



# Dream of Travel Writing

## Freelance Business Systems: Getting Your Business GED on with Governance, Executive Functions, and (Strategic) Direction

Today, we are wrapping up our Freelance Business Systems webinar series with "Getting Your Business GED on with Governance, Executive Functions and (Strategic) Direction." So this last webinar is interesting in a lot of ways because as we've gone through the series, we have looked at some different areas of your business in different departments, if you will, and how to manage them. And yet here we are at the very, very end talking about strategic direction and management in a lot of ways in terms of the executive functions.

And what always strikes me as kind of interesting about that and when I was thinking about how to put this webinars series together is that if I were to just start at the beginning with setting strategic direction and managing your business and all of that, you would have a very different view of it than if we had not already talked about all of these different departments that go into your business, all these different facets of your business that you may or may not be working on right now, but that are important functions, crucial functions, you know, un-ignorable functions, even if we often try, to running a successful functioning business.

And so as we talk about this idea of governance, executive function, strategic direction, we're gonna look at a couple of different things. So I kind of named this webinar or the GED to be the acronym for those three things, but also for another reasons. We're gonna talk about this idea of what is an MBA today really and what do people with an MBA have that other people who are running a business don't, and does it matter? And then we're gonna look at what do we mean by these three different terms and also why I've grouped them all together.

And then another thing I wanna look at is rather than as we've done in the past webinars taking a lot of examples about different aspects of your business that you might wanna look at or apply to. You know, I know in the technology one and the IT one, we talked about some different apps that might be useful. We talked about some different areas, looked at apps. In accounting, we looked at some different categories that you should be measuring, things like that.

So rather than doing that, I wanna give you today some kind of more framework type, high level approaches to these different things, executive function, strategic direction, and management. And I wanna do that because you can apply them however you see fit, but there are things that for, in the case of couple of them, more than 50 or 60 years have been used by all people running all companies and everyone going through an MBA and they are some frameworks or systems, if you will, of looking at these different things that are very, very simple, not simplified but very, very simple. So they're very easy to implement.

And I want or I'd love at the end of this webinar for you to kind of go out having an idea not just about what these things, strategic direction and governance and executive functions, mean in a business or in a business like yours, but also from the perspective of how you implement it without me having to, you know, look specifically at each of your goals and without you having to feel like the system doesn't work if your goal changes. Because for a lot of things around small business, I find that they get really into goals, like they get really into goal-setting and how to make sure your goals happen and all these things. But I find that



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there's not always a real-world appropriate amount of what to do if things happen to not make those goals happen.

And I have a lot of conversations where I see a lot of emails go by with people who are like, "Oh, you know, I was planning to get my book out this year. Oh, I was planning to pitch my first article pitch this year. Oh, I was gonna leave my job to travel write full time this year. I was gonna take this trip this year. I was gonna do that. I was going to that." And then, there's always the "and then," you know, a personal thing, a personal thing with my family, a health thing, like a physical accident, something financial, something, you know, financial involving a loved one, etc. and so on and so forth. And so there's a lot of things that come up.

And what I really like about the idea of these frameworks, particularly in this vein of what your executive function should be to bring to bear the strategic direction for your business and how you can "govern," and we'll talk about what that means, to make sure that that happens and that you're honoring your mission and strategic direction. I wanna give you these frameworks because I want these things to feel resilient. I want everything that we're talking about in this webinar series really to feel resilient.

Even though some are the departments that we've looked at may feel more like they are a long list of tasks that you need to add to your plate, we've always talked about how to handle those and how to scope that down at the end of all the webinars like this. This webinar that we're gonna do right now is something that should be with you every day, both managing yourself and staying on track with the strategic direction of your business and being accountable for that are simply the most fundamental drivers of having a business that feels successful to you, to whatever your measure of success is.

