THE E-MYTH
STARTUP ENTREPRENEUR

Why Most Startups Don't Work
and What to Do About It!
A Blank Piece of Paper and Beginner's Mind!

by

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Michael E. Gerber Companies

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First Edition

“Remember yourself always and everywhere.”

— G. I. Gurdjieff

“The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do.”

— Steve Jobs

“The higher goal of spiritual living is not to amass a wealth of information, but to face sacred moments.”

— Abraham Joshua Heschel

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"There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all of time, this expression is unique."

— Martha Graham

In the Beginning……

There's no question, but were Steve Jobs alive at this moment, he would still be charging beyond infinity to create something no one has heard of before. He would be screaming at stumps of people who seemed to just wake up from a terrible slumber, still trying to adjust their pajamas when this seeming Madman rushes in to speak of thunder and lightning and the bridges of the river Kwai. Who is this their sleepy eyes will ask, their sleepy ears will try to absorb, their sleepy minds will just begin to realize they're in a windstorm of imagination, hyperventilating from the king of courts, universal courts, not tennis courts, the universal courts inhabited by the universal mind of one we're calling The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur, swinging madly at balls no one else sees and striking them just as madly into the hyperspace none have ever visited before. That's what it was like at Apple, a true E-Myth Startup Enterprise. That's what it's going to be like for you, every single one of you

blithering idiots, yes, we love you all, except for the “bozos” who deserved to be called dirty names, which he did in extremes don’t you see? Not because they were “bozos” of course, but because they didn’t need to be. There were existential opportunities just awaiting them all. But, eyes closed, ears stopped up, mouths too full of gag music, and snot change, none were able to accept their destinies, let alone take a confident step forward. “Doomsville,” Steve Jobs would have called it. “Yuck!” He would have said. “Welcome to The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur. It’s coming your way!”

“The ones who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do.”

— Steve Jobs

Chapter One: The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur

There was a terrible reality we confronted when I founded my very first small business development firm, way back then in 1977. We called it The Michael Thomas Corporation. MTC for short. I was Michael, he was Thomas, and the firm we launched was intended to transform the state – the infinitely tragic state – of small business worldwide. What was so tragic about it? The abysmal fact that the vast majority of startups failed. No matter what they did, no matter how they did it, no matter how much experience their founders possessed, no matter how enthusiastically they set out on their path, fail they did, again and again and again, and yes, yet again. It was that tragic reality that MTC was created to deal with, by creating a startup business model that challenged the assumptions most startups were eviscerated by. The simple idea that populated the vast majority of startups simply didn’t work ... no matter how

hard their founders worked … the simple tragic fact was that nothing their founders believed to be true, did work, and again, no matter how hard they worked, the most consistent outcome of it all was failure, with a capital F. Tom and I saw that Failure as an immense opportunity. An opportunity our company MTC was committed to turn around, one small business client at a time, again, and again, and again, and yes, again. Not only in San Mateo, where we opened our first MTC office. But worldwide. The idea being that once we could prove our idea in the form of a system we called our Business Format Franchise Prototype, once that System was proven to be effective, we could then replicate it successfully city by city, just like the franchise model we emulated at MTC did, the model of McDonald's. Hell, we said, if Ray Kroc could do it at McDonald's, we could do it at MTC. Turnkey. Replicable. In the hands of ordinary people. Not professional business consultants, no, but "kids" just like the kids at McDonald's could and did. Kids we provided with The System – The System we were going to create to fulfill our Strategic Objective, "to transform the state of small business worldwide." Understand, when we opened our first MTC office in San Mateo, we didn't have that System, we set about the seemingly impossible task of inventing that System, knowing in our heart of hearts that such a System, once we invented it, would literally transform the disastrous results facing the startup of every

new business, because the way the vast majority of startups started up was doomed to disaster given the consistent experience the world of startups faced, doing it, doing it, doing it, doing it, doing it the way the vast majority of them did, every single day, busy, busy, busy, busy, in every single geographical location, throughout the world. What a tragedy, we said to ourselves. What an opportunity, we said to ourselves. Just think, we said to ourselves, if McDonald's could do it, well, hell, why not MTC? Enter The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur. Creating the E-Myth Experience. One small business owner at a time.

“To understand the immeasurable, the mind must be extraordinarily quiet, still.”

— J. Krishnamurti

Facing an Elaborately Dysfunctional World

When you’re facing an elaborately dysfunctional world, no matter what the arena, education, government, transportation, energy, food, economics, marriage, communication, and just plain living to get through the day, there’s an immense challenge to each of us to put it all into a framework which, organized in the past, is a living testament to acknowledging that what we see and hear and feel and experience today is not truly present at this moment. It could rightly be called a figment of our imagination. Just in the same way, you and I are the product of the past, each and every one of us, as we exist today are also a figment of our imagination. But imagination in this case needs to be defined differently than the great imaginative leaps driven by our creative intuition. The imagination in this case is more like a dream. Yes, the vast majority of us are dreaming in the smallest sense of that word, not the largest sense of that word, that we are who we

believe ourselves to be, that the world is what we believe it to be, that the people we elect to govern are who we believe them to be, that our teachers are who we believe them to be, and so on and so forth. Of course, none of them are who we believe them to be. They don't know it, and we don't know it. And that's exactly what The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur has created as his or her Mission. To transform our understanding of reality, by addressing reality in unimaginably creative ways. It might be said that The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur is beyond innovation, because innovation addresses what is, rather than what might be. It is only creativity applied from the outside in, rather than from the inside out – call it origination – which can make the enormous leaps of our true imagination, call it our E-Myth Imagination, is truly capable of creating. Think E-Myth and you'll begin to understand it. Think E-Myth and then come back and visit us tomorrow. Yours Creatively, The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

