identity now can be useful in your future business owner life.

## The Perpetual Cycle of Preparation

On top of the apprehension of changing, there is another cultural force that can keep you stuck and it’s really important to be aware of this. It’s the adult version of ‘but I need to finish my homework!’

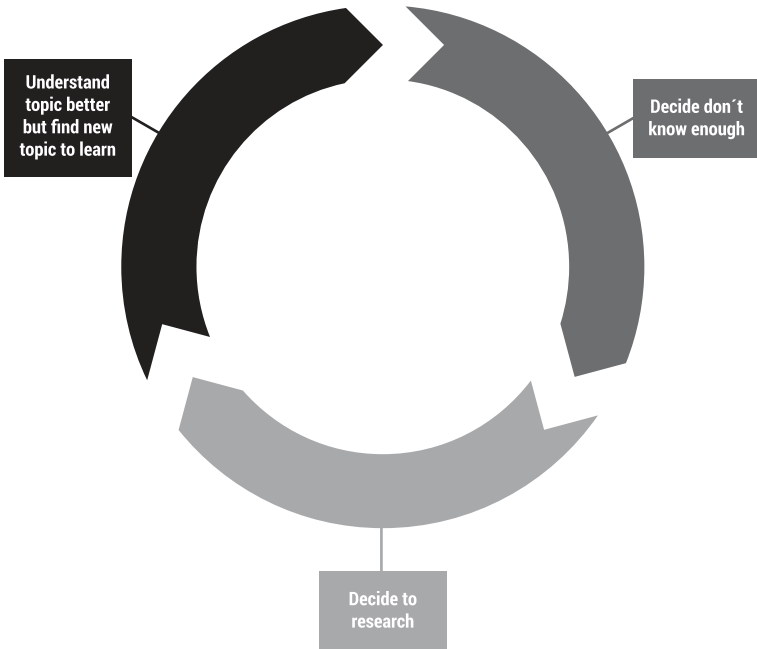
What does a person do when they aren’t ready for something, even though they know they want it? They prepare. In the case of running a business, that usually means research, but it can also mean doing *busy work* like worrying about what colour your logo should be, buying stationery or doing absolutely anything to avoid the key activity that actually shows you have a business or not — selling.

Research comes in many guises. Watching webinars, downloading cheat sheets, reading blogs and listening to

podcasts. Here's why all that is often a waste of time. Do all of these information sources agree with each other? No!

Imagine for a moment what you would see if you googled 'how to start a career' and had no idea about the world of work. Think of the range of results you would get. You'd still have no idea how to start! It's no different if you google 'how to start a business'. Once you start searching more specific phrases, you find out more about one area, but then you'll discover more you weren't aware of, which triggers more research.

What happens here? You end up in the Perpetual Cycle of Preparation.



**Diagram 4.5: The Perpetual Cycle of Preparation**

First, let's address the obvious:

Preparing is usually a great idea! Have you ever done badly at something because you hadn't prepared enough? I know I have. You were likely also chastised for not being prepared.

Preparing, or 'doing your homework', is the grown-up way of not screwing things up, right?!

Well, yes and no.

Preparing is useful for specific events for a limited period of preparation time.

- Preparing for a race is a good idea.
- Preparing for a speech is a good idea.
- Preparing before *starting* a new diet is a good idea.

In these examples, you are preparing for something that you've likely set a date on. In reality, there is only a limited amount of preparation you can do until you have to start. You can't lose weight by collecting recipes.

Here's why preparing to be a business owner is different. In the ideal scenario, this business is going to be your way of earning money for a long time. That means you are trying to prepare for something that's intended to last maybe the rest of your working life. You're also trying to prepare for something that is hugely complex and you have no way of knowing in advance what direction you'll want to take once you start.

Imagine if you sat down as an 18-year-old and started researching being an adult so you could be prepared. There

would be way too much to cover! You couldn't do it. When you came of age, your only option was to do your best at adulting until you got the hang of it! And do you feel like you've got the hang of it yet? Most of us haven't!