So before we get into talking about our GED topics for the day, I want you to just take a second to look at how we got here. So like I said in the intro, we are covering sort of the top of your business now, the "executive," you know, the CEO, the top chair, top seat, what have you. But we went through a lot of other things to get here. We went through finance, accounting, purchasing, all those money-oriented things. We looked at how the work gets done, we looked at operations and quality control. So for all of those perfectionists out there, quality control is when you should check out to see how that actually gets sent in a business where they have to make that tradeoff between perfection and the bottom line, right?

We looked at sort of those more internal things, HR, legal and IT. We looked at how you communicate with your customers, whether that's customers you already have or future customers with sales, marketing, PR and customer service. And now we're looking sort of at a different side and the operations level with admin, research, development and governance and strategy. These are the things that help your business not only get the work done but also move forward.

So in the last webinar on research and development, we looked a lot about this thing of thinking about where your business might go next and running some feasibility looks around that. For us as travel writers, it might mean learning a new skill, like maybe you're a writer



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and you don't shoot photos and now a lot of the magazines want photos as well. And is that something that you're gonna take the time to learn? What's the physical investment? What kind of time investment is at? Is this something that interests you? That would go in that R&D category, right?

So as we go this week into governance and strategy, we've looked at all of these areas of your business, which whether you think about it or not, you're doing, right. HR is whenever you think about doing something self-care to help you to get your work done, right, whether that's getting a coffee machine for your home office or even setting up a home office, right? I've talked to a number of folks during our coaching summer camp in the last week about their home office that they already have or that they're planning to set up and what that's gonna look like to enable their business.

So as we look at governance and strategy, it's really important to remember that we have to touch on all these things because when we're just one person, and we're a solopreneur, especially for a solo service provider like a writer who might not have a lot of other external admin support like bookkeepers or admins or like bloggers might have somebody who do their Pinterest. But if you're more of a freelance writer, you might not have so much support. So when there's just the one of you, it can be very easy to feel like you're just doing whatever you're doing that day. You're doing whatever's on the list and not that you're actually these 15-plus people that we see here. Because that's one of the things that we covered in the very beginning of this series is that when you took on this company that you have as a freelancer now, you signed the job descriptions for all of these different roles.

So today, as we look at this idea of the GED, Governance, Executive Function, and Strategic Direction, I just wanted to frame it in terms of what we've covered and how this sets you up as a business owner going forward. There's things that I covered that are gonna speak to you differently at different points in terms of where you are with your freelance career. It's definitely the kind of series where you gonna watch it a year or two years from now and see a whole other side to some of the webinars which are really geared towards a different level than where you are now.

But if you've just gone through these, and particularly this one we're gonna do today, you have what I like to call sort of jokingly that many people call jokingly who have them, a "good enough diploma," right? So I know somebody who is a theoretical computer scientist who got his PhD from Berkeley and now teaches at Georgia Tech and all this stuff. And even he has a good enough diploma that he got before he went to college because he was doing other things when he was in high school. So a good enough diploma can take you very, very far. Okay.

And what we're gonna talk about in terms of these GED things, particularly with management and strategic direction, these are foundational things that they will teach in business schools all around the country. They will teach in companies where many people rise into leadership positions and didn't go to business school. But I wanted to look at this



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idea of managing your company, whether it's sort of from that executive strategic level or more that management level.

Because when we think about an MBA, a master's in business administration, in a lot of sectors of the job market, it's kind of taken for granted. You have to have an MBA to do X, you have to have an MBA to do Y. But if you haven't done one, it's very not clear what exactly you learn about in an MBA. It is a lot of numbers. It's a lot of what we're looking at in this series and it's also a lot of case studies.

The Harvard Business School is very famous for case studies where it looks at real-world things that have happened to real-world companies and talks about them, talks about what people would do in those situations. It's a lot of learning by like "fake" doing if you ask me. So the thing that makes an MBA different, in most cases people will tell you, it's not what they learned because they could learn a lot of those things out in the job market, but it's often that people they meet in doing those case studies. So what I really like about these frameworks that we're gonna look at today are that there are frameworks that you can put on a lot of different situations that you find yourself in and you can create your own case studies to work through. You can create your own situations that have or haven't come up and think about them yourself.