— Aristotle

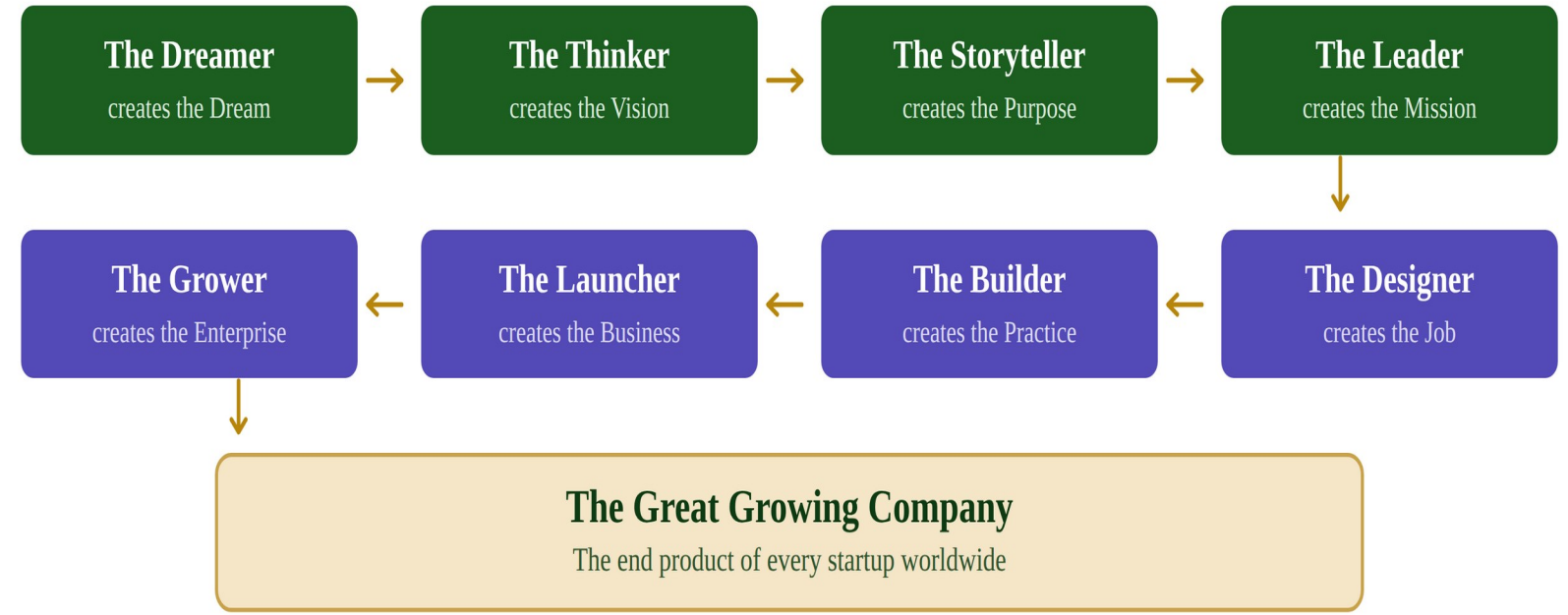
Chapter Two: The Eight Discrete Personalities of an E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur

An E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur isn’t just one person; he or she is literally eight distinct individuals. Each of whom plays a dramatically distinguishable role in the pursuit of the creation of their enviably original enterprise. To understand what distinguishes an E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur from those many who think of themselves as entrepreneurs, one must first understand and value each of those eight discretely functional personalities, how they think, what they do, why they do it that way, and what evolves as the unique outcome of all that. The first personality is The Dreamer. The second is The Thinker. The third is The Storyteller. The fourth is The Leader. The fifth is The Designer. The sixth is The Builder. The seventh is The Launcher. The eighth is The Grower. Think: Dreamer. Thinker. Storyteller. Leader. Designer. Builder. Launcher. Grower. The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur pursues the

evolution of their E-Myth Enterprise by walking his or her way through those eight discrete steps for the invention of their unique enterprise, in much the same way that Ray Kroc followed in the footsteps of the McDonald brothers before him in the creation of that stalwart enterprise, the most successful small business in the world, yes, the franchise called McDonald's. Let's walk through that process briefly, to prepare ourselves for the monumental task of taking on each of those eight steps in the significant way they are called to pursue.

The Eightfold Path

Eight discrete personalities of the E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur



Dream side

Dream → Vision → Purpose → Mission

Build side

Job → Practice → Business → Enterprise

“The privilege of a lifetime is to become who you truly are.”

— Carl Jung

Chapter Three: The Dreamer

The Dreamer has a Dream.

Not a wish. Not a hope. Not a plan. But a Dream. A Dream that envisions the Great Result.

Let me tell you what I mean by that, because if you misunderstand this, everything that follows will be built upon sand.

The vast majority of people who start a business begin with a question that sounds reasonable but is actually fatal: “What should I do?”

They look at their skills. They look at the market. They look at what seems to be working for somebody else. And they pick something. They open a shop. They hang out a shingle. They print business cards. They start doing the work.

That is not dreaming. That is reacting. And the business that comes from reacting is a business that will consume

you, because it was never yours to begin with. It was an accident with a logo.

The Dreamer does not begin with “What should I do?”

The Dreamer begins with “What is the Great Result I am here to produce in the world?”

Feel the difference. One question puts you inside a business, doing work, trying to survive. The other question puts you above the business, outside of the business, seeing the result, seeing the world transformed by that result, seeing the lives changed by that result. The first question creates a technician. The second question creates an entrepreneur.

When I founded The Michael Thomas Corporation in 1977, the Dream was not to start a consulting firm. The Dream was to transform the state of small business worldwide. That was the Great Result. I could see it. I could feel it. It moved me in a profound way like nothing else had ever moved me. Because of the tragedy I was looking at – the 90% failure rate, the millions of earnest, hardworking people destroying themselves one day at a time in businesses that were never designed to work – that tragedy demanded a response. Not a small response. Not a local response. Not an ordinary response. But a response so large that it could only be called a Dream.

