

"This is the best little 'how-to' book for starting and running a small business I've come across. Don't even think about going into business without it. And if you are already in business, this book is a must-read."

– **Larry Winget**, television personality and five-time bestselling author, including the #1 bestseller: *Shut Up, Stop Whining and Get a Life*

BUSINESS **in** BLUE JEANS

**How to Have a Successful Business
on Your Own Terms, in Your Own Style**

Susan Baroncini-Moe

PRAISE FOR BUSINESS IN BLUE JEANS

“This is the best little “how-to” book for starting and running a small business I’ve come across. Don’t even think about going into business without it. And if you are already in business, this book is a must-read.”

LARRY WINGET

Television personality and five-time bestselling author, including the #1 bestseller: *Shut Up, Stop Whining and Get A Life*

“Everything you need to start your own business is here! Susan delivers much more than the usual “how-to” stuff, instead guiding you to first build the mindset to achieve your dreams. How I wish I had *Business in Blue Jeans* when I started my own business ten years ago!”

DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

Bestselling author of *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*, now in over 25 languages from Bulgarian to Vietnamese

“*Business in Blue Jeans* is a strong book of advice for people seeking to find their own way to do business. It’s filled with bravery and a lot of opportunities to bring yourself up to a new level. Susan Baroncini-Moe has your homework right here. Get on it.”

CHRIS BROGAN

CEO and President of Human Business Works,
Co-author of *The Impact Equation*

“Susan shows you how to have a business and a life; what an amazingly refreshing concept.”

JOHN JANTSCH

Author of *Duct Tape Marketing* and
The Commitment Engine

"Business in Blue Jeans is a rich framework that will help you create and grow a successful business on your terms. A wonderful combination of actionable advice and insights, it will change how you think and how you approach business."

JOHN MICHAEL MORGAN
Author of *Brand Against the Machine*

"In *Business in Blue Jeans*, Susan delivers an entire college education on entrepreneurship. You'll have homework, but you won't have to sit through classes and boring lectures."

BRIAN HALLIGAN
HUBSPOT CEO

"Some people think that if you want to create a business around your life, it is because you're lazy and want to get rich quick. What the masters know is that creating a business around your life actually takes a lot of hard work and dedication.

Business in Blue Jeans helps you define this path and creates a roadmap for the journey. Sure, you get to wear blue jeans, but you're going to get them all worn in by putting your passion into a business that matters. *Business in Blue Jeans* is both a practical and powerful read for those looking to create the life they were meant to lead."

MITCH JOEL
President of Twist Image
Author, Blogger, Podcaster, *Six Pixels of Separation*

"Business in Blue Jeans is real, relevant, and revolutionary. Real, because Susan has an amazing ability to get right to the core of the matter; relevant, because it's full of real-world examples and practical tips that are immediately applicable to any business; and revolutionary, because I guarantee it will permanently change your approach to running and growing a successful business."

BEN COPE
Internet Genius and Web Developer

“New and existing businesses—you need this book. A thorough, complete how-to guide, this should serve as *the* textbook for branding. Perfectly penned; Baroncini-Moe aced this.”

CHRIS REIMER

Author of the upcoming book, *The Impossible Contract*

“Susan Baroncini-Moe was made to write this book. She was made to help others to take their business to new levels, but do that in a way that’s true to themselves.”

There are way too many people who spend their lives building businesses that aren’t true to who they are. So they wind up having a “business mid-life crisis” because as their business grows, they like it less and less.

Susan will help you to build a business around your own strengths, talents, and passions, so as it grows you’ll love it more and more. In fact, Susan Baroncini-Moe will help you to grow a business that will fit like your favorite pair of blue jeans.”

MITCH MATTHEWS

Co-founder, The BIG Dream Gathering
mitchmatthews.com

“I thought I knew the basics of being a small business owner and I needed some advanced tactics to grow my business. Wow! I thought wrong! Susan Baroncini-Moe’s *Business in Blue Jeans* takes the basics of small business and takes them to a whole new level, with insights to take *my* business to a whole new level. Jam-packed with proven usable insights, this book will fast become a staple of small business owners everywhere!”

PHIL GERBYSHAK

Chief Connections Officer, Milwaukee Social Media
Author of 4 books and more than 2,500 articles
focused on small business tips and tricks

“Having worked with Susan, I can tell you that *Business in Blue Jeans* is just like sitting down in person with Susan and her wealth of knowledge. Her words will encourage you, teach you, lead you, and even make you laugh out loud. I felt bigger and bolder and ready to tackle my business with new

zeal by the time I was only a few pages in. Whether you're thinking about starting a business or are already well down the path of CEO-dom, you will benefit from reading and applying the lessons in this book."

STEPHANIE HINDERER
CEO, Red Letter Paper Company

"Business in Blue Jeans is a great book both for newbies and those who are established. Susan delivers no-nonsense advice and humor in a very conversational tone like she's talking to a friend."

MIKE STENGER
Social Media Specialist

With expert guidance from Susan Baroncini-Moe and her thought-provoking exercises, I moved through a lot of "brain junk" like self-doubt, fear of failure, and self judgment. I was able to finally begin paying attention to my own voice and discover my true ideas about the kind of career and lifestyle I want.

Best of all, with Susan's help, I'm on a path to create a viable business doing what I love, and I've never been more excited about my future! If you've ever wanted to do more, be more, or create more, *Business in Blue Jeans* will help you do it."

BRANDE PLOTNICK
Tomato Envy

"As a business owner and coach, I have watched entrepreneurs trip over the fallacy of complexity. The more complex something is, the more value we believe it must hold. We wrongly assign value to something relative to its complexity when it is the simplest principles—in business and in life—that are always the most valuable.

In this book, Susan has removed the complexity and mythology from entrepreneurship and laid out a series of sound and practical principles and exercises to lead you through the creation or reinvention of your company.

But be forewarned! Just because the principles and exercises contained in this book are simple, by no means are they easy. Entrepreneurship is like giving birth and going to war at the same time. You will labor intensely as you take your idea from concept to reality and then you will

wage a daily battle against yourself, your competitors, and the economy at large just to keep your dream alive.

We all need people to fight alongside of us, encourage us, and guide us through the many business battles we will face. Through this book, Susan can do just that. She has labored and fought to bring you these business truths. The result is a book that, should you submit to it, will act as a guide to you as you create a business that fits your wants, needs, and desires—just like your favorite pair of blue jeans.

Summon the courage to dive into this book with all you have and, above all, execute on the ideas laid out.”

TRAVIS ROBERTSON
CEO, The Don't Settle Group
travisrobertson.com

“Now and then you discover a book that has you smiling before you are a full chapter in, and then you realize that you have mentally added it to your client holiday gift-giving list because they *must* have a copy. This engaging and inspiring book delivers a potent message about life and business and business and life that will have you raring to craft the best entrepreneurial life that you can possibly envision.”

DENISE GRIFFITTS
Web Developer, VA/OBM

“I don't want to spoil your illusions, but I must dispel two rumors about doing business in your blue jeans:

“It's not as easy as you think.”

“It's not as much fun as you think.”

After you read the words of Ms. Baroncini-Moe, you'll see that these are the rumors and what she writes is the truth. Jeans-clad for nearly 60 years, I know her truth to be the one you can take to the bank.”

JAY CONRAD LEVINSON
The Father of Guerrilla Marketing
Author of the “Guerrilla Marketing” book series

“Susan’s book, *Business in Blue Jeans*, is a valuable resource to anyone trying to get ahead in business without losing their head. It teaches us that we can *be* who we are to *become* who we are.”

AMBER OSBORNE
a.k.a. “Miss Destructo”

“Susan demonstrates in this book that you can build a business around the lifestyle you want. *Business in Blue Jeans* provides actionable lessons on everything from mindset to marketing to give the start-up entrepreneur the very best chances of success.”

JAMES REYNOLDS
SEO, Sherpa.com

“*Business in Blue Jeans* is a thoughtful, comprehensive guide for anyone who wants to create professional success. Regardless of what you prefer to wear (I go from yoga pants to business suits from one day to the next!), it’s about your mindset and what you must do so you’re poised to achieve your dreams. Highly recommended!”

FELICIA J. SLATTERY
M.A., M.Ad.Ed., Bestselling author of *21 Ways to Make Money Speaking* and *Kill the Elevator Speech: Stop Selling, Start Connecting*

“This book will make you forget any conventional thoughts about entrepreneurship. A fascinating process that starts by working on your most essential asset—yourself. This is how small businesses are created today.”

FRANCISCO ROSALES
SocialMouths.com

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

**How to Have a Successful Business
on Your Own Terms, in Your Own Style**

Susan Baroncini-Moe

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To Leo, who teaches me about life and love every
day, and who reminds me to believe.