It's not much different being a business owner. It's a whole way of being and working. There is only limited preparation you can do. Because of the size of the task, if your preparation is to be at all helpful, you can only prepare the first steps, only the first milestone.

The first milestone in this case is working out what winning looks like to you by doing the Rule Makers & Rule Breakers exercises in Part 2: Who's Your Player.

Otherwise, you get stuck:

You know you want to start a business, but you decide you don't know enough, so you research business ideas, for example. You gain some understanding but realise you know nothing about social media and you're going to need to know about that, right? You research social media and find out about advertising. You'll need to know about that in your new business owner role, right? You continue in this research mode and the cycle goes on and on. You don't know enough about advertising to start your business so you do some research, but then you find out you need an email list to put your prospects on. You had better research that too!

You're in the Perpetual Cycle of Preparation. And you are doing this with great intentions. Because you don't want to be an idiot and go in unprepared and you don't want to get told off by some know-it-all because you didn't do your homework. So, you keep preparing.

Preparation has to be interspersed with action to be helpful. Be aware of your natural tendency to get stuck in this cycle.

Read this book once. Then go back and do the exercises. Yes, of course, you want to think about it, but then get straight into action. You want to get to testing your idea as soon as possible.

### **Rule Makers & Rule Breakers Exercise: Pick a Plan!**

1. Choose your next action step. (Either the first exercise in this book or the exercise after the one you did last.)
2. Set a timeframe on it.
3. Know that you'll prepare for the steps afterwards when they come. Understand this is the only way to progress.

You really can't prepare it all. It's the whole idea of 'start before you are ready'. Do a reasonable amount of preparation and know when it's the right time to start.

You're not in school anymore. As illogical as it might sound, overpreparing in business holds you back.

## **Comparisonitis**

When you start your business, you'll almost certainly be hit by what many people call 'comparisonitis'. This is where you look at some successful people online or people that you admire and say to yourself, *Oh my God! I could never do that. That thing is amazing, they look fabulous, look how incredible their website is, look at all the work they've done, their videos are professionally filmed.*

Etc, etc.

They *look* like they've got it all together and you are left wondering how you are ever going to get there or — the next logical step — whether you should even bother trying.

The truth of what is happening here is you are comparing yourself — with your intimate knowledge of your personal flaws — to some stranger's stage persona.

You know what you look like in the mornings, before you put your makeup on. You know what you look like when you're slopping around in your house gear, as I am right now as I write this. You know what your first drafts look like and how much help you might need with certain tasks.

You don't see any of that in someone else's web presence or products, so you give them an unattainable status in your mind and think that can't be you.

You are comparing your crappy days with their show reel.

And most likely, you're comparing yourself to someone who may be two, three, five or even ten years into their business.

In the beginning, I didn't have any professional videos. I didn't have a podcast. I didn't have a book. And when I very first started writing a 300-word blog post, it was a two-day ordeal. What you have to remember when these thoughts come up is you're going to build those things over time too. You are also going to become much more capable and able to create things that you never thought would be possible in the beginning. Everybody, no matter how glamorous or amazing they look now, had to start somewhere. Including with the

ugly camera videos, as I had. Including whatever hang-ups are disturbing for them.

So, don't let this get in the way! Know that you are setting yourself up for an unrealistic comparison. Remember what you're looking to do is to get into the marketplace. The huge advantage that you have in the beginning is that you *are* small. That means you can adjust, offer a more personalised service, which are luxuries that people running larger business don't have anymore. There are lots of advantages that you have as a new business person, which an experienced entrepreneur with a bigger business can no longer provide to the marketplace.

Every level has its advantages. And while you don't have some things in place that other people down the track now have, you do have some in your favour.

## **Expect to feel uncomfortable**

Often, if people start the 'best' business model or idea for them, or they start a business based on their passion, they expect to feel awesome doing their work each day. This is their ideal work, after all. This is exactly what they should be doing. But the truth is — and again, I want to warn you in advance — you should expect to feel uncomfortable at times.