And that is the first thing you must understand about the Dreamer: the Dream is never reasonable. It is never proportional to what you have today. It is never something you can explain to your family over dinner and have them nod and say, “Yes, that makes sense.” The Dream does not make sense. It makes meaning. And meaning is what drives everything that follows in a Great Growing Enterprise.

Steve Jobs understood this. When he stood in that garage in Los Altos, he was not dreaming of building a computer. He was dreaming of putting a dent in the universe. That was Steve Jobs’ Great Result. The computer was just the vehicle. The Macintosh was just the vehicle. The iPhone was just the vehicle. The Dream was always the same: to transform the way human beings experience technology, to make it so beautiful and so intuitive that it disappears, so that what remains is the human being, fully alive, fully creative, fully empowered. That was Steve Jobs’ Dream. Everything else at Apple was not so simply a consequence of it.

And at the heart of the Dream lives the Passion.

Not enthusiasm. Not excitement. Not motivation. But Passion. The kind of Passion that Steve Jobs spoke about so eloquently, the kind that wakes you at 3:00 in the morning not because you are anxious but because you are on fire with the vision of what is possible. The kind that makes you impossible to live with and impossible to ignore. The kind

that Gurdjieff called the fire of real attention – the force that burns away everything false and leaves only what is essential.

Without that Passion, nothing of meaning will ever be created. You can build a business without Passion. People do it every day. They build businesses that make money and provide a living and look successful from the outside. But those businesses have no soul. They have no reason for being beyond the survival of their founders. And when their founders leave – or burn out, or give up, or die – those businesses collapse, because there was never anything holding them up except one person's willingness to keep showing up.

The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur's Dream is different. It does not depend on the founder's presence. It depends on the founder's Passion – but that Passion is not trapped inside the founder. It is embedded in the Dream itself. The Dream is so clear, so vivid, so compelling, that other people can see it. Other people can feel it. Other people can be moved by it. And when that happens, the Dream begins to live on its own. It becomes larger than the person who dreamed it.

That is what happened at Apple. Steve Jobs is gone. But the Dream lives at the very heart of Apple, even now. Not because Apple has good managers. Not because Apple has good products. But because the Dream was so powerfully

conceived, so deeply embedded in the culture and the systems and the identity of the Apple enterprise, that it survives the Dreamer. That is the standard. That is what the E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur is building toward from the very first moment.

So, I ask you – you, the person reading this, the person who has started a business or is about to start one or is thinking about starting one – what is your Dream?

Not what your business idea is. Not what your product is. Not what your market niche is.

But what is the Great Result you are here to produce in the world?

See it. Feel it. Be moved by it.

Because everything that follows – the Vision, the Purpose, the Mission, the systems, the Practice, the Business, the Enterprise, the Great Growing Company – all of it flows from this one thing. The Dream is the seed. And if the seed is small, everything that grows from it will be small. But if the seed is a Great Result, if the seed is the transformation of something that matters, then everything that grows from it will be worthy of the life you are about to pour into it.

That is what the Dreamer does. The Dreamer dreams the Dream that is worth building. And then the Dreamer hands it to the Thinker and says: now give it a Vision. Show me what it looks like.

But that is the next chapter.

For now, dream. Dream as though the world depends upon it.

Because it does.

"The difference between something good and something great is attention to detail."

— Charles R. Swindoll

Chapter Four: The Thinker

The Thinker has a Vision.

The Dream came first. The Dream said: transform the state of small business worldwide. The Dream was fire. The Dream was meaning. The Dream was the Great Result that moved everything that followed.

But the Dream, by itself, has no form. It has no shape. It has no color. You cannot walk into it. You cannot touch it. You cannot hand it to someone and say, "Here. This is what I am building." The Dream is the destination. But it is not the vehicle.

The Thinker creates the vehicle.

The Thinker takes the Dream and asks: what does this look like? What does it feel like? What does it do? What does it cost? The Thinker is pragmatic. Not in the small, diminished sense of that word – not the pragmatism that kills dreams. The Thinker's pragmatism is the kind that brings dreams to life. It gives the Dream a body. It gives the

Dream a face. It gives the Dream a place to live in the real world, where real people can find it and be transformed by it.

When I was the Thinker at MTC, I saw McDonald's.

Not literally, of course. I was not building a hamburger franchise. But I saw what McDonald's meant. I saw the Golden Arches and what they represented: a promise, visible from the highway, that what you were about to experience had been designed for you. Every detail. Every color. Every surface. Every interaction. The way the counter looked. The way the food was packaged. The way you felt when you walked in – not like you were entering a random restaurant, but like you were entering a system that had been built to serve you, perfectly, every single time.

That is what I saw for MTC. The McDonald's of small business development services.

Now let me show you what that looks like. Not in abstractions. In the pieces. The furniture. The color. The warmth.

The Visual Dimension

Picture a street corner. Any street corner, in any city in America. There is a storefront. It is not large. It does not need to be large. But it glows.

Not with neon. Not with flashing lights. It glows the way a well-made thing glows – the way a hand-polished wooden table glows, the way a perfectly ripe apple glows, the way a child's face glows when they see something that delights them. The glow comes from intention. Every surface has been chosen. Every color has been placed with purpose.

The signage is clean and simple. The name is there. The promise is there. And the colors – think of what McDonald's did with gold and red. Think of what Tiffany did with that particular shade of blue. Think of what Apple did with white and glass and light. Those colors were not accidents. Those colors were decisions. They said something before a single word was spoken. They said: what is inside this place has been thought about. What is inside this place has been cared for. What is inside this place was made for you.

The E-Myth storefront says the same thing. Its colors glow, shine, glisten. They are as brand new as the surprise they hold inside. And they stay that way. Not because someone remembers to polish them. Because the system requires it. Every morning. Every location. The same glow. The same care. The same first impression.