CONTENTS

PREFACE	15
INTRODUCTION	19
You Are Not Alone.	19
There Is No “Get Rich Quick” in Business.	19
It’s Never Too Late.	20
It Doesn’t Matter Where You Are Right Now.	20
“Wait...business fundamentals? Pfft! I need advanced help!”	21
My Style, My Way vs. Your Style, Your Way	22
What You Can Expect	23
BRAIN JUNK	27
The One Factor I Can’t Account For	28
Don’t Skip This Stuff!.	28
“Grasshopper Mode”	29
The Mindset Factor	30
<i>What’s Wrong With Being a Dreamer?</i>	31
<i>What Comes Next</i>	34
<i>The Voices in Your Head.</i>	35
<i>Replacing Negative Thoughts</i>	37
<i>Other Tools and Strategies</i>	38
Creating the Success Mindset.	39
<i>Planning Your “Whys”</i>	40
<i>Authenticity and Your Real Story</i>	42

<i>The Big Stretch</i>	43
<i>Finding “Your Happy Place”</i>	44
When It’s Time to Find Help	45
Taking Care of Yourself	45
<i>Sleep</i>	46
<i>Exercise</i>	47
<i>Nutrition</i>	48
<i>Stress</i>	49
<i>Time Management</i>	50
<i>Relationships</i>	53
Your Work Ethic	54
Your Money Mindset	56

THE FIRE 63

Why Fire Matters	63
Two Sources of the Fire	64
<i>Why You Need Both the Heart and the Glow</i>	64
<i>The Heart</i>	64
<i>The Glow</i>	66
A Note on Purpose	68
The Extinguishers	70
<i>The Kitchen Sink</i>	70
<i>No Fire</i>	72
<i>Uncertainty</i>	72
<i>Grandiosity</i>	73
<i>Time</i>	75
<i>The Ember Challenge</i>	77
The Fire, Properly Channeled	78

EXPERTISE 81

What Is Expertise?	81
Why Does Expertise Matter?	81
<i>Your</i>	82

<i>Business</i>	82
What If You Don't Have Expertise?	83
<i>Discovering Your Expertise</i>	83
When It's Okay Not to Have Expertise	85
Developing Your Expertise	86

PACKAGING 91

The Interplay	91
The Weirdness	92
Packaging the Sweet Spot Into a Business.	93
<i>Getting Your Ducks in a Row</i>	93
<i>Writing Your Mission Statement.</i>	95
<i>Drawing Lines in the Sand</i>	96
<i>Be Prepared</i>	99
<i>Your Target Market</i>	100
<i>Analyzing Your Peers</i>	113
<i>Product and Service Offerings</i>	121
<i>Your Business Model.</i>	125
<i>Delivering Products and Services</i>	126
<i>Turn Your Industry on Its Ear</i>	128
Packaging Your Sweet Spot Into a Brand	130
<i>What the Heck Is "Branding" Anyway?</i>	130
<i>Why Does Branding Matter to My Small Business?</i>	131
<i>Creating (or Revamping) the Brand Identity.</i>	132
<i>Styling the Brand</i>	138

LEANING INTO YOUR MARKETING. 153

What Is Marketing?	153
<i>Creating a Marketing Plan</i>	155
Leaning In: The Philosophy	157
The Big Mistakes in Marketing	158
<i>Broadcasting.</i>	158
<i>Ignoring Your Audience</i>	159

The Keys to Leaning Into Your Marketing	160
<i>Targeting</i>	160
<i>Engagement</i>	162
<i>Consistency</i>	165
<i>Educating Your Target Market</i>	167
Marketing with Conscience	169
<i>The Container Store</i>	170
<i>Whole Foods</i>	170
<i>When to Market With Conscience</i>	171
Extraordinary Customer Experiences	172
<i>How to Create an Extraordinary Customer Experience</i>	172

THE VILLAGE	187
Who You Need in Your Village	188
<i>Masterminds</i>	188
<i>Networks</i>	192
<i>Administrative</i>	196
<i>Advisory</i>	208
A Few More Words	217
Join the Business in Blue Jeans Community.	219
Acknowledgments.	221
Index	225

PREFACE

When I was a young girl, I was deeply passionate about a dream, and that dream was all about bubble gum. It wasn't the bubble gum itself that I loved, as much as it was *blowing bubbles* with bubble gum. I'd throw an entire pack of gum in my mouth and chew away like a baseball player until the wad was soft enough to start blowing bubbles, and then I'd start blowing the biggest bubbles I could make. There was nothing quite as satisfying as the sound of a really, really good bubble popping.

Luckily for me, my mom was usually pretty good about buying me bubble gum when we went to the store, but sometimes she said no, and if you're six years old and trying to blow the world's largest bubble gum bubble (I had Guinness World Records® aspirations even back then), you have to have bubble gum.

So that was my dream: to keep blowing bubble gum bubbles without interruption. To do that, I knew I needed more money than my allowance, since that money was already going for the essentials (specifically, Barbie clothes, Archie comic books, and Sea Monkeys), and gum was expensive (twenty-five cents a pack!).

One day, after begging my mom to take me to the store to buy another pack of grape Hubba Bubba, I assessed my options. I was only just starting to learn how to play violin, and I still sounded pretty bad, so I knew that wasn't going to help. I wiggled my teeth, but none of them were loose, so

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

the Tooth Fairy was out. Besides, that was only good for a limited time, and I needed something *sustainable*. I was too young to babysit, too young to cut the grass, and I didn't yet have the "mad skillz" my future self would acquire.

It was July. I remember sitting on the sofa in our family room, gazing out the window, daydreaming about bubble gum, when I saw a guy jog past our house. Slowly, it dawned on me. Joggers were *always* going past our house. It was the heyday of the Jim Fixx era. Everybody was jogging.

My dad, a doctor who was friends with the late Jim Fixx, author of *The Complete Book of Running*, had mapped out a two-and-a-half mile route through our neighborhood and passed it out to our neighbors with a title written across the top: "The Moe" (our last name). From that point forward, joggers used that route all the time. To this day, when walkers, joggers, and runners encounter each other in our neighborhood, it's common to ask, "How many 'Moe's have you done today?" In fact, on July 4th, there's an official annual walk and run event in our neighborhood that goes around The Moe.

If you've ever visited the Midwest in July, you know how hot and humid it gets. You probably also know that hydration is key to surviving those "dog days."

Back then, because my dad was such an avid health nut, I'd been to enough walk/run/jog events with my dad to know that every runner loves those tables with cups of Gatorade along the race. And I'd been playing "Lemonade Stand" on my Apple II Plus for a whole year. This was a Hot, Sunny Day, according to the game, which meant it was the perfect time for a lemonade stand, and according to the game dynamics, I could practically charge whatever I wanted!

But...I wasn't sure how to make lemonade. I needed to outsource! I got my mom to make up a batch of grape Kool-Aid (okay, so it wasn't lemonade, precisely, but I was out of the box even back then).

While she was mixing up the Kool-Aid, I curled my hair with a butane curling iron and put on my best velour top and shorts. I dragged my little picnic table out by the street and made up a cardboard sign, and I was in business!

I not only sold out of my Kool-Aid that day, but I sold out of *three* batches. Cars stopped, joggers stopped, friendly neighbors came out to see

PREFACE

what I was doing. I delivered every cup with ice and a shy smile, saying, “Thank you so much. Please tell your friends and please come again,” or “Thank you for stopping. That was so nice of you. I hope you like your Kool-Aid. I’ll be serving cherry flavor tomorrow.”

It was glorious, and I had gum without interruption for *the entire summer*. It was my first taste of the power of being an entrepreneur. From that moment on, I was hooked.

Small business is, to me, the essence of the American Dream. Entrepreneurship is the backbone of our economy, and it offers virtually anyone unlimited opportunity, income, and freedom. But like anything worth pursuing, it requires effort.

For some, the effort will be more challenging than for others, by way of circumstance, life path, or lack of skill. I’ve done what I can in this book to put as much as I can fit into a single volume to give you as much help as I possibly can, and I’ve put additional resources at the book web site, <http://BusinessInBlueJeans.com/book>.

It is my greatest hope that this book will give you what you need to start to make your entrepreneurial dreams come true. I’m giving you the tools, the path, and the knowledge to make it happen. Now all you need to do is add some effort and...stir.

INTRODUCTION

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

That's the first thing I want you to know. You are not alone in your small business journey. I decided to write this book because I wanted to reach out to the vast numbers of people starting and growing small businesses and looking for answers to how to create a stable, successful enterprise...in *any* economy.

Right now we're seeing a massive surge in entrepreneurial activity, and millions of people just like you are starting or growing small businesses of all kinds. But starting and growing a business isn't easy, and it won't happen overnight. Anyone who tells you that it is easy and fast is either lying or is trying to sell you something that probably won't help you.

THERE IS NO "GET RICH QUICK" IN BUSINESS

I may have lost you right there. In fact, if you kept reading after that one line, I'm already impressed, so I'll give you a little reward for sticking around: There's more to that sentence!

Ready? Here it is: There is no "get rich quick" in business...but there are *definitely* ways to make the path to success and wealth smoother and faster than if you did it alone.

In this book, I'm going to show you many of the shortcuts I've learned in my years of working with small businesses and entrepreneurs. I'm going

to show you what to do and what *not* to do so that you can avoid many of the mistakes that keep businesses from succeeding.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

It's never too late to start your business. It's never too late to pursue success. Orville Redenbacher started his popcorn company when he was fifty-eight. Mary Kay Ash was forty-five when she started her cosmetics company. And Colonel Harland Sanders launched Kentucky Fried Chicken with his first Social Security check at age sixty-five.