Because one of the things about an MBA today is also people are getting it later. And then also in a lot of situations people who would otherwise get them aren't because they work in digital marketing or social media management or some area where the landscape changes so fast that if they went to get an MBA in order to further their career and become a director of marketing or vice president of marketing or whatever, they would be out of the landscape of what's happening for so long that they would fall behind.

So for us as freelance writers, you know, you can kind of say jokingly, "Well, I'm a writer, why would I ever need an MBA?" But you do, to run your business, need at least a good enough diploma in freelancing, which is what we've been working through in this series. And even people who usually would get MBAs aren't getting them today, so don't feel bad, not that you would. Now as we get into talking about this concept of strategic direction and management and everything, I couldn't help but think of this "Alice in Wonderland" quote.

Now, there's a lot of variations about this. There's one that's kind of ship sailing-related that I really like and I can never find when we do webinars. But there's this idea of if you don't know where you're gonna go, will you end up anywhere? Does it matter if you get there or is it just that you're wandering around through life? Right? So in the "Alice in Wonderland" quote, Alice says, "Would you tell me, please, which way I have to go from here?" And the Cheshire cat says, "Well that depends a good deal on where you want to go." And Alice says, "I don't care much." Then the Cheshire cat says, "hen it doesn't matter which way you go." But Alice finishes, "So long as I get somewhere." And then the Cheshire cat says, "Oh, well, you're sure to do that if only you walk long enough."



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And I think that the bottom part of this quote is often left out. I think this is really important for us as freelancers because I think that that bottom bit, "You're sure to get somewhere if you only walk long enough," is what happens to a lot of people. All right? But I have this conversation way back at the top Cheshire cat line here that, "It depends a good deal on where you want to go," which way you want to go with a lot of people. And something that seems so unbelievable, and we're gonna look at it in some of the upcoming slides in the series, but something that seems so unbelievable is that the businesses that really excel, whether we're talking here about freelancers or larger businesses or corporations or what have you tend to be the ones that are excruciatingly focused on what they're gonna do.

And I know as individual service providers that can feel really boring, like we don't wanna write about the same thing every day. We don't wanna write for the same clients every day. We don't wanna do the same kind of work. But that's fine because that's not your goal, right? But it's about figuring out what your goal is. And I mean that in a larger way. I don't just mean one goal, but where you wanna go rather, and heading in that direction, checking in when you get off course from that direction, and taking active steps to course correct.

When we think about this idea of the governing body of our organization, and we try to think about it as something larger than us, who do you speak to about what's going on with your business? I know a lot of people have mentioned to me lately that they have either their best friend or their partner or their mother or some other family member who they talk to regularly that they kind of hash out when there's something that's bopping around in their head that they wanna make a decision about, right? So if governing body is a weird term for you, it can be useful to think of it instead as a board of advisors. Who are the people that you go to when you need some more information about something, when you need somebody to hear you out, when you're looking for a bit of perspective on something?

Now, in a more formal, governance also includes the mechanisms where it's required to balance the powers of the members with the associated accountability and their primary duty of enhancing the prosperity and the viability of the organization. Now this sounds way more formal, right? So when we think of this idea of governance, this typically applies to something like a board of directors. And in a board of directors meeting, I've been on several, depending on how much the board is involved in sort of the day-to-day operations of things, there's going to be a lot of this monitoring when they come in. So there's some boards, especially for corporations, where the board members are intentionally people who have grown a different business to a certain size and then they're invited to be on the board of this corporation of a business which produces something.