You see it from across the street and your step changes. Something in you moves toward it. Not because you know what it does yet. Because it looks like something worth knowing.

That is the visual dimension. And it begins before the client ever touches the door handle.

The Emotional Dimension

Now the client walks in.

This is the moment most businesses waste. The client opens the door and enters a lobby. There is a receptionist. There is a waiting area. There are magazines. There is a water cooler. It is fine. It is forgettable. It says nothing. It feels like every other office the client has ever walked into. And in that moment, the client's unconscious mind says: this is ordinary. And ordinary cannot save me.

The E-Myth office does not waste this moment. The E-Myth office transforms it.

The client opens the door and the first thing they notice is the warmth. Not the temperature. The feeling. Something in the space has been arranged to say: we expected you. Not in a generic way. In a specific way. The way a great host expects a guest. The way a grandmother's kitchen feels when you walk in on a Sunday morning – everything is ready, everything has been prepared, and you know without being told that you are welcome here.

The furniture is not extravagant. It is chosen. A chair that holds you. A table at the right height. Materials laid out – not

stacked randomly, but placed with care, the way a chef plates a meal. The lighting is warm. The air smells clean. There is nothing cluttered. There is nothing accidental. Every piece of the puzzle is in its place.

And then the person appears. Not a salesperson. Not someone checking their clipboard. A guide. Someone who has been trained – not to sell, not to pitch, not to close – but to welcome. To see the client. To say, in words and in manner: I know why you are here. I know what you are going through. And this place was built to help you.

The client sits down. The guide sits across from them. And the guide does something that almost never happens in a business setting. The guide listens. Not while waiting for their turn to talk. Not while preparing their pitch. The guide listens the way a doctor listens to a patient who has come in after months of ignoring the pain – with full attention, with no agenda except understanding.

And in that moment, the client feels something they have not felt in their entire experience of running their business: somebody built something for me. Somebody understands. Somebody cares.

That is the “Oh, my goodness” experience. It does not come from a clever script. It does not come from a charismatic personality. It comes from the system. The system created the warmth. The system trained the guide.

The system arranged the furniture and chose the lighting and laid out the materials. And because it is the system, it happens every time. Not just when the best person is working. Every time. Every office. Every client.

That is the emotional dimension. And it is not a nice-to-have. It is the core of everything.

The Functional Dimension

Behind the warmth, behind the glow, behind the "Oh, my goodness" – there is a machine.

The client does not see the machine. The client should never see the machine. The client should only feel the result of the machine, the way a passenger on a great airline feels the result of thousands of checklists and procedures and training protocols, without ever seeing the cockpit.

But the machine is there. And it is precise.

The guide who welcomed the client did not improvise that welcome. The guide followed a process. Not a rigid script – a process. The way a great jazz musician follows a structure that allows for improvisation within it. The guide knew what to say first. Knew what question to ask second. Knew when to pause. Knew when to offer coffee and when to offer a tissue. The guide knew these things because they were taught. Because someone designed the welcome the way an

engineer designs a bridge – to bear weight, to hold, to endure, to serve.

The materials on the table are not random. They are sequenced. The first document the client sees addresses their fear. The second addresses their hope. The third shows them the path. This sequence was not invented in the moment. It was designed, tested, refined, and proven. It works with the plumber in San Mateo and the chiropractor in Dallas and the restaurant owner in London. It works because human beings, at the moment they walk into a place like this, all need the same thing: to be seen, to be understood, and to be shown that there is a way forward.

And the person delivering all of this – the guide – is not a thirty-year veteran. The guide is twenty-three years old. The guide has been with the company for four months. The guide is, in the language of McDonald's, a kid. And the kid is delivering a world-class experience. Not because the kid is extraordinary. Because the system is extraordinary. The system takes ordinary people and gives them the power to do extraordinary things.

That is what Ray Kroc understood. The genius of McDonald's was never the hamburger. The genius was that a sixteen-year-old working their first job could produce a consistent, reliable, satisfying experience for every

customer, every time, in every location on earth. The system did the work. The person operated the system.

The E-Myth enterprise does the same thing. But instead of producing a hamburger, it produces a transformation. Instead of feeding a body, it feeds a business. And the system that makes it possible is just as precise, just as replicable, just as turnkey as the one that makes a Big Mac taste the same in Tokyo as it does in Toledo.

That is the functional dimension. And it is the reason the business can scale. Without the machine, you have a practice. With the machine, you have a business. And a business can be replicated. A practice cannot.

The Financial Dimension

Now the moment comes. The client has felt the warmth. The client has been listened to. The client has seen the path. And the client asks the question every client asks: what does it cost?

The guide tells them.

And the client says: “Is this all it costs?”

Not because it is cheap. It is not cheap. It is priced with confidence, because the value has already been felt. The client has already experienced the glow. The client has already felt the welcome. The client has already seen the

materials and felt the care. The client has already thought, at some level: these people understand what they are doing.

And so the price does not land as a cost. It lands as a relief. Finally. Finally, someone has built something that can help me, and it does not require me to take out a second mortgage to afford it. Finally, someone has figured out how to deliver this level of care, this level of transformation, at a price that makes sense.

That is the financial genius of the Vision. The Thinker does not just ask, "Can we make money?" The Thinker asks, "Can we deliver so much value that the price feels like a gift?" When the answer is yes, you have a business that grows without friction. The clients sell it for you. Not because you ask them to. Because they cannot stop talking about it. "You have to go see these people," they tell their friends. "You will not believe what they do. And you will not believe what it costs."

That is word of mouth. Not the kind you engineer with referral programs and discount codes. The kind that happens naturally, inevitably, when someone experiences something so good, so unexpected, so perfectly designed for them, that keeping it to themselves feels impossible.