It is *never* too late to start a business. It is never too late to pursue your dreams. I don't care if you're nine, nineteen, or ninety (well, if you're nine, please get your parents' permission before launching your startup); you can take action *today* and start your business *now*. It is *never* too late. I've worked with clients who are in their twenties and clients who are in their seventies. It doesn't matter how old you are. It matters how much you want to pursue your dreams.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW

Whether you're just starting out or you want to grow a business you already have, I'll show you the smartest places to invest your time, energy, and money in your business so that you have the best chance of building that stable, successful business and can lean back and enjoy your life. In each chapter, I'll show you how to apply my principles in very practical ways, regardless of where you are in your business growth.

Plus, I've made this book as close to the experience of working directly with me, one-on-one, as possible. When I work with my clients, I give them "homework assignments," which are practical tasks that they do in between our meetings. Similarly, throughout this book, I'll give you homework assignments to do, and I've designed the assignments so that there are assignments for startups and for businesses in growth. Some exercises are good for just about anyone to do. But where there are differences, look

INTRODUCTION

for “Newbies” (for startups) and “Existing Business Owners” (for growing businesses).

So if you’re starting a new business, this book’s for you. If you’ve been in business for awhile and want to take your business to the next level, this book’s for you, too.

This book will teach you the business fundamentals that far too many businesses don’t have in place (don’t be so sure yours does, by the way), plus new tricks for your business arsenal.

“WAIT...BUSINESS FUNDAMENTALS? PFFT! I NEED ADVANCED HELP!”

Let me take a moment here to make a case for business fundamentals. All too often, business owners and entrepreneurs *think* they have the basics worked out. I see it all the time, and it comes in many forms.

For example, a coach comes to me for help growing her new practice, and in our first meeting, when I’m analyzing the business and which areas I think will yield the best return on the investment of our time and attention, when I ask about the name of her business and where it came from, she says, “It’s a name that’s really meaningful to me.” That response tells me she’s skipped some fundamentals, like knowing her target market and designing a brand that appeals to the people she most wants to work with.

Then there’s the corporate executive who comes to me and wants to know why he’s having a hard time getting repeat customers, and during my analysis, I discover that his customer service line keeps people on hold for lengthy periods of time and his customer service representatives are lackadaisical. That tells me he’s missing some of the fundamentals, like knowing what real service to customers is and understanding how employee engagement transfers to customer loyalty.

The fundamentals of business are the foundation of everything we do. There’s a reason why they’re fundamentals. They’re the basic principles that have stood the test of time. The fundamentals don’t change. Strategies and tactics change, but the fundamentals don’t.

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

And if you think, *Come on, I've heard all of this before*, it's a sure sign that you need to hear it again, because you probably haven't opened yourself up to the knowledge and taken it in.

The reason I talk about the fundamentals is threefold:

1. Newbies and startups need to learn them,
2. Existing businesses still aren't getting it and need to hear it, and
3. If you don't have the fundamentals in place, then ultimately, you're going to be chasing anything that you think might work to grow your business, making you easy prey for scam artists and con men peddling the next, latest, greatest "magic bullet" tactic that can change the course of your business and make you the next millionaire. Trust me, there's *no* single strategy or tactic that can do that for your business.

What builds success is creating a stable, strong business that's based on fundamental principles and then fusing that solid foundation with the best-performing strategies that apply to your business and your target market. That's what I'm going to teach you in this book.

MY STYLE, MY WAY VS. YOUR STYLE, YOUR WAY

When I came up with the idea of "Business in Blue Jeans," it was, in part, because I wanted to roll up my sleeves and work in the trenches with my clients and their businesses. I personally work best when I'm comfortable and when I'm not distracted by uncomfortable clothes. So yes, I often work in my jeans.

But there's more to the story. Business in Blue Jeans is also a metaphor. Think about your favorite pair of jeans—that pair that's worn in all the right places and fits perfectly, the pair that makes you look ten pounds lighter. When you wear those jeans, don't you feel good about yourself? That's how I want you to feel about your business. I want your business to fit you perfectly and to show you in the best possible light.

INTRODUCTION

I also want your business to have the characteristics of denim. I want it to be strong, stable, and lasting. That's what a Business in Blue Jeans is really all about.

So it's not about wearing jeans to work every day. That's *my* style. Your style might be different. That's okay. You can wear a suit to work and still have a Business in Blue Jeans.

My business is structured so that I can travel regularly and work from anywhere in the world, whether it's in the heart of urban Montevideo, Uruguay (where I worked on the outline for this book) or the English countryside (where I wrote this chapter) or a vineyard in Tuscany (where I drank a lot of wine and ate far too much pasta), or in my comfortable home office in Indianapolis (which I share with three hamsters, and where I wrote the bulk of the book). That's *my* dream. That's *my* way of doing business. Your way of doing business might be completely different. That's okay, too.

This book isn't about how to copycat my business model or any kind of one-size-fits-all marketing strategies. It's about how to develop and grow a business that suits you, fits your values, and creates the kind of lifestyle you want to create for yourself and your family, using business fundamentals that have stood the test of time.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

I don't pull my punches. I'm going to give it to you straight. And often, just like with my clients, I'm going to give you homework assignments throughout this book. You'll do these exercises independently, outside of the book. I recommend using a notebook or creating a document file to type your answers into, but if you prefer to do them in a fancier, official workbook, there's one for most every chapter, available for you to download at <http://BusinessInBlueJeans.com/book>.

BRAIN JUNK

BRAIN JUNK

Entrepreneurs get tripped up in *many* ways. When you think about all the business mistakes people can make, you may think about things like not having a good business plan or not having enough capital to finance your endeavor. (By the way, while this book doesn't cover how to fund your business, the bonus content on the book web site does: <http://BusinessInBlueJeans.com/book>.) You might think about poor branding or bad marketing strategies.

You might not realize that a business can get derailed before it even gets started just because of what I call “brain junk.”

Brain junk is the mental baggage that gets in your way, and it can stop you from having a successful business *before you've even started it*.

If you've ever thought, *I want to start a business, but I can't because I'm not smart enough, and I don't know anything about business*, or *I want to grow my business, but I can't because I don't have enough money*, or *My business hasn't grown, and it must be because I'm not good enough*, then you have some brain junk. If you've ever wondered why other people seem to be able to create successful businesses while you flounder, then you have some brain junk. And we're going to handle the brain junk before we get into the nuts and bolts of your business.

THE ONE FACTOR I CAN'T ACCOUNT FOR

I can teach you everything I know about business (but probably not in the space I'm allowed for this book). I can give you the information about business models and branding and marketing and social media and customer service. I can teach you how to network and I can show you how to assemble a team. I can show you all the keys to success.

The one factor I can't account for, though, is you. I don't know what you've experienced in your lifetime. I don't know what you learned growing up. I don't know what your work ethic is. I don't know how confident you are.

So while I can give you everything you need to be successful in business, the only ingredient I can't account for is you, and that means that your success is really, ultimately up to you.

DON'T SKIP THIS STUFF!

Early in my career, occasionally I would get a client who was emphatically against working on the personal elements. These clients wanted to jump into branding and marketing their businesses because they thought the nuts and bolts pieces were the most important things they needed.

“A business can get derailed before it even gets started just because of “brain junk.””

That's when I discovered that entrepreneurs who skip the Brain Junk Step often end up creating businesses that don't bring them joy, thinking too small, branding for the short term, and getting stuck pretty quickly. In fact, willingness to work on your brain junk is a good indicator for whether you'll be successful or not.

Working through the brain junk now means that you can sort out the voices in your head and get absolute clarity on what's in your heart. It means that you can open yourself up to all the things you've never allowed yourself to dream about or hope for in life and start seeing those things as possible. It means that you can change how you see yourself so that you can walk taller and feel stronger. It means that you can learn to deal with self-doubt and fear—intermittent companions for most entrepreneurs—so that you conquer them, and not the other way around.

BRAIN JUNK

And it means that you can think much bigger about what you want to create so that you can create a *business* instead of just a job for yourself. Working through the brain junk also means that you'll be more productive and creative, so you'll do better work in the long run.

Here's the really big secret most successful entrepreneurs don't want you to know: Even the most successful people in the world experience self-doubt. I've experienced my own mindset issues throughout my career. I know that most of my colleagues have too. If you've listened to my interviews, you've heard me ask everyone from celebrity entrepreneurs, bestselling authors, well-known public speakers, and experts about their brain junk and how they dealt with it. Everybody has it.

What sets really successful people apart from everyone else is that we work on our brain junk so that nothing stands in our way. Aside from being afraid of what you might find, there is no downside to working through the brain junk. And since ninety-nine percent of the clients I've worked with over the years have had some brain junk to work out, I'm guessing that you do too. In fact, it might very well be the thing that's holding you back. So let's deal with it and then move on to the nuts and bolts.