And so at the board meetings or before the board meetings, they spend a lot of time looking over the numbers of how the company is doing and asking very pointed questions about, "Well, why is this happening? Why is that happening? Like, I see that this was spent on this, did we actually get anything from it?" And it can be quite sort of grueling and intimidating, but that's the job of the board. And so when you think about this for yourself as a freelance writer, I'm sure for most people, the first reflex is like, whoa. Like, you know, I work for myself to not have that. But I will tell you that if it sounds kind of like vomity at this



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moment, it's something that I just want you to keep in mind because there's a lot of times where you can feel with your business that it's off track in some way, shape, or form.

And if you could only speak to somebody who could look at it with a similar or even more advanced knowledge-base than you from a place that was separate and slightly elevated, like they had a bird's eye view of something, than where you're looking at it, the answer might be very clearly there in the facts. So I know a number, for instance, of online business owners who have different content-driven businesses who have spouses who do not work for their company, but at some point during the year, they sit down with their spouse and they go through the different numbers of what's going on for their company and have that spouse do that sort of balance of power, accountability, continuous monitoring thing over the financials of the business. So this is like not for somebody who has a lot of employees or a CFO, but somebody who's, you know, their own one-author band or something.

I know people who have parents or other family members who are very business-minded that they might do it with those people. But the idea is that there will come a point for you with your business where the need to identify those areas that are holding you back will outweigh any sort of potential icky feeling that you may have around sharing that information in a very transparent and blunt way with another individual who's gonna give you feedback that might be strong, but it's gonna have your best interest at heart. So I'm not gonna talk too much more on this call about the idea of governance because I feel like it's something that A, a lot of folks aren't necessarily ready to introduce into their freelance business for a lot of reasons. And some of it might be that you don't have the data or that your freelance business is new. But I wanted to introduce that idea and make sure that we covered it because it is a really fundamental part of most businesses.

So what do we mean by executive functions? So this is like a very dictionary, blatant removed from the business school or general business setting definition that I have contrasted with one from somebody named Peter Drucker who we're gonna look at some sort of maxims of his later on in this webinar as well. But I wanted to contrast these two definitions because I feel like they're both very fundamental in terms of describing what an executive is, but some might speak more to one person than another. And, of course, the idea here is that I want you all to feel that you are an executive if you don't feel it yet.

So dictionary.com says an executive is a person or group of persons having administrative or supervisory authority in an organization. So of course, we are not gonna feel like, as solopreneurs, we are an organization and yet, your organization puts things out, you know, messaging on the website, you put out products to the people who pay you for your words. So you are in fact an organized entity and hence an organization. So administrative or supervisory authority, we talked a lot in one of the other webinars, but this idea of administration and why it's very sticky and people have a lot of associations with it. But I feel like this idea of supervisory can be just as difficult.

So I find that it's difficult to talk in a freelance solopreneur setting about this idea of supervisor because one thing that happens is that when people leave their jobs, they can feel



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like they've basically just replaced their old boss with their clients and their clients are kind of supervising them and telling them what to do in that way. But in your freelance business, the only person supervising you, unless you have like a nanny cam for your spouse or something, the only person supervising you is you. You're the only one who knows what you're spending your time on, if it's being spent effectively, who decides what your time is gonna be spent on, who directs your activities. You are the supervisor, but you're supervising yourself, which makes it very difficult, right?

But Peter Drucker has this really cool sort of lengthy...I actually took a paragraph out of the middle, but this cool way of looking at executives I feel like might resonate in a more modern sense. And it's interesting because he talks about this idea of knowledge workers, which we think of as a very sort of computer-era word. But this book was written in 1967 actually. And he's really attributed with growing a lot of the capabilities of modern businesses, in fact, through a lot of his research and terminology and things like that. So here's what he has to say, and there's a typo here and I apologize for that but, "I have called executives, those knowledge workers, managers or individual professionals who are expected by virtue of their position or their knowledge to make decisions in the normal course of their work that have an impact on the performance and the results of the whole. The most subordinate, we now know, may do the same kind of work as the president of the company or the administrator of the government agency that is plan, organize, integrate, motivate, and measure. His compass may be quite limited, but within his sphere, he is an executive."