The Whole Vision

Four dimensions. Inseparable. Visual. Emotional. Functional. Financial. If any one of them is missing, you do not have a Vision. You have a sketch. The Thinker does not sketch. The Thinker sees the whole thing – complete, vivid, alive – down to the color of the walls, the feel of the chair, the expression on the guide's face, the weight of the materials in the client's hands, the tone of voice that says "is this all it costs?"

And here is what most people get wrong about the Thinker: they think the Vision is flexible. They think you start with a rough idea and refine it as you go. No. The Vision is precise. The Vision is what the Dreamer's Passion demands. The Vision is the form the Great Result takes in the real world, and it must be seen so clearly that anyone who encounters it – a client, an employee, a partner, a passerby on the street – immediately feels what it is. Before they understand it intellectually, they feel it. The colors say it. The packaging says it. The experience says it. The price says it.

McDonald's did this. Ray Kroc did not build a flexible restaurant concept. He built a precise one. Every detail was specified. Every detail was replicated. And the result was the most successful small business in the world. Not because the hamburgers were the best hamburgers. Because the Vision was so clear, so complete, so fully

realized, that it could be reproduced a thousand times, ten thousand times, fifty thousand times, and every single one of those reproductions delivered the same experience.

Steve Jobs did this. When he saw the Macintosh, he did not see a general-purpose computer. He saw a specific object – its shape, its screen, its interface, the sound it made when it started up, the way it felt when you held the mouse for the first time. Every detail was the Vision. And when his engineers said it could not be done, or it was too expensive, or no one would notice the difference, he screamed at them. Not because he was cruel. Because the Vision was non-negotiable. It had to be exactly what he saw. Anything less was a betrayal of the Dream.

That is the relationship between the Dreamer and the Thinker. The Dreamer gives you the fire. The Thinker gives you the form. And the form must be worthy of the fire. Down to the furniture. Down to the lighting. Down to the way the guide says good morning.

To You, the Reader

So I ask you – you, the entrepreneur reading this – what does your Vision look like?

Not in general terms. In specific terms.

Visually: what do your clients see when they encounter your business for the first time? What colors? What surfaces? What does your storefront say before the client reads a single word? If you cannot describe it – if you cannot paint it – you do not yet have a Vision.

Emotionally: how does your client feel when they walk through your door? Do they feel expected? Do they feel welcome? Do they feel that this place was made for them? Or do they feel like they have walked into another generic office, another waiting room, another place where they are a number?

Functionally: can an ordinary person operate your business and deliver an extraordinary result? Or does it depend on you being there, on your talent, on your personality, on your twenty years of experience? If it depends on you, you do not have a system. You have a job. And a job cannot be replicated.

Financially: when your client sees the price, do they say "that seems about right" or do they say "is this all it costs?" If they say the first, your value proposition is ordinary. If they say the second, you have something that will grow faster than you can build it.

If you cannot answer all four of those questions with absolute clarity – if you cannot see the colors, feel the warmth, describe the system, and predict the client's

response to the price – you are not yet the Thinker. You are still dreaming. And dreaming is beautiful, but it is not building.

The Thinker builds the bridge between the Dream and the world. The Thinker says: this is the form it will take. This is what it will look like on the street. This is how it will glow. This is what it will feel like to walk through the door. This is how the machine will run. This is what the price will say.

And then the Thinker hands the Vision to the Storyteller and says: now tell me why. Tell me the story of the problem this Vision is here to solve. Tell me the story of the person whose life this Vision will transform. Give it its Purpose.

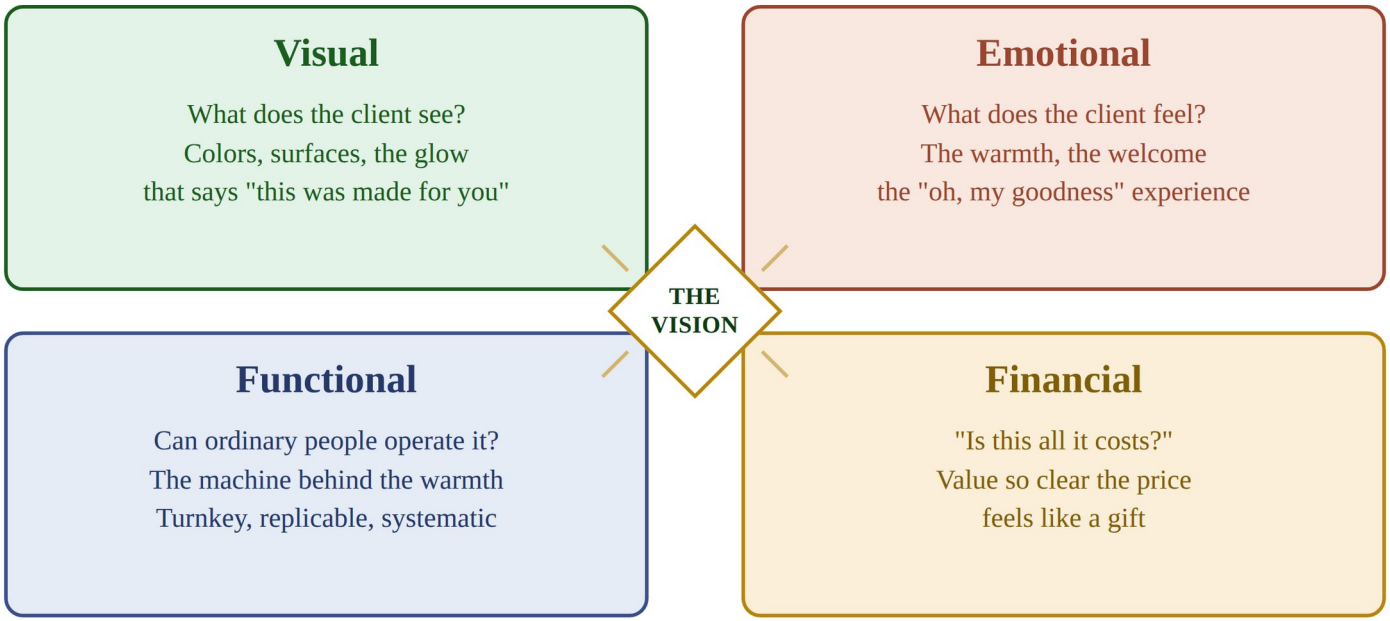
But that is the next chapter.