“GRASSHOPPER MODE”

There's a story in the Bible about the children of Israel who, upon reaching the Promised Land, were afraid to enter. The verse says, “And there we saw the giants and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight” (Num. 13:33 KJV).

This “grasshopper mode” is something that happens to everyone. We see the “giants” in our field and think of ourselves as grasshoppers. But we've *all* been grasshoppers at one time or another. And more importantly, we're all grasshoppers compared to somebody with more experience or expertise.

Bravo! has a cooking competition show for aspiring chefs called *Top Chef*. Throughout the competition, young professionals competing on the show encounter the best chefs in the world as the master chefs come to judge various competitions. You can see how star-struck the aspiring

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

chefs are. You can literally see them shift into grasshopper mode, where they see themselves as small and the master chefs as giants.

After a few seasons of *Top Chef*, Bravo! created a new series called *Top Chef Masters*, in which the best chefs in the world compete for donations to charitable causes in the same kinds of competitions as the young professional chefs endure in the regular series.

What's fascinating about the *Top Chef Masters* series isn't the mastery of the cooking, but rather the experience of the giants of the culinary world. Going through this competition and being challenged in new ways humbles the chefs, and the audience gets to see them experience quite a bit of self-doubt and fear. They become the grasshoppers.

So you see, we're all grasshoppers and we're all giants.

Here's where it gets *really* interesting. Going back to that verse, "And there we saw the giants and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, *and so we were in their sight*" (Num. 13:33 KJV). When you see yourself as a grasshopper, you essentially teach others how to see you. You put off a "vibe" that tells people that you see yourself as a grasshopper and that you *are* a grasshopper.

See yourself as small and insignificant, and others will see you that way, too. But see yourself as someone important, as someone who's on the verge of being hugely successful, and that's how the world will see you.

If you see yourself as a grasshopper though, it's not so easy to start seeing yourself as a giant. And even giants have their grasshopper days. Successful people experience fear and doubt and mindset issues *all the time*, just like you do. We just know what to do about it. I'm going to share the strategies we use with you in this chapter.

THE MINDSET FACTOR

Mindset matters because your mindset—where your head is—guides everything else. Your mindset guides how well you can "think big," how much you believe in your ability to succeed, how well you can think creatively and outside the box, and whether you can really stick with this and stay motivated. Mindset, in short, is everything.

BRAIN JUNK

You know how time can pass slowly or quickly depending on what you're doing or how you're feeling? Well, that's mindset. And you know how you can find it easy to accomplish certain goals, while others are a struggle? That's mindset, too.

Also, if your mindset is all junked up with limitations about who you are and what you can accomplish, you'll be finished before you even start.

As children we dream of being astronauts, rocket scientists. Do you remember? What did *you* dream about? Was it going to the moon, fighting fires, flying in the air? As children, there's absolutely nothing holding us back.

But as we grow, we develop ideas about who we are and what we're capable of. People tell us we're not good enough or we can't do certain things. We're told we need to be realistic, and when we incorporate these statements into our psyche, they turn into beliefs about who we are and what we can accomplish; they become "limiting beliefs."

As we incorporate these limiting beliefs into who we are, we begin to forget our dreams or to minimize our successes and "put things into perspective." We make our dreams smaller so we don't have to deal with disappointment. We keep quiet about what we wish for so that people don't call us dreamers.

What's Wrong With Being a Dreamer?

Whoa, hold on. What's wrong with being a dreamer? Is it really so bad to be a dreamer? No, it's not.

When people use *dreamer* as a derogatory term, there's usually a reason for it. Maybe they've seen people they care about go after a dream, only to fall short. Maybe they themselves had dreams and ambitions that were never realized.

People who don't know how to go after their dreams or who have experienced failure often call others dreamers when they want to bring them back down to Earth and remind them what the "real world" is like. It's not necessarily malicious. Sometimes it's just a misguided attempt to protect people they care about.

But what if you *never* put your dreams away? What if you never let anyone tell you what your limitations are? What would be possible? As Robert Schuller famously said, "*What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?*"

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

Take a moment, right now, to close your eyes and sit with this question. What would *you* attempt to do if you knew you couldn't fail? What if you could let your light shine as bright as it can shine without the possibility of being dimmed by any shade? Sit with that. Ponder it.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: **THE LIST OF 100**

The first step to re-opening yourself to your dreams and accessing all that's possible is to make The List of 100. The List of 100 is a way to reactivate the dreamer in you. You're going to make a list of one hundred things that you want in life. It can be material things; it can be a certain income level, places you want to travel, experiences you want to have...it can be whatever you want.

If you get to fifty and get stuck, take a little time away and then go back and start writing again. Keep working until you get to one hundred and make this a living, breathing document that you update regularly. If you get really stuck, it's time to start looking at the voices in your head and what's holding you back from discovering what you really want.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: **THE "DREAM TO REALITY BOOK"**

This next exercise is based on the life coaching "Wheel of Life," which is a tool coaches use for helping clients quantify their level of satisfaction with various areas of their lives. Using the categories from that tool (plus a few of my own), I've developed this "Dream to Reality" exercise.

First, create the right environment by following these steps:

1. Close your eyes.
2. See yourself at your highest peak of success, a point where you've achieved everything you've always dreamed of (and even some stuff you haven't yet imagined).

3. Step into the body of that successful version of yourself (or, if you have a hard time imagining yourself at this point, imagine someone who you know who has achieved the level of success you want and step into their body).
4. What does it feel like to be this version of yourself? How do you stand? What is your posture like? How confident do you feel?

In that mindset, as the most successful version of yourself, begin to create your “Dream to Reality Book,” in which you write down the greatest, coolest things you have accomplished at this point in your life, at this moment when you’ve reached your pinnacle of success.

Write in the present tense, as in, “My books are New York Times bestsellers, and I have had both a non-fiction business book and a novel on the bestseller list.” (Yes, that’s an example from my own book.)

Your “Dream to Reality Book” has eight chapters:

Chapter 1: Business

Start with an inventory of the awards, honors, and cool recognitions that you’ve received. Include a description of your professional support team and your work environment. Write about who you serve and how you serve them, how you spend your time, and what your day looks like.

Chapter 2: Family and Friends

In this chapter, you’ll write about your relationships. Describe the quality of these relationships and how you spend your time with the people in your life.

Chapter 3: Environment

Here you’ll write about your home environment. Describe how it looks and feels and is maintained.

Chapter 4: Time Management

This chapter is about how you balance your time. How do you spend your days?

Chapter 5: Contribution/Spirituality

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

This section is about your contribution to the world as well as your personal spiritual practice.

Chapter 6: Health

Here you'll write about your physical health and how you maintain and take care of your body.

Chapter 7: Personal Support Team

This is an inventory of the people who support you in your personal life. This list might include coaches, counselors, attorneys who handle personal matters, financial advisors, friends, housekeepers, etc.

Chapter 8: Wealth

This is the inventory of your material things, such as cars, homes around the world, jewels, investment accounts, and charitable donations.

What Comes Next

Once you've completed your "Dream to Reality Book," take some time to meditate on what you've written. Get inside those dreams and feel what it feels like to have already achieved each one. And then...put that book away.

Contrary to what you'll read in many personal growth and motivational books, I *don't* recommend that you review these goals every day. At the most, review your goals once a week or even once a month. Set aside a time that you meditate on your dreams just that one time each week and then *move on*.

Your goals and dreams *are* important. However, you don't necessarily want to get so wrapped up in those written-in-present-tense goals that you live inside of them, essentially living in the future rather than doing the work of the moment.

Sometimes people get so focused on their grand ambitions that they can only see the future, not the path they need to take to get to that future. As a result, they often end up stagnating and spending most of their time in unproductive fantasizing, under the delusion that they're somehow using the Law of Attraction to bring their dreams to life.

BRAIN JUNK

There's nothing wrong with dreaming, but you can't dream things into reality. You have to put in some elbow grease to make things happen.

Sometimes people get so tied up in their present-tense dreams that they expect to already be at the point where they actually *have* achieved those dreams, and they can't understand why other people aren't seeing it. This can lead to inappropriately large egos, looking for shortcuts to take the easy route to success, and a chaotic, scattershot approach to success.

And while there's nothing inherently wrong with honorable shortcuts (*not* shortcuts that make use of shady or illicit marketing tactics, for example), it's exceedingly rare for someone to be so incredibly brilliant and amazing that that he or she gets to jump the line. Even overnight successes rarely actually happen overnight.

So write out your goals and dreams and ambitions, and write them in present tense. But once you do that, set them aside and just focus on *the work*.

“You can't dream things into reality. You have to put in some elbow grease to make them happen.”

The Voices in Your Head

Have you ever taken a moment to notice all the voices in your head? While you're going about your daily life, there are voices in your head that are observing, considering, judging, commenting on the past, planning for the future, making lists, reacting to everything...it's an almost endless dialogue. And only *some* of the voices in your head belong to you.

That's right. You have voices in your head that belong to all kinds of people: family members, friends, teachers, pastors, bosses, coworkers, some random person that you met at a bar one time. They're all in there, they all have something to say, and we all make the mistake of thinking that what *they're* saying is what *we* believe.