In business, you're going to have to do some uncomfortable tasks, have uncomfortable conversations, and come up against uncomfortable truths. You're going to have conversations with people who may or may not want to buy from you. You're going to have to try new things and inevitably get out of your comfort zone.



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Regardless of your workstyle, you're going to be stretched, but this is how you also achieve self-actualisation by having an element of challenge in your work. There are going to be times though, especially in the beginning, when you are more out of your comfort zone than you are used to. Potentially, this is going to make you feel anxious and certainly not in flow, which might make you think you made the wrong choice.

Have a look at this model of Flow by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. He suggests flow is a combination of skill level and challenge level.

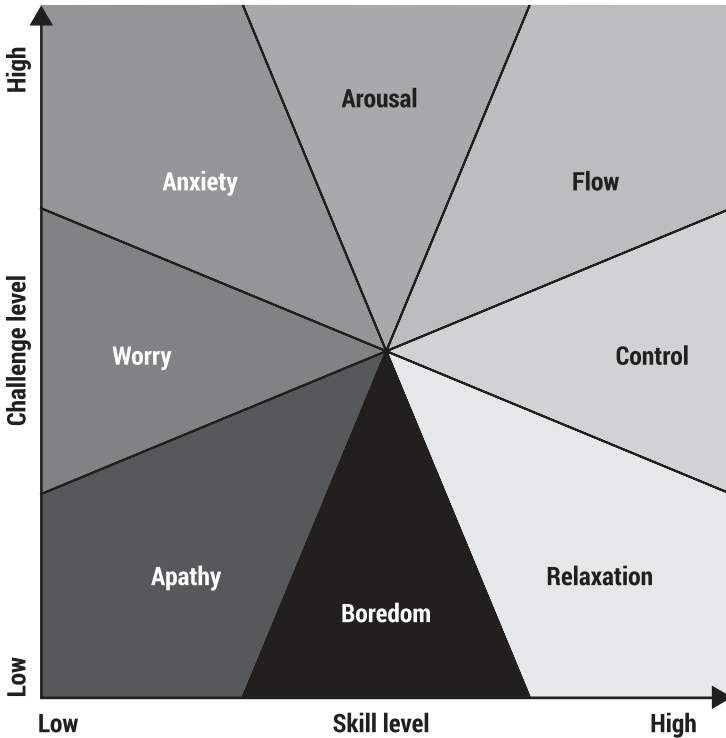


Diagram 4.6: Flow States by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

When you are comfortable in your work and love the challenge, you're going to feel in flow. That's the very definition of flow.

However, in the beginning of starting your business, regardless of your skill, interest and talent in this area, you're going to have a high level of challenge, which is at times above your skill level. This is because you're going to be doing this work maybe with different people, in a different format, in a way where you are more directly responsible for the results, where you're getting paid directly and not through someone else.

There will be differences in how you encounter this. Your challenge level will be increased and your skill level won't quite be there yet. For a period of time, situations will come up that make you feel anxious, worried or scared and you won't feel in flow. And what I want you to know is: that doesn't mean you chose the wrong thing. This challenge isn't a fundamental lack of some sort, but a necessary symptom of growth.

Simply, you're going through a learning phase and your skill level is taking time to move up to the level of challenge involved. You feel under pressure. You feel that you need to deliver. Yet once your skill level increases, because that's what you do all the time, then you start to feel in flow and feel great every day.

This was exactly my experience in my business. In the beginning, there were many tasks and situations that made me feel stressed. Doing sales calls, doing my first coaching sessions. Even though I knew what I was doing, still I felt

stressed about delivering client sessions in the same way I had felt stressed previously in job interviews. Over time, I became much more comfortable. What's happening there is my skill level is increasing and I feel in flow.

When you first do something new in your business, if you're feeling anxious, if you're feeling stressed about it, it doesn't mean you've lost your passion. It means you're uplevelling from a new challenge. Once you moved through this adjustment phase, which is just a matter of time, you're likely to move into flow.