So what I really love about this definition, aside from Peter Drucker who has a cool way of looking at the world, is this idea that if you make a decision that has an impact on the performance and results of the whole. And I actually feel like we looked in the very, very, very first webinar in this series about these three different types of entrepreneur, right? We looked at the technician and the manager and the visionary, and I know they have a different word for visionary, but the technician is the one that's doing the work, the manager is the one that likes to keep things organized, and the visionary is the big picture person, right?

And a lot of folks spend a lot of time in one area or the other, but the technician, I find to be often the culprit because if you spend too much time managing or too much time in the visionary way, you're never gonna get any words out and you're never getting paid for your words, and you're never gonna be able to be a full time freelancer in the first place. But when you quit your job and become a full-time freelancer, then you get into this mode of, "I have to write the words to earn the money." Like, you have to write the words to earn the money.

This is like, every morning, I know people who it's the best time of day for them, but what they do first and foremost in the morning is the work that they hate. Like content marketing work that they pick up on super random topics that might not even be related to travel, they do that first thing in the morning because they wanna get it done. They wanna know that they earned their money for the day before they can move on to do other things. And that's this technician, right?



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But when you're doing that work, you can often get kind of divorced from this concept of making decisions in the normal course of work that have an impact on the performance and the results of the whole. So I like this way of looking at it because I feel like those moments when you're being more of a writer, more of a technician, having this mindset of what an executive is can help remind you that you are steering the ship as well as currently being the one...I'm gonna make a sailing analogy that's like, you know, swabbing the deck or, you know, running up the main sail or whatever that is.

Okay. So let's take a quick look at strategic direction before we dive into some of these exercises. So I picked, again, two definitions here, one which is more simplistic and one which is larger. So strategic direction is a course of action that leads to the achievement of the goals of an organization's strategy, right? So we wanna piece this out. So a strategy is like the path you're on, you know, where are you going, something like that. And the goals are the milestones, okay. So if you're driving down 95, you know the goal might be that you're trying to drive from Maine to Florida, okay? And there might be like sort of sub-goals, which are different places that you need to drive through on the way. But the strategy is that you are exploring America through road trips, okay? Or that you're trying to see America at the ground up from the communities that make it up, okay?

So I'll give some more examples later on, but I wanna make sure that we keep these things separate because it can be really easy, like I said earlier, to get goal-oriented in a way that neglects what your strategy is, what your approach to moving in the direction you want to be and to moving through the world is, okay? So here's another crack at this, which is a little more lengthy. Strategic direction refers to the actions taken to achieve the goals of an organized relational strategy. Some companies use a vision statement or a mission statement to define where the organization wants to be, but in short, the statement is a way for the organization to set the direction that the organization wants to go and define what it wants to be in the future. Strategic direction includes the plans and actions that need to be put in place to work toward the vision of the future of the organization.

When defining a strategic direction that includes a 360 corporate vision, every single area of the organization must be analyzed, including all processes in order to gain the maximum value. So I like this a lot because of how it weaves in at the end the idea that your strategic direction needs to be cohesive and coherent and, to use the business term, synergistic with what you're doing in all parts of your business, right? So if one of your goals, if a driving principle for you is independence and freedom and you have a client who, you know, requires you to invoice in this super specific way on this super specific schedule that you often can't do because you don't even have internet at the time and so on and so forth, that's not gonna be in line with your vision and your values and the direction that you wanna be going in, which is creating freedom for yourself and your life through your company, right?

So that accounting practice is something that, if not appropriately visited, is gonna become this thorn in the side of where your company is going, okay? And I think it's also interesting in this definition, how they talked about the action taken to achieve the goals is also the strategic direction. Because the same way that when we talk about writing magazine articles,





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you know that there's a lot of details out there in the world and the ones that you choose to include are gonna be the ones that specifically fit the angle that you're going for in this piece or the why of this piece. It's the same thing that the steps that you take to achieve the goals themselves should also be, you know, of the strategic direction.