For example, I once had a client who believed that he didn't have what it took to be successful. He simply could not believe that he could do anything that would contribute to his own success. As we worked on this piece of his brain junk, he realized that all his life, whenever something really good happened to him, his father would tell him that

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

he was “lucky.” Over time, he incorporated his father’s voice into his own thinking so that every time something good happened, instead of believing that his success was his own hard work and efforts paying off, he believed it was just luck.

When we uncovered this truth and he identified that voice in his head as his father voice, and not his own voice, his confidence and belief in himself grew, and he was able to see his own efforts as worthwhile and integral to creating his future success.

The voices in our heads tell us all kinds of information, and the information they provide is often just flat-out wrong. I grew up believing that my own success made others feel small. I learned to keep my accomplishments small and never put in much effort so that I lived in a kind of limbo all the time.

Then one day, as I was doing some of this work myself, I realized that the voice telling me that my greatness hurt other people was absolutely *not* my own voice. Not long after that epiphany, I was swinging life around by the tail. Since then, I’ve accomplished some pretty big things, including breaking a Guinness World Record.

The voices in your head sometimes tell you that you shouldn’t want things. You shouldn’t wish for more than you have. In fact, sometimes the voices in your head say that you should just be grateful for what you have and not want more. *It is absolutely okay to be grateful for what you have and to still want more.*

As you make your way through this book and begin to grow your business, you’re likely to hear some of those voices piping up. Most likely, they’ll discourage you and you’ll experience some anxiety or fear. It happens to the best of us, so I feel pretty comfortable telling you that it’s likely to come up at least some time along the way in your entrepreneurial journey.

When the voices in your head pop up and start to make you doubt yourself, take a moment and let the voices tell you what their *real* message is. Most of the time, these messages come from well-intentioned people who care about us.

A discouraging message may sound like “This business is a foolish idea,” but might actually just be saying, “I don’t want to see you experience pain.”

BRAIN JUNK

Sometimes these messages come from people who are envious, and in those cases, a message that seems discouraging and sounds like, “I can’t believe you’d try to do something like that,” might actually be saying, “I wish I had your guts,” or “I wish I could dream the way that you do,” or “I wish I had your talents, skills, or abilities.”

And sometimes the messages come from people who are just mean. Those messages might sound like, “You’ll never be a success,” and are usually, “I hurt, so I want others to hurt, because I believe that will make me hurt less.”

Your job is threefold here:

1. Determine whose voices are in your head and discover the consistent messages they send you.
2. Translate the message into what it’s *really* trying to tell you.
3. Decide if you want to heed the message or ignore it. If you heed it, it’ll become *your* voice. If you ignore it, you’ll start to replace it with a different message (that’s coming up).

That’s it. It’s not always easy to go through the process, but once you begin to identify the voices, you’ll automatically find yourself questioning them whenever they come up.

Replacing Negative Thoughts

When you discover that the voices in your head have some messages that don’t resonate with who you are or who you want to be, that’s the time to start replacing the messages.

Sometimes the negative thoughts that you have are echoes from the past—things that you heard someone say that stuck with you, either because what was said really hurt at the time or because the words were repeated again and again.

Sometimes negative thoughts are what you believe about yourself, things that simply are not true, but because you’ve gotten in the habit of repeating them in your head, you think they are true.

Whatever they are, wherever they came from, to be successful and avoid sabotaging yourself or thinking too small (or whatever your particular brain

junk is), you must develop a way of managing negative thoughts so that they don't rule your mind.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:

POSITIVE EQUIVALENTS

The first step toward replacing negative thoughts is to write them down. Write them down for an entire day—two days, if necessary. Keep a log of all the negative thoughts you have throughout the day. Don't worry about how many there are and don't judge yourself for having negative thoughts. Just observe how many you have and write them all down.

When you've completed that step, look over your list and see if you can organize the negative thoughts that you've recorded into categories. What patterns can you find in the negative thoughts that you experience on a daily basis?

Next, start to write the positive equivalent for each negative thought. So, if your recurring negative thought is, "I don't have what it takes to be successful," then your positive equivalent is something like, "I'm learning the skills to become more successful." And we know that's true, by the way, because you're reading this book.

I've had multiple clients who, when they did this exercise, told me that they realized one of their patterns was, "I don't know how to grow a business," but they quickly discovered that their positive equivalent was, "I'm learning how to grow a business."

Other Tools and Strategies

There are many other tools and strategies that may be useful for you. Among them are affirmations, vision boards, and meditation.

I'm a big fan of meditation, but I've had clients that can't get into it and don't find it helpful. I have some clients who love affirmations and some who can't stand them. As for vision boards, some clients of mine use magazines and newspapers to create real boards they hang on a wall of their

office, while others use a site like Pinterest to collate and create a digital vision board.

These tools are all about creating a system that works best for you. Experiment with all the homework assignments and tools and see what resonates with you and your unique personality.

CREATING THE SUCCESS MINDSET

Once you've started the process of replacing your negative thoughts, it's time to start getting into the success mindset—to start really opening up your brain and thinking like a successful person.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: **INVENTORY OF SUCCESS**

Your Inventory of Success is a document where you curate your lifetime of achievements. You simply list all the awesome stuff you've done in your lifetime. I keep mine in an online document so that I can update it each time something cool happens.

You can start back as far as you want to go. I started with age five and included things like having won a grade school pumpkin-carving contest. Even if you tried something and it didn't go the way that you thought it should have, it can be considered a success. For example, in my Inventory of Success, I include the number of times I've asked Seth Godin for an interview. He turns me down every time. But one day I know he'll say yes, so I consider my persistence a success: Seth! E-mail me! Let's talk!

Include everything you can think of, and if you start to get stuck, ask people who know you and your history for help. I once sent out an e-mail to my family and closest friends and asked them to recall five of my accomplishments or successes. That turned out to be a cool exercise for many reasons, not the least of which is that I saw that my family thinks I'm awesome.

Make sure your Inventory of Success is a living document that you continue to add to. Every time you do something amazing, every

time you get a testimonial, every time you go out on a limb, put it in the Inventory.

Planning Your “Whys”

I take a different approach to business than you may be used to. I’ve always thought that it makes sense to know what your goals in life are first, so that when you construct your business, you think in terms of business models that have the most potential to help you reach those goals.

For example, let’s say that you have expensive taste. Let’s say that you want to own a house in the south of France, a horse ranch in Montana, and a mansion in Malibu. You want a boat, an expensive sports car, and a couture wardrobe. If that’s the case, you’re going to need a different business model than someone who has much more modest needs.

That’s why I started having my clients map out their dreams and goals. Each of us has a different idea of what success means. If you get clear on what *your* definition of success is, then you can create a business that matches up with your unique values.

Planning your whys means making a list of reasons why you do what you do. Let’s get real here: You don’t really want to sell widgets or work with clients. What you *really* want is that house in France or to buy that fancy car or to pet a tiger (one of my personal dreams). What I want is to sit on the sofa with my husband at night watching *So You Think You Can Dance* and eating popcorn with money in the bank.

Those are the whys.

HOMework ASSIGNMENT:

PLANNING YOUR WHYS

Start making your list now. What are your dreams? Get really specific here and start attaching dollar figures to each thing that you list. Want a Ducati motorcycle? Write it down.

Then spend a few minutes finding out about how much that motorcycle costs and write that down. Want to have a retirement fund with \$2,000,000 in it? Write it down.

Create a “Why” budget, too. Just like you’d plan out how much you need for mortgage, utilities, food, “fun money,” and monthly spa visits (or whatever), create a budget for your dream lifestyle.

For a list of resources to help you find the cost of things and a tool to help you create your “Why Budget,” visit <http://BusinessInBlueJeans.com/book>.

Now that you have a sense of how much cash you need to create your dream lifestyle, you’re better equipped to choose a business model. We’ll get to that in a couple of chapters.

Sometimes my clients are shocked by how much their dream lifestyle could cost. I’ve also had a few clients who were surprised to learn that what they wanted in life cost far less than they expected. But when you start planning your whys, you start to get clear about the goals you’re after, and you can plan your real business in a practical, quantifiable, results-oriented way.

Equally important, in writing down these dreams and starting to put a dollar figure to each one, you make them much more real. The more tangible and real your dreams feel to you, the more motivating they’ll be. This is what you’re working toward—what your business will make possible in your life! It’s fun and exciting stuff!

The Why Aftermath

An interesting phenomenon occurs with many of my clients after they do the “Planning Your Whys” exercise.

Some clients are excited and motivated by the exercise. But others see that their dreams are expensive—I don’t care what the economic climate is, houses in Malibu don’t come cheap—and start to get nervous. Those voices in their head come back, saying things like, *Who do you think you are? You can’t make that kind of money!* and *You should be grateful for what you have. Why do you need all that stuff?*

Fairly quickly, they start to pull back from their dreams and begin to try to be more “realistic.” They begin editing themselves and squashing those big dreams back down.

This is usually the point where we start to get to the heart of your mindset issues. So get ready.