## Remember to take care of yourself

As you might have gathered from this section on having mental fortitude and flexibility, starting a business is a self-development journey. If you're not feeling it right now, I'm willing to bet that you will look back and be amazed by how much you've learned and grown once you are up and running. And that statement will take on a new meaning.

Doing the work is going to be exciting but it's also going to stretch you. This means you are going to need to take care of yourself.

You *and* your business are relying on you.

- Take regular breaks when you need them.
- Don't beat yourself up when things don't go your way.

## MENTAL FLEXIBILITY

- Celebrate and savour the milestones. Don't push for the next one without taking a moment to enjoy it.

This business game is about you and for you as well as your clients, so do take care of yourself along the way. Sometimes, that means being gentle. And sometimes, that means digging deep and having the determination to carry on. Which brings us to our next factor: drive.

# WHY DRIVE MATTERS



**Diagram 4.1: The Three Success Factors**

In many ways, drive is the most important factor in all of this. By this point in the book, I hope you are raring to go and much more prepared to succeed in living, working and making money on your terms, fired up and ready for the challenge. I hope you are raring to go, because, as I mentioned earlier, the one thing I can't give you is the drive to do this. Others can provide you with inspiration and knowledge, but your drive can't be bought or acquired. It comes from within.

## WHY DRIVE MATTERS

If you don't have that feeling inside of you that you want to do more, want to change your situation, and you're going to do it no matter what, then none of this is going to work. Building a business is just not going to happen if it's on your nice-to-have list, but not your must-have list. You'll never get around to it and everything else in your life will appear more important. If not now then when you run into your first inevitable difficulties, which happen to everybody, you won't be driven to overcome them no matter what.

At this point, I encourage you to ask yourself honestly: now that you understand the nature of the game, the possible games you can play, and the mapped-out option for gaining the most freedom, do you feel that you come with the drive to do this and this is what's going to be best for you?

Remember, there are other options. The get-a-good-job option, the different business model options. You can take these if you feel they are more suitable for you.

Sit with this drive question, because you can't jolly yourself up every morning and do motivational videos to make yourself want to change your life. You have to truly want it and be prepared to do the work together.

So, where are you at?

Is this for you?

Is this what you want for your life?

Because having this drive is going to be what makes the difference.

## **Rule Makers & Rule Breakers Exercise: Your Commitment**

Because your drive and commitment are so important to getting this project off the ground and making it happen, I have an exercise for you to cement in your mind why you want this in the first place.

After reading this book, you have a much better understanding about the nature of business, what business choices would be good for you. But unless you are actually doing something with it, your reality is not going to change, right?

That's why I want to share with you the commitment I ask of my clients who go through Ignition, my program for helping budding entrepreneurs get their business up and running.

I'd love you to either write in the exercise, make your own version of it or download the version using the link below that I have for you on my website: <https://catleblanc.com/commitment>

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, commit to building*

*my business. This is really important to me because:*

*the first reason I want to start my business is \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_.

*the second reason I want my own business is: \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_.

*Another thing that's really important to me is \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_.

WHY DRIVE MATTERS

*Through having my own business, I will \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_.

*My business will allow me to \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_.

*My personal growth will \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_.

*Through my business, I will be able to help people \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_.

*For charging for my services, I will \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Having a thriving business means this to me: \_\_\_\_\_*

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

*I agree to take full responsibility of myself and my actions. Not give up on myself and my dreams in the face of challenges. Be forgiving of myself if things don't go perfectly the first time. If there is no failure, there is no learning. I will do the work. I understand I will not make progress unless I do the work.*

*Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_*

*Sign and date your commitment and put it near where you work so you are reminded of why this is so important to you.*





# YOUR TURN

Now you've read through and understood the bigger game, you have a much clearer idea of what you're trying to achieve, of what freedom means, of what a business can provide. You can see why so many people want this right now as work stress has increased and you know how the opportunities are opening to you at the same time as the traditional model is dwindling. You've understood what the natural rules are and where you get to make your own. (Recap: pretty much everywhere!)