So I wanted to look at three different frameworks before we close out today of this idea of strategic direction, executive function, and particularly management because self-management in many, many ways is much more difficult than managing others. And Peter Drucker, who I mentioned earlier, also has a whole book on managing oneself, which is not very long. I think it's like 76 pages or something, but it is very much not what you think and very interesting. It's really focused around your strengths and that's one of the things that gave rise to all these strength finders and all these different personality assessments and everything we have today.

But I wanted to start with this idea of Patrick Lencioni's "Four Obsessions of the Extraordinary Executive." So this book I really recommend and it really doesn't take that long to read and it's relatively engrossing. That sounds weird for a business book, right? Patrick Lencioni writes business fables. Okay. So they are entirely narrative works that seek to outline something that is going on in a business setting, okay?

So these entirely narrative works basically take a fictional setting and one of the other ones we're gonna look at and does this as well, but I think Patrick Lencioni is kind of the master of it a lot of ways. So in this setting in which he introduces the four obsessions of the extraordinary executive, he talks about this guy, I think his name is Greene, how Greene is really jealous of his rival company. His rival company always seems to do better than him. He hires all these consultants to figure out why. He can't figure out what it is, okay?

Then his rival, and he went to the same business school, but Greene really stood out when he was there, and his rival really didn't make a big impression. They both left and they both started these consulting firms and his rival was just working a thousand hours and never seeing his family, he was missing baseball games, and he sat down and he took this yellow legal pad sheet and he asked himself, what are the things that I have to do? What are the things that I do that really matter to the firm? It's a consulting firm, okay?

And he wrote that those four things and he taped it to his desk and he changed his whole schedule to do only those four things. And his company thrived. It was a darling of the media. All their customers love them even when something went wrong. And Greene was just always obsessed with figuring out what was it that they did. And it turned out that there was a new hire that went into the company who the CEO had finally taken a vacation and he did not interview this person personally, which was part of the things that are on his yellow sheet, and he did not do company orientation with this person and this person was not a fit for the company in terms of the sort of soft culture personality things and he ended up...

This new hire, he was in an HR role. He ended up torpedoing the whole company by making the culture uncomfortable, by introducing some feedback in the executive team meeting that



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made it look like the CEO was skeptical and not trusting everyone else on his team to the point where the CEO of this successful company lost his head of marketing and his company was just starting to go down the tube because of all of these changes that this bad hire introduced. And so he let go of the bad hire, then got back on track, and the bad hire went back to Greene who was jealous of this other company and said, "Well, this is what he does. This is what the other guy does. I mean it works. It clearly works. It wasn't a fit for me." And Greene's company, he let it go down the tube and he started a new company using this framework that then itself was successful and his rival was a great mentor of his going forward. So it's very fable-y, okay?

And the things that you see here on the screen, these are the different disciplines that he has on his yellow sheet. So build and maintain a cohesive leadership team. It's an interesting thing to introduce into this concept where we're talking about us as, you know, solopreneurs and freelance writers to think about this idea of a leadership team, but it means that in all of the crucial leadership roles in your business, so some of that is gonna be finance. I hate to say it, taxes, my God, such a thing, right? So finance, for sure marketing, for sure sales.

What are the other most crucial things in your business? You need to have like a portion of your day, week, life personality that is a very trustworthy leader in that role. And when you're trying to bat out a decision and balance that against different values or different goals or different outcomes, you need to be able to trust that all of these different areas have your best interest at heart. So let's say, for instance, that your financial arm is not very strong. Let's say that your personal sort of voice in your head when you think about financial stuff is always coming from this place of scarcity of, you know, are we gonna have enough, of not running the reports and not planning ahead and sort of getting stuck when the numbers don't add up. Okay? That voice, that stance is not gonna help you when you need to make a strong decision.

