

Do What You Do Best, and Ask for Help

A practical guide to building a stronger business by staying in your lane and leaning on the right people



PAY IT FORWARD
with
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There's a lesson I've watched play out over and over in my work, and I wish more business owners took it to heart sooner:

You cannot be awesome at everything, and you were never meant to be.

When I decided to go into business for myself in bookkeeping, part of the draw was practical. I saw a real chance to build a good source of income and support the kind of life I wanted for my family. But the thing that pulled me in even more was the people. Most of my clients are in the service industry. They're plumbers, carpenters, craftsmen, some of the best you will ever meet at what they do. And the more of them I worked with, the more I saw the same thing playing out. Their craft was never the problem. Their business was.

I'd sit down with a carpenter who could build anything, and yet the business around that talent was struggling. They didn't know what their profit and loss looked like. They didn't understand the numbers, the insurance, the machinery that keeps a company running. Not because they weren't smart, but because no one had ever helped them with it.

This guide is about that gap, and about the mindset shift that closes it.

Why We Resist Asking for Help

When I talked with these guys on a more personal level, just trying to understand what was really going on, the reason came out fast.

Somewhere along the way, we've all absorbed the idea that running a business means being the leader who does everything alone. That taking charge means handling all of it yourself. And that asking for help is a weakness, something to be ashamed of. For whatever reason, the world almost shames you for it.

"BEING A LEADER DOESN'T MEAN DOING EVERY JOB. IT MEANS KNOWING WHICH JOBS ARE YOURS AND HAVING THE SENSE TO BRING IN THE RIGHT PEOPLE FOR THE REST."

Stay in Your Lane

Here is how I think about it. If you're a great carpenter, go build the house. That's your gift, and the world needs it. That is where your time and energy create the most value.

But you don't have to be the one running payroll. You don't have to be the one pulling the profit and loss. And you almost certainly don't have to be the one figuring out insurance, because insurance is its own difficult world.

The point isn't that these things don't matter. They matter enormously. The point is that they don't have to be done by you. When you try to be the carpenter, the bookkeeper, the payroll manager, and the insurance expert all at once, every one of those jobs suffers, including the one you're actually great at.

A Real Example: The Insurance Trap

Insurance is one of the clearest examples I can give of how a blind spot outside your lane turns into an expensive surprise.

Real example: The insurance audit surprise

A contractor signs a workman's comp policy expecting to pay around \$100,000 for the year, based on a couple of employees. That feels fine. They move on and get to work. Then a year later, the audit shows up. It turns out that over the course of the year they subcontracted three hundred thousand dollars of work, often to people who didn't carry their own coverage. Suddenly that premium has quadrupled.

Nobody warned them it worked that way. That is not a knowledge failure on their part. It's simply outside their lane, and there was no one in the room whose lane it was.

That single example is the whole argument for surrounding yourself with people who see what you can't.

Surround Yourself With People Who've Been There

My advice comes down to this. When you step outside your lane, find people who have the knowledge you don't. Surround yourself with someone who is already standing where you want to be.

Watch how they operate. Follow the steps they've already proven out. Then put your own touch on it. You're not copying them wholesale. You're borrowing a path that works and making it yours. They've been there and done that, and there's no reason to relearn every lesson the hard way.

And don't hesitate to ask for advice. That's the biggest thing. Reaching out for help is a strength, not a weakness.

Step by Step: How to Put This Into Practice

01 Get honest about your actual lane

Name the one or two things you do better than almost anyone. That is where your time belongs.

02 List everything else your business runs on

Payroll, bookkeeping, profit and loss, insurance, taxes, scheduling, collections. Write it all down.

03 Circle what falls outside your lane

Be honest about the tasks you dread, rush through, or quietly avoid.

04 Rank them by cost

Which of these blind spots could cost you the most in money, time, or peace of mind if it goes wrong? Insurance and the books are common ones.

05 Find the specialist

Look for someone who lives in that world the way we live in insurance, and who is already where you want to be.

06 Ask, then follow

Bring them your questions. Follow the path they lay out, and adapt it to fit your business.

Pitfalls to avoid

Treating "asking for help" as a confession of weakness

It's the opposite. It's how strong operators stay strong.

Waiting until something breaks

The insurance audit is a perfect example. The time to bring in help is before the surprise arrives, not after.

Hiring the first person you find

Look specifically for people who have been where you're trying to go, not just anyone with a title.

Handing something off and disappearing

You still put your own touch on it. Follow their proven steps, but stay involved enough to understand your own business.

Trying to master everything yourself to save money

The blind spots that come from stretching too thin usually cost far more than the help would have.

General guidance: When you're evaluating a specialist, a few plain questions go a long way. Ask them to walk you through a problem like yours that they've already solved. Ask what usually goes wrong for people in your situation and how they catch it early. The right person will explain things in a way that makes sense to you, not in a way that keeps you dependent and in the dark.

"YOU CANNOT BE AWESOME AT EVERYTHING, AND YOU WERE NEVER MEANT TO BE."

How to apply this in the next 7 days

Exercise

- DAY 1** Write down the one or two things you do better than almost anyone. That's your lane.
- DAY 2** List every other task your business depends on to run.
- DAY 3** Circle the tasks that fall outside your lane, especially the ones you dread or avoid.
- DAY 4** Pick the single one that could cost you the most if it goes wrong.
- DAY 5** Identify one person or firm that specializes in that area and is where you'd like to be.
- DAY 6** Reach out and ask them one real question about your situation.
- DAY 7** Decide what to hand off and what path to follow, then take the first step to put your own touch on it.

Summary - At a glance

- *You cannot be awesome at everything, and you were never meant to be.*
- *Great craftsmen often struggle in business, not because of their craft, but because of everything around it.*
- *Asking for help is a strength, not a weakness, no matter what the world tells you.*
- *Stay in your lane and do what you do best.*
- *For everything else, surround yourself with people who've been there and done that.*
- *Blind spots outside your lane, like insurance, can quietly become very expensive.*
- *If you have a true passion for your work and a genuine calling to take care of your customers, the rest tends to fall into place.*