Authenticity and Your Real Story

We all tell stories about ourselves—to others and to ourselves. But the stories you tell yourself aren’t always the same as the stories you tell the world, are they? You want the world to see you a certain way, but that’s not always the way that you see yourself.

Successful people know how to get honest with their stories and make sure they’re telling authentic stories to the world and to themselves. That means the story you tell yourself has to be the same as the story you tell the world. It all has to be *authentic*.

“ Even if you think you’re hiding it, your true story will show up in your business. ”

If you don’t get your stories in harmony, they’re going to clash, and ultimately, two things will happen: 1) You’ll be found out, and 2) your progress toward your dreams will be threatened.

When you’re not telling the same stories to the world that you’re telling yourself about who you are and what you’re capable of, the disharmony pervades every aspect of your life.

Ask yourself if you’re being authentic. Are you being honest about your story—who you are, what you’ve experienced, and where you are today?

This is a time to get *really* honest. What’s your story? What are you trying to hide from? What don’t you want other people to know? You want to get to the heart of this, because sure enough, even if you think you’re hiding it, your story, your *true* story, will show up in the way that *you* show up, in your business, in your interaction with clients, and in your sales process.

For example, if you’re desperate to pay your bills, you don’t want to show that in your business. You’ll *try* to look successful, but ultimately, without you even realizing it, you’ll probably show up as desperate to make a sale. If your true story and the story you tell the world don’t coincide, the

truth will shine through, even when you think it won't. So get clear about what your story is, *especially* the parts you're hiding from, and turn that story around so it works for you, not against you.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:

WHAT'S YOUR TRUE STORY?

Answer the following:

1. What's the story that you tell others about yourself?
2. What's your true story?
3. Are these stories the one and the same?
4. What do you most want to hide from?
5. What don't you want other people to know about you?
6. What are you most afraid of?
7. Are there any stories of failure that you're hiding from?
And if so, how can you transform those stories into a learning moment?

The Big Stretch

One thing truly successful entrepreneurs know is that you have to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. I call this The Big Stretch.

You know how, at the gym, when you first start to stretch, it hurts a lot and you can really feel that pull? The more you stretch, the less it hurts and the easier it gets, so you stretch a little more until you feel the pull again.

That's what it's like to be a successful entrepreneur. You constantly do things that challenge you and make you stretch a little so you can see your limitations...until you get used to them and have to push the boundaries a little further.

It can be a little scary to be an entrepreneur and to be stretching all the time like this. But if you're born to be an entrepreneur, that stretch will feel a little bit good and a little bit exciting, too.

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

Not long ago, I was pretty nervous about doing webinars and video interviews. In fact, whenever I did a video, I spent a lot of time working to get my hair and makeup *just right* and recorded an embarrassingly large number of takes to get the perfect video. I would work on a script, practice it over and over and over...I had almost no confidence in myself on video.

“**Successful people do things that make them feel uncomfortable because those are the things that keep their businesses growing.**”

Then I decided to host a webcast to break the Guinness World Records® record for the world’s longest uninterrupted live webcast, and spent two days on camera. Talk about a stretch!

If you watch the playback of the webcast (it’s available at <http://breakarecordwithsusan.com>) you can see my nerves in the first hour or so. But as the event progressed, I got more and more comfortable with being on camera, and now I do videos and webcasts regularly and it’s not at all scary for me.

Successful people keep stretching and doing things that make them feel uncomfortable because these are the things that keep their businesses growing. So start getting comfortable with The Big Stretch.

Finding “Your Happy Place”

This is one of the last exercises I’m going to give you in this chapter. I started calling it the “happy place” years ago, somewhat cavalierly, because I think it’s funny to say “Go to your happy place.” But this is actually a useful, serious tool that you can use.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: FINDING YOUR HAPPY PLACE

Create a clear vision of what would make you the absolute happiest in life. Write out a full description of what that looks and feels like for you.

Your description can be a place, but it can also be a moment in time. For example, my happy place is when my husband wraps his arms around me and I have a feeling of absolute safety and love.

The feeling I experience in that moment in time is my “happy place.” Yours might be a place that you love or a moment from your past.

Whatever your happy place is, what’s most important is that every night when you go to bed, you close your eyes and “go to your happy place.” Create a powerfully positive image in your mind, right before you drift off to sleep. Doing this allows you to sleep through the night. That same powerfully positive image allows you to wake up in the morning with an optimistic, faith-filled attitude with which you can conquer your day.

WHEN IT’S TIME TO FIND HELP

There are times when the exercises and homework assignments I’ve given you aren’t enough. Sometimes the brain junk is big enough that you’ll want to seek out help to address it. Counselors, therapists, coaches—they’re all great assets when you need to move forward in your life and don’t want to be hindered by brain junk. If you need help, get it.

If you can’t afford to hire someone to help you, if coaching is out of reach at the moment, then find someone else who’s in the same boat and coach each other honestly. Or think outside the box and make a coach an offer.

I’ve had people say, “Hey, I can’t afford to work with you one-on-one by phone every week, but what if I wanted to e-mail you with questions now and again? Or what if I wanted to call you once a month, or once every other month?” Many coaches and consultants like people who think outside the box and get creative. We’re here to help. Don’t be afraid to ask for help if you need it.

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Successful entrepreneurship requires more than just the right mindset. Your mindset, obviously, is tied to your brain. And your brain is part of your body. For your brain to work at optimum levels, you have to take care of your body. You also need a lot of energy to run a business, so taking good care of yourself is critical to your success.

Remember: You are your most valuable resource. Take care of yourself!

Sleep

Taking care of yourself starts with getting enough sleep. When you don't get enough sleep or enough *good* sleep, you can have memory problems, depression, and a weakened immune system (so you get sick more). If you think you can solve the problem by drinking more coffee, think again. Caffeine can't overcome a lack of good sleep.

How Much Sleep?

We're all wired a little differently in terms of how much sleep we need. Generally, seven to eight hours is good, but some people can get away with five, while others require ten. Determine what works best for you and stick with it.

Try to get up at the same time every morning. Sleeping in on weekends is a bad idea because it messes up your circadian rhythms—the built-in biological clock that determines all kinds of stuff about your body.

“**You are your most valuable resource. Take care of yourself!**”

I get up at the same time every day religiously, no matter what day it is. For the most part, in order to keep my hours regulated, I don't consume any caffeine past 5:00 p.m., and I don't eat after 7:00 p.m.; otherwise, I'll be up later than I intend and will ultimately pay the price by waking up later the next day. The only times when my schedule changes are when the seasons (and thus, the light/dark cycle) change or when I'm traveling.

Sleep Tips

Invest in a good quality mattress. Many people have a hard time sleeping because they have a poor mattress. My husband, Leo, and I tried all kinds of mattresses, researched the subject for months, and drove to Chicago to test some hard-to-find brands before choosing ours. In a mattress, you want support, comfort, and space, *and* if you sleep with someone else, you want to make sure you can't feel them moving around, which is a big source of sleep disruption.

Our mattress is my greatest creature comfort and something we really invested in. (Heck, if you're spending twenty-five to thirty percent of your

BRAIN JUNK

life in a bed, you *should* invest in it!) Whenever I travel, I can't wait to get home to my bed. Other than my niece and nephew, that bed is the one thing I miss most when Leo and I are away from home.

Don't take naps. Even though studies have shown that naps really don't harm your sleep cycle in general and *can* reduce stress and even improve productivity, I'm not a big fan of naps, even when I'm recovering from jet lag. I find that when I take a nap, I'm not as sleepy when it's time for me to go to bed. So I avoid naps whenever possible.

No alcohol before bed. Alcohol may make you feel relaxed and sleepy initially, but it can cause you to have fragmented sleep.

Make your bedroom restful. Your bedroom should be a place of peace and relaxation. It's hard to sleep well in a room that's cluttered and chaotic, so keep your bedroom tidy and clean. Make your bedroom a sanctuary that's all about peace and quiet.

Some people suggest adding blackout shades to your windows, but I find them confusing. I hate waking up in a blackened room and not being able to tell what time it is. I wake up with the sunlight, and that helps me to feel refreshed. You might find that blackout shades work well for you. Experiment and find out what works best.

Most articles on sleep tell you not to watch TV or read in bed. I think that's a bunch of hokey. Leo and I don't watch shows that are too brain-stimulating, but we love watching TV in bed at night. Also, I love reading in bed and find it enormously relaxing. So do what works best for you here as well.

Cool down your bedroom. Studies have shown that dropping your body temperature a little bit helps make you drowsy. That's one reason that taking a hot bath before bedtime helps you sleep better—it's not raising your body temperature that helps you sleep, but the drop in temperature *after* the bath that makes you sleepy. Similarly, a cooler bedroom will help you sleep better.

Exercise

In addition to being a great strategy to improve the quality of your sleep, exercise is important for all kinds of other things, too. Exercise is a great stress reliever and of course, it's good for your overall health. But did

you know that exercise can actually improve your mood, boost energy, and ward off things like stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression, certain types of cancer, arthritis, and falls? Exercise even helps your brain to work better by increasing certain chemicals that create new brain cells and form new connections that help you learn.