So the second point is create organizational clarity. This is around values and mission and strategy and then over-communicate clarity. So this means having on your desk, having a thing in the morning where you walk yourself through your goals and what you're gonna do to get there. And then reinforcing clarity through human systems. So in the book, for instance, and it's something where they have the annual meeting and they decide on what is gonna happen for the year ahead. And then each of the departments heads talks about how they're gonna bring that information back to their team and how they're gonna communicate it, okay? So that's reinforcing it through human systems.

In your life, it might be much more granular, right? It might be that you have something that you do in the morning to reinforce clarity to yourself. It might be that you have ways that you reinforce with your family or other people who you cohabitate with about what you value in your work time, okay? So I really, really recommend this book, but like I said, if you just have these four things on your desk, even though there's just one of you, it will really get you to think if you can focus on these things, okay? So like what is organizational clarity?



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It could we only be working on the stuff that makes you a lot of money. It could be only working on the stuff that is going to get you into magazines. It could be creating a brand that means X, whatever that clarity is for you. And then how do you make sure that you over-communicate that clarity to your clients, to yourself, to other stakeholders in your life? And then how do you reinforce that clarity through human systems? They're very simple, but these things will align and streamline into creating a very effective business for yourself.

So Peter Drucker, we talked about earlier, so these are his seven principles for being an effective executive. Effectiveness can be learnt, okay, this is really important because a lot of people feel like they're missing something that they can't A because of B, okay? And he has a whole thing about strengths, okay? But it's important to think about effectiveness is a way of being rather than kind of what you already are. It's the way that you pursue what you're working on.

The next one is know thy time. Now, this is something that I know I really harp on, and I have a section on it in a book, and I work on it with a lot of people, and I track my time every single moment. In fact, of course I just realized that the time tracker is not running for this webinar, but it's okay because I know how long the webinar was. So know thy time, this is something where you can't make good decisions until you really have a great understanding of both how you are inclined to spend your time, how you're already spending your time, and how long different things take you. What can I contribute? This goes into the next one about making your strengths productive, but what is it that you are most equipped to do? And then how do you make that strength into something that's productive?

Now, the next one that Peter Drucker has, I really like this idea of first things first. So this comes actually from Dale Carnegie who went to like the Rockefeller or Vanderbilt or something like this. Dale Carnegie, we now know for "The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People" or something like that. But he went to one of these people, like a Vanderbilt, and said like, "If you pay me whatever you want, after six months, I will do something that will so transform your business and you can just decide how much you wanna pay me, how much it's worth to you." And it was just this first things first. It was just this idea of the MITs. or most important tasks, of having every single manager and every single person in the company pick the three most important things they were going to do that day and do those three before anything else. So that's why Peter Drucker had this in here, it came around a similar time.

Now, he also talks about the elements of decision making. And the idea is that, I know I talk to so many of you who really work on your decisions a lot, even very, very, very small decisions. And if you can systematize what you really need to know to make a decision, what really matters to you, what information you really need to gather, then that will help you to make effective decisions. So being an executive is gonna be one part of the many different hats that you wear in your company, right? And so to do that effectively, you need to remember that effectiveness can be learned, that you are the one who manages your time, that you need to focus on what you can actually contribute and how to do that in a productive way, right? We all have things that we love that we spend way too much time on. You need to



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put the first things first. You need to be clear with yourself about the elements of your decision making and then use that to make effective decisions.

Now, just before I leave you, I have this really cool framework about management. It's called the one-minute manager. So of course it has three parts, so it's three minutes, but I'm gonna go through them quickly. The idea is that in the one-minute manager is that as you are managing, in this case, yourself but really anybody that being very to the point...right? That's the point of like this whole webinar, everything's about being to the point, right? That being very to the point with your goals, with your reinforcement, whether positive or negative, will be the most effective thing to create feedback loops that allow you to go brilliantly into the world.