For now, see it. See it so clearly that you could paint it. See the colors. See the furniture. See the guide's face. See the materials on the table. See the client's eyes when they hear the price.

Because if you cannot see it, you cannot build it. And if you cannot build it, the Dream remains a dream.

The four dimensions of the Vision

Every E-Myth Vision must be complete in all four



"If any one of them is missing, you do not have a Vision. You have a sketch."

— Michael E. Gerber

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

— Maya Angelou

Chapter Five: The Storyteller

The Storyteller has a Purpose.

Let me tell you a Story.

Because every founder, every new entrepreneur, IS a Storyteller. A Storyteller with a profound Story living at the very heart of it. And that Story must be told.

So let me tell it.

Years ago, there was a young man who found himself looking at something that no one else seemed to see.

He was not a businessman. He was not an MBA. He was not a consultant. He was a man who had lived many lives already – a saxophone player, a seeker, someone who had traveled far inside himself before he ever traveled the world – and he found himself standing in the middle of something that broke his heart.

He was looking at small business owners.

Not entrepreneurs. Not yet. Just people. Ordinary, decent, hardworking people who had done the bravest thing

a human being can do in the economic world: they had started something. They had taken their skill, their craft, their trade – the thing they were good at, the thing they loved – and they had said: I am going to do this for myself. I am going to be my own boss. I am going to build something of my own.

And it was killing them.

Not all at once. Slowly. The way a vine kills a tree – by wrapping around it so gradually that the tree does not notice until it can no longer breathe.

They were working for fourteen-hour days. They answered every phone call, solving every problem, doing every job, wearing every hat. They were the technician and the manager and the salesperson and the bookkeeper and the janitor and the customer service department and the CEO, all at the same time, all in the same exhausted body. And at the end of every week, every month, every year, they looked at their bank account and their marriage and their health and their children's faces and they thought: something is wrong. Something is terribly wrong. I am doing everything right. Why is it not working?

That was the Story. Not Michael Gerber's story. Their story. The story of millions of small business founders all over the world, all living the same nightmare, all believing the same fatal lie.

And what was the lie?

The lie was this: if you are good at something, you should start a business doing it.

That was the E-Myth. The Entrepreneurial Myth. The fatal assumption is that because you are a good baker, you should open a bakery. Because you are a good plumber, you should start a plumbing company. Because you are a good accountant, you should hang out your shingle. The assumption that technical skill is the same thing as business skill. Knowing how to do the work is the same thing as knowing how to build a company that does the work.

It is not.

It has never been.

And because no one told them – because no school taught them, because no mentor warned them, because no book explained it – they walked into the same trap, generation after generation, country after country, trade after trade. They started businesses that were nothing more than jobs. Jobs they owned. Jobs they could not quit. Jobs that consumed them from the inside out.

The baker who loved baking woke up one day and realized she had not baked in months. She was too busy managing employees, chasing invoices, arguing with suppliers, and wondering why the passion that drove her to start had turned into the prison that held her. The plumber who was

the best in his county found himself working harder at sixty than he had at thirty, with less money, less health, and less hope. The accountant who started her own firm discovered that the freedom she had been promised was actually servitude – servitude to every client, every deadline, every demand, with no system, no structure, no way out.

That was the Problem. Not a small problem. The Problem. The great problem that the Great Result was meant to overcome. The problem that lived at the heart of the 90% failure rate. The problem that destroyed more dreams, more families, more lives, more potential than any economic force in the history of the modern world.

And that was the Story that young man saw. The Story that broke his heart. The Story that became his Purpose.

Because the Purpose is not the Dream. The Dream is the Great Result – the transformation of the state of small business worldwide. The Purpose is the reason the Dream must exist. The Purpose is the answer to the question: why? Why does this matter? Why must someone do something about it? Why can't we simply look away?

The Purpose lives in pain. In the baker's exhaustion. In the plumber's broken body. In the accountant's sleepless nights. In the marriage that ends because the business took everything and gave nothing back. In the child who grows

up watching their parents disappear into a business that was supposed to set them free.

That is the Story. And the Storyteller's job is to tell it so clearly, so powerfully, so truthfully, that the person hearing it recognizes themselves in it. Not as an abstraction. As a mirror.

When Michael Gerber stood in front of his first client and said, "You are not an entrepreneur. You are a technician suffering from an entrepreneurial seizure," something happened. The client's eyes changed. The resistance dropped. The defense fell away. Because for the first time in their life, someone had named the thing they could not name. Someone had described the pain they had been carrying alone, in silence, in shame, believing it was their fault.

It was not their fault.

That is the most powerful sentence in the E-Myth canon. It was not their fault. The failure was not a failure of character. It was not a failure of effort. It was not a failure of intelligence or courage or dedication. It was a failure of model. They were using the wrong model. They were building a business the only way they knew how – by doing the work – and nobody had ever shown them another way.

The Storyteller tells them there is another way.

Not yet what the way is. That comes later. The Designer will build it. The Builder will construct it. The Launcher will bring it to market. The Grower will scale it. But before any of that can happen, the founder must first understand why everything they have been doing has not worked. They must first see the Problem. They must first hear the Story. They must first feel, in their bones, that the nightmare they are living is not inevitable. That it has a cause. And that the cause has a cure.

That is the Purpose. The Story underlying the reason for being. The great problem that Great Result is meant to overcome. And without it, nothing that follows has power. Without it, Vision is just a pretty building. Without it, the Dream is just a wish. The Purpose gives the Dream its moral authority. It says: this is not just something we want to build. This is something the world needs us to build. Because people are suffering. And we know why. And we know how to stop it.

