

Your Effortless Business

In order to build Your Effortless Business, you need to know what your effortless business will look like. What does Effortless mean to you?

For most people it will boil down to freedom - time, money, energy freedom. To do the work that excites and inspires. To travel, or putter in the garden, too. To dine with friends and to take long walks on the beach. To build a business that scales or to cherry pick the best clients.

Are you one of those people who care deeply and passionately about your community and the world? Are you in business for yourself so you will have the freedom to pursue those passions? Do you need your business to work better for you so you can?

Do you have some projects waiting in the wings? Fun, interesting things you plan to do - when you get the time/energy/money/authority/permission?

Are you working on projects now that eat into your earning time and mean that you are not as profitable as you could be? But you can't give that work up.

Your Dream Effortless Business

Before you even start, you have to have a clear idea about what Your Effortless Business will look like.

Record a typical dream day for you:

Write it out, speak it, draw it. Imagine it first, but you do have to record it too.

Give yourself the space and time to really think this through, then record your perfect day. Record it as though it is real. You might imagine you are being interviewed, or you are filling in diary pages or you are painting a picture in front of you.

Then share these details with friends. Everyone should have a mastermind group - a group of people who care about you and will give you honest feedback. Who will support you, cheer you on and hold you accountable. All these exercises work best if you share them. Everyone will bring their own lens to what you say. Listen, appreciate that they care and take what you need from their feedback. You need to surround yourself with people who are excited for you.

Now you know where you are going.

Your Effort(less) Business now

Let's create a baseline of where you are. We'll examine your reality to find out what needs adjusting and the priorities.

Over the next few days, record what you do and how you feel about it:

Where to Start with your Effortless Business?

Let's see how you did. What work gave you energy, put you in flow, moved you and your business forward?

What sapped you? What did you do (or not do) that was a slog, ground you to a halt, felt like you were spinning in circles?

What made you crazy? What irritated you?

You want to do more of #1, give away all of the work in #2 and mine #3 for areas of improvement.

Your Effortless Business?

If you don't believe this can happen for you, it won't. You will have to make some changes. You will have to change how you spend your time. You will move out of your comfort zone. For most of our time on earth we viewed the unusual, and anything different, as a shorthand for dangerous.

The good news is that, we are no longer faced with saber-toothed tigers ready to eat us, if we choose a different path to walk to the watering hole. I wish I could tell you that this will work perfectly for you and everything from this moment forward in your business will be perfect, because you are now in the hands of Your Effortless Business. But life, business and people don't work that way.

If we stumble as we go through this 8 week program, and we will, it will not be devastating. In fact, this is where you will find out that some of those long-held beliefs or 'truths' may not in fact be true. Don't worry about other people watching. For the most part, most people don't pay attention. They don't notice what you do, good bad or indifferent. Those that matter don't care; those that care don't matter.

Who is watching you and why will they care?

You are not alone. There are millions of people who have chosen small business. We are all over the world facing similar challenges and very different challenges. We have figured out how to make some things work really well for us and we are exasperated by others. The thing is, between all of us, we have figured all of it out. Let's work together.

We all make mistakes. If you make a mistake, own up, apologize, make it right and move along. One of my teachers showed us a sheet of writing with big black marks all over the page and then she showed us another page where the mistakes had a single ~~(strike through)~~ with brackets around them. The mistakes seemed to disappear and we could read the story without the distraction of the mistakes.

The worst thing we can do is chose to not make changes because we are afraid of failing. The problem comes when we don't commit and we end up in a limbo of almost making it work, but not quite.

What reasons do you tell yourself for why your business is not effortless? Write them out. Have a good hard look at them.

There is a perception that if you own a business you are on easy street. The media trumpets the few very successful businesses. That is not a reality for most of us. Given our society's definition of success is money, we feel shame if our business is not profitable enough for us to have the typical trappings of success. In a meritocracy the best naturally make it to the top, and conversely the worst drift to the bottom.

- First we are not in a true meritocracy.
- Many of us focus on other things than money.
- Our businesses can give us other benefits – let's celebrate that.
- If we help enough people get what they need, we will make money. That is only right and proper.

On the other side of the coin is the belief that making money off the backs of the people who need us is wrong. We are in business because we sincerely want to help people. We don't want to be tarred with the same brush as big bad business. So we eschew that. We don't charge enough. We let people pay when they can. We do more and then discount our price. It always seems like the people who need us the most are the least able to pay.

We do the things we do because of the beliefs we have. How would you do things differently if you could focus purely on helping and not money?

This is an important discussion. Look at what you wrote. How can you structure your business so you can do that and still make enough money to live on?

You can offer plenty of free material, while charging appropriately for people who need more of your help.

How would you do things differently if you knew whatever you did would work?

Welcome to the new world, because whatever you do will work.

Let's do it together; let's support each other; let's teach each other; let's learn from each other; let's hold each other accountable.

Crafting Your Effortless Business

Creating Your Effortless Business is about making your efforts give you maximum results. It's about eliminating low-result work and clearing away irritants.

The first thing you can do is design your day so you are doing your best work at the most appropriate time. My favourite time to write is first thing in the morning. That's what I do. I do love bookkeeping and I seem to hit the sweet spot of concentration at about 2 in the afternoon. I find midday to be the best times for meetings, correspondence and moving projects forward.

Give away one of those energy sapping chores. You already have people in place to do them, but you are having a hard time letting go. Holding on is hurting you and them. It is taking your time, focus, energy away from your best work. Other people are better at that work. In my bookkeeping business, I experience this all the time. Business owners seem to think that by doing their own bookkeeping they are keeping a better handle on their business. If you are the one doing most of the transactions in your business, recording those transactions won't give you any more information than when you did them. If you go buy paper for your printer, entering that transaction, doesn't tell you anything new. Whereas, when you and I sit down and go over your financial statements, we can learn and make management decision about your business. Let it go.

Irritants are a wonderful place to look for opportunity. New businesses and industries are built around solving irritants.

What is the one thing you would like to work on in your business over the next 7 weeks?