So this idea of the one-minute goals is to plan your goals, together here means with your manager hat on and your technician hat on and your visionary hat on, and describe them briefly and clearly, have them written out on a page with due dates. Shouldn't be more than 250 words. Review your most important goals each day, which takes only a few minutes, especially if they're all on a single page. Take a look at the goals in relation to what you're doing and see if that behavior matches the goals. I swear if everybody that I coached did this every single day, we would have like the most explosively productive people, but it's very difficult to actually do this. So have your goals and then see if it actually matches what you're doing and then if it doesn't, rethink what you're doing so you can realize your goals sooner.

Now, actually I'm just gonna skip ahead one side. So if something is happening that is not in line with the goals and the values, you should redirect as fast as possible. This is an issue that I see people running into is that they have something that's not working and they continue down that path. This can be with a client, this can be with yourself, this can be with a contractor working for you, but it often comes up with clients. Confirm the fact first and review the mistake that had been made together, being specific. Express how you feel about the mistake and its impact on results. If you're doing this for yourself, you could say, you know, like, "I blew this deadline because I did not get started on the research early enough. And by the time I started looking into it, I needed to do some additional interviews, which I couldn't get scheduled. And I feel really disappointed with myself that this happened, that I disappointed my editor in this way," okay?

And then you pause, you pause to kind of sit with that. Okay. Then you let them or, you know, in this case you know that they're better than their mistake and you think well of them as a person. So this is a really great thing to do to yourself to say, you know, "That happened, but I'm better than that. That's not me. That's not a permanent thing. And like, I'm still a good writer. I'm still a good freelancer." Okay? And then remind them/yourself that you have competence and trust and support their success and realize that when it's over, it's over. So I really liked this redirect idea as a way to move forward when something has gone poorly for you because it's very easy to get stuck on that for a very long time, especially in the guise of pulling something useful from it.



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So then there's this idea of praising, which I wanted to wrap up with because praising are great. So praise people will as soon as possible, even if something's just getting started, okay? So let's say that you just started pitching and you spent 15 minutes on it today. Tell yourself, "Oh my God, I'm so excited. I spent 15 minutes on pitching today. I actually did it. I spent 15 minutes." Let someone know what they did right and be specific. So in this case, who knows what the pitch looks like, right? It hasn't gotten accepted yet. So the idea is that I spent 15 minutes. That's the specific, right? Tell people how good you feel about what they did and how it helps. So you would say to yourself like, "I'm so glad I did this because I've been telling myself I would do this for a really long time. And it feels really refreshing, empowering to start doing it. And it's an important step towards my future of working with magazines." Okay?

Again, pause, allow that to sink in. Encourage them/yourself to do more of the same. "That was so great. I'm really looking forward to doing another 15 minutes tomorrow," or Thursday or whenever you have it scheduled. Make it clear that you have confidence in them and support their success. You know, and this is something you do in your journal, right? Like I'm confident that I'm going to be able to keep this habit up and do what it takes to succeed in what I've set out to do, right? So these are some really great guidelines, these Ken Blanchard one-minute things in terms of how you can bring self-management into your life in a way that's in line with remembering that you are the executive of your own business.

So as we talked about this today, particularly the management bit, but also in the executive part and the four obsessions of the extraordinary executive, I hope it's kind of made you revisit some of the things that you think about and the other departments that we've explored in this series. And that's great. So let's not forget how this all started in this webinar series that we have on "Freelance Business Systems" with you signing that job role, that contract for all of the different roles that you've taken on to run your business. So now that you are equipped with the tools to make sure that they are in line with your strategic direction and to manage them, get on that. How can you streamline the different job descriptions that you have for yourself to be in line with the strategic direction that you wanna set?

So thank you guys so much for joining me today. It was such a pleasure to wrap up the series with you, and I hope that you've enjoyed it as much as I have while I know that there's a lot of finance going on. So I will leave you with that and I will see you on another webinar very soon. Cheers.