Every great enterprise has this Story at its heart. Apple's Story was not about computers. It was about the tyranny of complexity – the way technology had been built by engineers for engineers, and the millions of human beings who were shut out because nobody had made it simple, beautiful, and human. Steve Jobs said that Story every time he stood on a

stage. He did not sell features. He sold liberation from complexity.

McDonald's Story was not about hamburgers. It was about the chaos of American food – the unpredictability, the inconsistency, the dirtiness, the randomness. Ray Kroc saw a world where a family could not drive across the country and knew, with certainty, that the meal they ordered in one town would be exactly as good as the meal in the next. He told a Story of order in the midst of chaos. Of reliability in a world of disappointment. Of a promise kept, every single time.

The E-Myth Story is about the founder. The lost one. The one who did everything right and got everything wrong. The one who built a prison when they thought they were building a dream. The one who is working right now, at this very moment, in a business that is slowly consuming them, wondering what happened, wondering where the passion went, wondering if this is all there is.

The Storyteller looks that person in the eye and says: I see you. I know your Story. It is not your fault. And there is a way out.

That is the Purpose. And it is the most powerful force in the entire E-Myth Enterprise. Because it is true.

So, I ask you – you, the founder reading this – what is your Story? What is the Problem that lives at the heart of what

you are building? What is the pain your client carries that no one else has named? What is the lie they believe about why it is not working?

If you cannot tell that Story – if you cannot look your client in the eye and say "I know what you are going through, and it is not your fault" – then you do not yet have a Purpose. You have a product. And a product without a Purpose is just another thing for sale.

The Storyteller gives the enterprise its soul. The Dream gives it direction. The Vision gives it form. But the Purpose gives it meaning. And meaning is what makes people stop, listen, and follow.

And then the Storyteller hands the Purpose to the Leader and says: now take this Story to the world. Find the people who need to hear it. Enroll them. Inspire them. Give them a Mission.

But that is the next chapter.

For now, tell your Story. Tell it until you weep. Because if it does not move you, it will not move anyone.

“Management is doing things right;
leadership is doing the right things.”

— Peter Drucker

Chapter Six: The Leader

The Leader has a Mission.

The Dream gave us the Great Result. Vision gave us the form. The Purpose gave us the reason. But none of them, by themselves, move a single human being to action. They live inside the founder. They burn inside the founder. They keep the founder awake at night, on fire with the certainty that something must be done.

But certainty is not enough. The founder cannot do this alone. No founder ever could. Not Ray Kroc. Not Steve Jobs. Not Michael Gerber. Not you. The Dream is too large for one person. The Vision is too complex for one pair of hands. The Purpose is too urgent to wait while one human being tries to do it all.

The Leader is the one who takes the Dream, the Vision, and the Purpose out of the founder’s chest and puts them into the hearts of other people.

That is the Mission. Not a mission statement. Not a plaque on the wall. Not a paragraph on a website that nobody reads. The Mission is the act of enrollment. The act of going into the world and finding the people who need to hear the Story and telling it to them so powerfully that they cannot walk away. The Mission is the outreach. The driving, relentless, unstoppable outreach to transform the mindset of the people the Great Result was created to serve.

The Leader enrolls. The Leader inspires. The Leader teaches. The Leader coaches. The Leader does not manage. Management comes later, in the Business. The Leader does something far more difficult and far more important than management. The Leader changes minds.

Think about what that means. The people you are trying to reach – the small business founders, the lost ones, the ones who are killing themselves in businesses that are consuming them – they do not know they need you. They do not know the E-Myth exists. They do not know that the nightmare they are living has a name, a cause, and a cure. They believe, with every ounce of their exhausted being, that their problem is that they are not working hard enough. That if they just put in more hours, hire one more person, land one more client, push through one more month, it will get better.

It will not get better. It never does. Not that way. And the Leader's job is to reach them before it is too late.

That is what Michael Gerber did. Not from behind a desk. Not from inside an office. He went out. He spoke. He stood in front of rooms full of small business owners – plumbers, bakers, contractors, dentists, accountants, florists, restaurant owners – and he told them the Story. He looked them in the eye and said: you are not an entrepreneur. You are a technician suffering from entrepreneurial seizure. And the room went silent. Because for the first time, someone had named it.

And then he said: it is not your fault. And the room exhaled. Because of the shame they had been carrying, the secret belief that they were failing because they were not good enough, fell away. And in its place was something they had not felt in years: hope.

That is what the Leader does. The Leader does not sell a product. The Leader does not pitch a service. The Leader delivers a revelation. The Leader says: the world you are living in is not the world you think it is. There is another way. And I am going to show it to you. Not because I want your money. Because I cannot stand to watch you suffer when I know the cure.

That is the Mission. And it requires a specific kind of courage that has nothing to do with bravery in the

conventional sense. It is the courage to be rejected. The courage to stand in front of a room full of skeptics and say something they do not want to hear. The courage to tell a plumber who has been plumbing for thirty years that he does not know how to build a plumbing business. The courage to tell an accountant with a wall full of degrees that her education taught her everything about accounting and nothing about enterprise.

Most people cannot do this. Most people soften the message. They hedge. They say, “Well, there are many approaches to business, and ours is just one of them.” The Leader does not hedge. The Leader speaks the truth as though lives depend on it. Because they do.

Steve Jobs was this Leader. When he stood on that stage in Cupertino, he was not presenting a product. He was enrolling the world into a Vision. He was saying: the way you use technology is broken, and we have fixed it. He was not polite about it. He was not diplomatic. He held up the iPhone and said, essentially: everything you have been using until this moment is garbage. And here is what you deserve instead. And the world believed him. Not because he was charming. Because he was certain. Because the certainty came from the Dream, the Vision, and the Purpose that lived inside him, and the Mission was the act of putting all of that into the world.