What's really interesting is that we now know that if you work in a sedentary job (one where you're sitting most of the time), you're at a higher risk for obesity, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and certain kinds of cancer. You'd think that stopping at the gym for an hour-long workout would mitigate that risk, but I've read several studies that indicate that it doesn't work that way.

Reading this research scared me enough that I started using a treadmill desk, which is a desk that fits over a treadmill. You can get pre-built treadmill desks (they're usually super expensive), or you can build your own (my husband built mine, and you can see photos of it on my blog at <http://susanbaroncini-moe.com>).

You'd be surprised at just how easy it is to get used to standing up while you work and walking while you work. Even walking at a slow pace is better than sitting down all the time. I've discovered that when I'm working on the treadmill desk, my energy stays constant throughout the day, and I'm far more productive than when I'm sitting at a traditional desk.

What's most important, though, is that you get some exercise in most days and that you *sweat*, even if you're doing yoga.

Nutrition

I'm not an expert in nutrition, but I do know that it's critical to feed your body and your brain the best foods possible so that you can operate at peak efficiency and have sustained, consistent energy throughout the day. That means it's time to evaluate your diet and what you consume. Do you live on junk food and fast food? Does everything in your diet come out of a box, a can, or some other kind of package?

Every nutritionist I've ever spoken to has said that the best diet is broad and varied and includes a large number of extremely colorful fresh foods. I try to stick to that as much as possible, but I've been known to

consume my fair share of chocolate and crispy snacks from time to time. Nobody's perfect.

Hydration is also extremely important. I start every day with a big glass of cold water and keep drinking water throughout my day.

Stress

Stress can wreak all kinds of havoc on your mind and body. It can keep you from being able to think clearly and can interfere with your ability to plan your business wisely. Stress can also cause health problems. These days everyone's talking about the "mind-body connection," and we now know that stress takes a physical toll on your body.

Stress comes from all kinds of places, but wherever your stress comes from, it's critical that you learn how to minimize what you can and manage the rest.

The best ways that I've found to help manage my stress are exercise (particularly yoga) and meditation. I wasn't a big believer in meditation at first, but once I started incorporating it into my daily routine, I discovered that I was able to quiet all the "noise" in my mind so that I could work much more effectively and find solutions to problems quickly.

In fact, I credit yoga and meditation with being one of my greatest assets when I was attempting to break the Guinness World Records® title for the world's longest uninterrupted live webcast. During this thirty-six-hour event, I coordinated thirty-four speakers on three continents, seven witnesses, an online event and a live in-person event with audio and video. Plus, I conducted seven interviews and did two presentations, three live question-and-answer sessions, and one live business makeover hour. I also emceed most of the event. *And* I planned the entire event in fifty-five days.

Two days before the event, two speakers and a witness pulled out of the event, plus a few presenters needed to move their times around. I was approving signage, programs, and sponsor logos, testing equipment, training presenters on the webcast technology.

Looking back, I was surprised that I was as calm as I was in the middle of what everyone else would have called a tornado of activity. Hosting *any* live event is stressful, but hosting an event with this many moving parts has the potential to be epically stressful.

But because I started each day with a yoga practice and meditation (even if it was just fifteen minutes long), my stress was minimized, allowing me to handle problems quickly and efficiently and move on to the next thing. I even managed to cook my husband dinner every night leading up to the event. (But don't give me sainthood yet—the poor man is lucky he's Spanish and Italian and can cook up a storm, because otherwise he'd starve while I'm writing this book!)

Experiment with exercise, yoga, and meditation, and find what works best for you. On the web site for this book ([http://BusinessInBlueJeans .com/book](http://BusinessInBlueJeans.com/book)), I've listed my favorite resources.

Time Management

One of the biggest challenges for any entrepreneur, especially the *micro-entrepreneur* (a term I coined to refer to entrepreneurs who are just starting out and/or run businesses with fewer than twenty employees), is finding enough time to get everything done.

Time is a *huge* factor for entrepreneurs. If you want to be successful, you need *time*. You need time to come up with ideas, figure out how to develop and launch them, and then implement your plans.

When you're first starting out, you may be doing most things yourself for awhile. So it's quite common to be overwhelmed. There are many ways to deal with the pressure, including hiring contractors to help you with specific tasks and/or projects (we'll get to that later in the book). The first way to minimize feeling overwhelmed is with good, sound time management.

Multi-tasking

I'm a big multi-tasker. I usually have about twenty tabs open in my Internet browser. I like to knit and watch TV at the same time. But when I'm working, I absolutely *don't* believe in multi-tasking.

Study after study has shown that when you multi-task, you won't do any of the tasks well. Because you've divided your attention among different things, you simply can't attend to any one of them with the care and quality that they require.

I'm not talking about things like doing the laundry while you're working. I tossed in a load of whites right before I sat down to write this chapter.

BRAIN JUNK

But you won't find me going back to put those clothes in the dryer (or even thinking about them, usually) until I'm done with this particular work period.

The kind of multi-tasking I'm talking about includes things like checking e-mail while you're writing a report or popping into social media while you're on the phone with a client.

If you're trying to do two or three or more tasks at a time, you just aren't giving the attention any one task requires to anything you're doing. At best, you're doing an average job at all of them.

I know a lot of people who say they love multi-tasking and who say they're really good at it. Research indicates otherwise, and the results I've seen from most of these people support the research.

Unplugging

Often, even if you're great at managing your time, other people who are unused to the entrepreneurial lifestyle believe that if you're not working a traditional nine-to-five job, you're available 24/7.

Plus, our culture has developed into a place where you have to be available all the time. Years ago, people would call you at home, and if you didn't answer, they'd call back another time. If they couldn't reach you for a couple of weeks, they'd send you a letter.

Then answering machines came into the picture, allowing people to leave messages for you so that you could call them back when you got home. Then mobile phones made it possible for people to reach you wherever you are, whether you're in a movie, driving the car, in the bathroom, or on a completely different continent.

The problem for entrepreneurs is that we need "unplugged time" to create and develop ideas. How much can you realistically accomplish when your phone is ringing or beeping when you get texts or e-mails, or when your laptop is chiming with every incoming e-mail?

When you stop working to answer the phone, send a text, or write an e-mail, it takes you some time to get your brain back into the groove of what you were doing before. If you are interrupted regularly, you're severely impacting your productivity.

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These days it's critical to unplug—turn off the Internet, shut down the computer (sometimes), and get away from the phone—so that you can truly focus on your ideas. This focus will allow you greater creativity and clarity. You do your best work when you can remain undisturbed for long periods of time. That's why you need to unplug!

So how do you unplug? When you're working, turn off the phone ringers—all of them. Disable alerts in your e-mail software, and make sure your mobile doesn't send you alerts for e-mails and texts. (I keep all of these alerts turned off at all times, which is why I'm probably the worst person to send a text message to.)

If you're really brave, just tell people that you're unplugging during a specific time period every day. But don't expect that to be easy. Friends and family members often call when it's convenient for them, even if it's during your working hours.

My sister, who's a dentist with a long commute, calls me when she's driving home from work. If I'm working though, I won't answer the phone because the ringers are turned off (sorry, Anne!). But because my relationship with my sister is a priority for me, I try to plan for times when I know she's driving home from work, so that I can take the time out to talk with her and enjoy the conversation without feeling pulled back to whatever I was working on when the phone rang.

In addition to those folks who don't understand what you do, you may discover that friends who do, in fact, “get it” may have a different concept of work ethic than you do. You may discover that other entrepreneurs make time for long lunches and phone calls that you can't or won't break away for. It's important to set boundaries with *everyone*, whether they understand it or not. If you don't give yourself uninterrupted time that you need to build your business, then you'll never have the focus you need.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is about putting all of your focus on the one thing you're doing right now. For example, if you're buttering your toast, just *butter your toast*. Don't talk to someone while you're doing it. Don't listen to the news or watch TV. Don't do what I used to do and try to read while you're buttering that toast (that was particularly difficult). Just *butter the toast*. Pay attention

to it. Think about how much butter you really need. Think about how close to the edges you can get. Really focus on what you're doing in the moment.

You might be wondering why I'm talking about buttering your toast in a book on business. Mindfulness takes practice, and it happens to be easiest to practice on boring, silly moments, like buttering your toast.

The first time I did the exercise of focusing on buttering my toast, I stood in my kitchen thinking, "This is quite possibly the dumbest exercise I've ever made myself do." Later I noticed that my toast was buttered perfectly. It was the tastiest toast I had ever eaten. Being mindful and focusing on the moment gives you the opportunity to do things exceptionally well.

There are loads of mindfulness exercises. I found the toast one and others in the book, *How to Train A Wild Elephant* by Jan Chosen Bays. Some other exercises she mentions are making sure you don't leave a trace of yourself all day long and spending the day doing everything with your opposite hand.

While they might seem silly, these exercises (and others) are quite helpful in terms of becoming more mindful of virtually every aspect of your life. You become more aware of how you show up in the world, and you become more aware of how you spend your time. Spend a few days with mindfulness exercises, and you'll become more thoughtful in the way you work so that you can do *better* work and be more productive.

