

# Do You Have a Business or a J

Most people go into business for the wrong reason. They are skilled technicians; they are great at whatever it is that they do. They believe they can earn more by doing it in their own business than for someone else, so they leave and open their own business. This is what we call an “entrepreneurial seizure.”

Typically what happens is that:

- The carpenter, or the electrician, or the plumber becomes a contractor.
- The technical writer starts a technical writing business
- The hairdresser starts a beauty salon.
- The cook opens up a restaurant.
- The accountant opens up an accounting business.
- A graphic designer opens up a graphic design business
- The musician opens up a music store.

All of them, believing that by understanding the technical work of the business they are immediately and highly qualified to run a business that does that kind of work.

And it's simply not true! And it is this we call “The Fatal Assumption”.

In fact, rather than being their greatest single asset, knowing the technical work of their business becomes their greatest single liability.

For if the technician didn't know how to do the technical work of the business, he would have to learn how to get it done. He would be forced to learn how to make the business work, rather than to do the work himself.

The real tragedy is that when the technician falls prey to the Fatal Assumption, the business that was supposed to free him from the limitations of working for somebody else actually enslaves him.

Suddenly the job he knew how to do so well becomes one job he knows how to do plus a dozen others he doesn't know how to do at all.

Because although the “entrepreneurial seizure” started the business; it's the technician who goes to work. And suddenly, an entrepreneurial dream turns into a technician's nightmare.

These technicians believe they will find more freedom in their business, but they discover it is the hardest job in the world, because there is no escape. They are the ones who are doing the work!

## They are the “business!”

But if they are the business, they haven't really created a business at all; they have created a job for themselves!

The role of the business owner is really quite different. The role of the business owner is to create a business that works independently of him or herself - a business that produces consistent, predictable results – a money machine. At that point, the business owner may choose to sell it, open up another just like the first, franchise it or spend less time in the business.

The problem with technicians is they believe they ARE their work - they're incapable of being objective. You need to transcend your business, as if looking down on it, and few are capable of that.

For example; the carpenter believes that he needs to personally install those expensive cabinets, so he works 18 hours a day, six or seven days a week, and enjoys the illusion of having a successful business. It's an illusion because as soon as the carpenter quits rushing from job to job, everything collapses. Ironically, a technician who goes into business has less freedom than an employee.

Each morning, we should ask ourselves, “Am I going to a business, or am I going to a job?” If we are going to a job, what are

we going to do about it?

Go to work **ON** your business, not **IN** it, is the solution. The business should thrive on a level apart from its owner. It should run on a system, not sweat.

You may think that your business is special or unique, and that no one else can do it like you. That is not correct. Any business is a system, a system that must be clearly designed and monitored.

Business owners overlook the systems within their business because they are too tied up in day-to-day “technician” work, or hold a misguided desire to run everything in a “chaotic drama.”

A system is liberating. But in order to get there requires discipline. Building an effective system is not difficult. Anyone can do it.

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