You've gone deeper into what you really want in life, looked at your playing options, of which there are many, and analysed them in terms of which gives you the best possible chance of success and most freedom to do things your way.

Then you've walked through what you need to succeed and the process of setting up your concept, testing it and putting your business idea through its paces.

In the beginning, I recommended reading through the book to understand the concepts and then taking the action steps. If this was your first read-through and you're only just getting your head around what I've shared, now it's time to go back to the first exercise and start implementing everything you came here to learn.

Work through the process and let's make sure you know exactly how to live, work and make money your way.

# WANT MORE?

I hope this book has given you a new perspective and propelled you into action. Beyond the resources and practical steps I've provided in *Your Business, Your Rules*, here are some additional resources to help you on your business journey.

## Your Entrepreneurial Design Profile

<https://myentrepreneurialdesign.com>

This is the personality assessment referenced during this book. You may have done it already. If not, now is the time! It's designed to give you insight on the workstyle that suits you so you start a business that fulfills you rather than clashes with your personality.

## The Business Idea Starter Kit

<https://catleblanc.com/kit>

This resource contains a process to work through brainstorming and narrowing down your business ideas. It's an alternative to what I've described in this book.

WANT MORE?

## **Your Business, Your Rules podcast**

You can also listen to more great business information and insightful interviews on the Your Business, Your Rules podcast available on iTunes, Spotify and Stitcher.

## **The Zero to Paying Clients Masterclass**

<https://catleblanc.com/masterclass>

This masterclass is packed with information on how to start your business, including what to do as well as what not to do, comparisons on common strategies, and more on business ideas. I recommend taking notes!

If you were to use just one of the resources listed here, this would be my recommendation.

## **Everything Else**

If you simply want to check out everything that I do, go to: <https://catleblanc.com>

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And to you for reading this book, thank you. I hope it has given you clarity, inspiration and motivation to move into action towards a better life for yourself.

This was written for you.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cat LeBlanc is CEO and Chief Business Strategist at [catleblanc.com](http://catleblanc.com). She helps budding entrepreneurs all over the world design, build and grow a business that is truly unique to them, so they can live life on their own terms.

She hosts the *Your Business, Your Rules* podcast and has written for *Business Insider*, *Huffington Post* and other prestigious publications: <http://catleblanc.com/media/>

Cat prides herself on rarely leaving her house for anything business-related and is a big fan of pyjama days. She lives in the temperate rainforests near Melbourne, Australia and shares her life and log cabin style home with her fiancé Adrian, fur-son Bowie, and the kind of exotic back garden wildlife you only find in Australia.

# THE CORPORATE WORKPLACE JUST ISN'T CUTTING IT.

And the myriad of business systems being touted online are not your definition of success.

You're done reaching for the next rung on the ladder.

And you don't want some get-rich-quick scheme either.

## SIMPLY...

You want a life where YOU make the rules.

Your Business, Your Rules is about creating an income on your own terms, in a way that feels right to you, so that you can live how you want. It's about setting up a business around you as an individual, tailored to your personality, as well as giving you the best possible chances of success.

## IN THIS BOOK, YOU'LL LEARN:

- The only two business rules that any business owner needs to play by.
- Where you get to make your own rules. (Hint: almost everywhere).
- How to choose the right type of business for you with guidance on the option that gives you the most freedom to play your own way.
- What success looks like to you and how to reach it.
- The action steps to make it all happen so that you can live, work and make money your way.

Your Business, Your Rules shows you how to cut through the noise of generalised business advice and craft a business truly suited to the lifestyle you want to create.

**Cat LeBlanc** is CEO and Chief Business Strategist at [cattleblanc.com](http://cattleblanc.com). She helps budding entrepreneurs all over the world design, build and grow businesses that are truly unique to them, so they can live life on their own terms. She hosts the Your Business, Your Rules podcast and has written for Business Insider, Huffington Post and other prestigious publications.

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