Relationships

Relationships can have a *huge* impact on your ability to succeed. Without the encouragement of my husband, there's no way I'd be where I am today. It's his steadfast support and belief in me that keeps me going when I start to doubt myself.

When I told my husband I wanted to break a Guinness World Record, he didn't look at me like I was crazy. He said, "Go for it!"

And when I told him that the way it had to be done would cost over \$20,000 and that I planned to find sponsors to help me with the event, he said, "Go for it!"

I can't even begin to tell you what that's worth. If you have or can find that kind of support in your friends or family members, you have a huge advantage over everyone else.

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

If you don't have support from your friends or family members, I encourage you to find other entrepreneurs who can be supportive. You'll need a village to keep you on track and mindful of what you're working toward (more on that later).

Take stock of any toxic relationships and where they fit into your overall goals. Toxic relationships, arguments, and emotionally draining people easily can detract from you making real progress in your business.

Having said that, it's very important to me that you understand that I am not necessarily saying that you should cut people out of your life. While there may be some relationships that you do choose to end because of their destructive influence in your life, there are often ways to change the relationships you have to limit their damaging potential. If, for example, your marriage isn't working or isn't creating a supportive environment for you to start and/or grow your business, take a good, hard look at *why* things aren't working, and then take action to make things better.

YOUR WORK ETHIC

In 2007, Timothy Ferriss launched a book, *The 4-Hour Work Week: Escape 9-5, Live Anywhere, and Join the New Rich*, that changed the way many entrepreneurs thought about their businesses.

In his book, Ferriss talked about ways to structure your business so that you have employees and staff members who manage the day-to-day operations, while you manage from afar, checking in on your business at certain times and limiting your involvement to a mere four hours every week.

It's an amazing concept, and for those who had never heard of doing business in this way, it was transformative. For those of us who had been outsourcing for years, it was encouraging. However, as much as I enjoyed the book and the strategies Tim outlined, I realized three things.

First, seventy-five percent of small businesses have no employees. Most small businesses have a hard time making ends meet, much less finding the resources to hire employees so that the business owner can vacation on the Riviera or take pottery lessons in Crete (or whatever, you get my point). So for many entrepreneurs who spend well over a regular forty-hour work week

making their businesses run, the idea of a four-hour work week might be a difficult concept to even consider.

Second, most successful small businesses need the contributions of an invested owner, someone who cares deeply about the success or failure of the company. Talk to any company that offers franchises about what they've discovered is the single ingredient that determines whether their franchise owners will be a success or a failure, and they'll tell you immediately that that ingredient is the involvement of the business owner.

As a business owner, you can't show that you care deeply about your business if you're only there four hours a week. In small businesses, especially those where there is interaction with the owner, if you're not there, your employees are likely to become less committed and less invested in their jobs and in contributing to the success of the company.

In the early days of my career, I consulted with magazine publishing companies to help them take their printed content from magazines and turn it into digital content they could sell online. One of these magazine publishing companies was a small business with fewer than one hundred employees, and pretty much every employee had, at one time or another, met the owner.

He'd come in, walk around, ask an employee what he or she was doing, have a meeting or two with his vice president and some managers, and then he'd leave, flying out to St. Barts or someplace. Every so often, he'd lead a meeting to tell the employees what was going on in the company, and inevitably, he'd talk about his new boat or a new vacation home.

Following encounters with the owner of the company, employees often wondered why they were working so hard when their leader barely did a thing. The perception of the employees was that they were working tirelessly to make the company a success so that the owner could go lie on a beach somewhere. And while yes, that's their job, and yes, they're getting paid to work, the message that your employees are minions who work so that you don't have to work is *not* the message you want to send to your employees.

Third, I knew that those of us who work with entrepreneurs were going to face a challenge in terms of *sweat equity*, or the time and energy that our clients were willing to put into the beginnings of their companies.

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

The concept of a four-hour work week is not necessarily appropriate for startups, unless you're a startup with money to burn. Most startups begin with the investment of the sweat equity of the owner. That's when *you* work hard and put in the time, the energy, and the hours to grow your business to success. As your business grows, you take on employees or outsource to contractors when there are too many tasks for you to handle or when you can afford to delegate the work that you're not the best at or that you don't enjoy. But it's not something that most businesses do from the start.

If you are in a business that's in growth, then implementing the ideas from Tim's book can make your company run more efficiently and make your life more enjoyable. But always remember that businesses run better when the person who cares the most about the success or failure of the company is present and participatory.

In a more general sense, remember that your work ethic does matter. Good, sound business requires diligence, determination, perseverance, dedication, and patience.

YOUR MONEY MINDSET

Your money mindset is the way you're programmed to think about money—what you're capable of earning, what your skills and talents are worth, how you spend money, how you invest it, how you fear having it and losing it.

We're all programmed from the start to think about money in a certain way. If you grew up without money, it can be difficult to envision yourself as a prosperous person. But it goes beyond just whether you had money or didn't when you were growing up. Your money mindset is determined by how your parents thought about money and how they spent it, plus the experiences you've had as an adult.

For example, I grew up comfortably. I don't remember anyone ever worrying about not being able to put food on the table, and my sister and I went to good schools and always had nice clothes to wear. But my impression looking back is that we lived a little outside our means. I know that my parents invested and did *some* financial planning, but I remember my

BRAIN JUNK

mom sitting at the dining room table writing out bills and paying credit card bills and fretting about family finances.

I also know that my grandparents were deeply affected by the Great Depression, my grandmother in particular, and as a result, always scrimped and saved every penny for the rest of their lives. I'm pretty sure that my grandparents' fears and worries had a big impact on my mom and her ideas about money, and ultimately, affected me and my ideas about money, too.

So while my family was indeed comfortable and our basic needs were more than met, I also grew up with a strong fear of money and never having enough of it. As a result, when I went through my own financial struggles during a rough patch in the early years of my business, I experienced anxiety attacks and found myself obsessed with trying to find a way out of the problems.

Over the years, I've had many clients who have had all kinds of brain junk attached to their money mindsets. I've worked with clients who were reluctant to invest in their businesses, clients who didn't know how to manage their finances, and clients who were raised with the idea that they could only reach a certain financial level and couldn't surpass that.

Whatever your money mindset is, it will have a huge impact on your level of success. If you're operating out of a place of fear or lack, you'll make decisions that are based in fear and lack. Decisions made from this mindset are almost always bad decisions because they're almost always short-term decisions made to avoid something (usually the pain of fear or anxiety) in the immediate without regard for the long-term consequences.

When you make decisions from a place of strength and courage, your decisions are made with a calm mind and a peaceful heart. You can think more clearly, and you can take into account both the short-term and long-term benefits and consequences with a wider perspective.

So how do you get from having a "lack mindset" to having an "abundance mindset?" I'm going to give it to you straight: It isn't easy.

The first step is to determine where the lack mindset comes from. Are you *really* short on money, or do you just fear being without it?

If you really are short on money, take a good, hard, honest look at your financial situation. Many of my clients have found that simple, smart budgeting has made a world of difference between feeling lack and feeling

BUSINESS in BLUE JEANS

abundance. There are some wonderful resources for learning how to assess your financial situation and start a budget on the web site for this book (<http://BusinessInBlueJeans.com/book>).

Sometimes budgeting isn't enough to address your financial concerns because your sense of lack really does come from not having enough money to cover all of your expenses, even with a really good budget, even if you cut your expenses to the bare bones. In that case, it might be time to consider a job that can cover your expenses while you're starting and growing your business.

That's hard for a lot of people to hear, but some of my most successful clients took part-time jobs to make ends meet while they got their businesses up and running.

When you're in a part-time job that you don't really want because you're trying to make your entrepreneurial dreams come true, there are three things that can keep you going:

1. The knowledge that this job is giving you the resources you need to make what you *really* want possible.
2. The gratitude that you have a job that does provide the resources you need to make your dreams come true.
3. The realization that this is what you *don't* want.

Let me explain that third point a little bit. One of my clients works in a job that she despises. But by the time this book is published, however, she won't be working at that company anymore, and the reason for that is that being faced every day with something she doesn't want is as powerful as going home each evening to the thing she really *does* want.

Sometimes the thing you don't want is as powerful a motivator as the thing you do want.

That's why not having enough money can sometimes be an extraordinary motivator to keep you on track and working to achieve your goals. When you have enough money to keep you satisfied, sometimes it's easy to let a day or two pass without making progress in your business plan, because there's nothing prodding you ahead.

BRAIN JUNK

However, if you're going to take a job while you're building your business, make sure that you get really clear on your *fire* so that you know exactly what you're working toward so that you can think of it every day that you get up and go to that job.

Speaking of fire...

"This is the best little 'how-to' book for starting and running a small business I've come across. Don't even think about going into business without it. And if you are already in business, this book is a must-read."

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"*Business in Blue Jeans* is both a practical and powerful read for those looking to create the life they were meant to lead."

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– **John Jantsch**, author of *Duct Tape Marketing* and *The Commitment Engine*