Ray Kroc was this Leader. He did not sit in the office and wait for franchisees to come to him. He went out. He evangelized. He told anyone who would listen that the franchise model was the future of American business. He enrolled people into a Mission that was larger than hamburgers. He said: I am not selling you a restaurant. I am selling you a system. A system that will make you successful regardless of your experience. A system that works. And if you follow it exactly, you will build something that works without you.

That last sentence – "something that works without you" – is the Leader's most powerful enrollment tool in The E-Myth. Because it speaks directly to the deepest desire of every exhausted founder: freedom. Not freedom from work. Freedom from the tyranny of being the only one who can do the work. Freedom from the prison of a business that cannot function without the founder's hands on every lever, every day, forever.

The Leader says: I know you are tired. I know you cannot see a way out. I know you have tried everything you know how to try. But there is a way. And it begins with understanding that the business you have built is not the business you need. The business you need is a system. A turnkey, replicable system that ordinary people can operate

to produce extraordinary results. And I am going to teach you how to build it.

That is the enrollment. That is the Mission in Action.

And the Mission has a structure. It is not a random act of inspiration. The Leader does not just stand on stages and hope people are moved. The Leader designs the outreach the way the Thinker designed the Vision – with precision, with intention, with a system.

The first contact is the Story. The Storyteller's work. The client hears the Story and recognizes themselves in it. The shame falls away. Hope appears.

The second contact is Vision. The client sees what is possible. Not in theory. In vivid, specific, sensory detail. The glowing storefront. The guide who listens. The "Oh, my goodness" experience. The price that feels like a gift. The client sees it and wants it.

The third contact is the invitation. The Leader says: come in. Let us show you. Not sell you. Show you. Walk through the door. Sit in the chair. Feel the warmth. See the system. Experience what we have built. And then decide.

That sequence – Story, Vision, Invitation – is the Mission's engine. It repeats. Again, and again and again. In every city. In every vertical market. In every language. In every community. In every country.

Because the Mission is not to serve one client. The Mission is to transform the state of small business worldwide. And that requires a Leader who is willing to go everywhere, reach everyone, and never, ever stop telling the truth.

Not a truth. The truth. The E-Myth truth. The truth that says: every small business founder on earth deserves a system that works. Every small business founder on earth deserves freedom from the prison they have built. Every small business founder on earth deserves to become, at last, the entrepreneur they thought they were when they started.

That is the Mission. And it does not end. It does not slow down. It does not get easier. Because every day, somewhere in the world, another person is starting a business the wrong way, believing the wrong lie, walking into the wrong trap. And the Leader's job is to reach them before the trap closes.

So I ask you – you, the founder reading this – what is your Mission? Who are the people you are trying to reach? Where are they? What do they believe that is not true? And what will you say to them when you find them?

If you cannot answer those questions – if you do not know who your lost ones are, where they are hiding, and what truth will set them free – then you do not yet have a Mission. You have a wish. And a wish without a Mission is a Dream that dies in silence.

The Leader gives the enterprise its voice. The Dream gave it direction. The Vision gave it form. The Purpose gave it meaning. But The Mission gives it reach. And reach is what transforms local practice into a worldwide movement.

And then the Leader hands the Mission to the Designer and says: now build the system. Build the thing that delivers on every promise I have made. Build the Client Fulfillment System that turns our words into the client's experience.

But that is the next chapter.

For now, lead. Lead as though millions of lives depend on it.

Because they do.

“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.”
— Leonardo da Vinci

Chapter Seven: The Designer

The Client Fulfillment System Complete

Four steps. Awaken the Dream. See the Vision. Tell the Story. Launch the Mission. Each one mirrors the process you have just walked through in this book. Each one turns the reader’s experience into the client’s experience. The book becomes the system. The system becomes the business. The business becomes the enterprise.

And that is the genius of the Designer. The Designer does not invent something new. The Designer takes the truth – the truth of the Dream, the Vision, the Purpose, the Mission – and organizes it into a repeatable, teachable, turnkey system that ordinary people can operate to produce extraordinary results.

That is the Client Fulfillment System. It sits at the heart of the Business Format Franchise Prototype. It is the first leg of the 3-Legged Stool. And without it, nothing that follows – the Client Acquisition System, the Practice, the Business,

the Enterprise, the Great Growing Company – has a foundation to stand on.

So I ask you – you, the founder reading this – do you have a Client Fulfillment System? Not a way of doing things. Not a habit. Not "the way I've always done it." A system. Designed, tested, documented, teachable. A system that produces the same extraordinary result every time, regardless of who operates it.

If you do not have that system, you do not have a business. You have a Practice. And a Practice is a prison. But a System is freedom.

The Designer builds the path to freedom. Step by step by step by step.

And then the Designer hands the Client Fulfillment System to the Builder, and says: now build the Client Acquisition System. Build the machine that brings clients to the door. And combine them into the Practice – the Business Format Franchise Prototype – the 3-Legged Stool that sits at the heart of the Business.

But that is the next chapter.

For now, design. Design as though the system is the product.

Because it is.

The Client Fulfillment System

Four steps that mirror the Eightfold Path

1

Awaken the Dream

"What is the Great Result you are here to produce in the world?"

The guide asks the question no one has ever asked.
The client stops. The Dream speaks.

↓

2

See the Vision

Visual. Emotional. Functional. Financial. All four dimensions.

The guide walks the client through the complete picture.
No dimension skipped.

↓

3

Tell the Story

The great problem. The lie they believe. The pain no one else has named.

The guide helps the client find their Purpose --
the Story that gives the business its soul.

↓

4

Launch the Mission

Story, Vision, Invitation. Find the lost ones. Enroll them. Set them free.

"If you work just for money, you will never make it, but if you love what you are doing and you always put the customer first, success will be yours."

— Ray Kroc

Chapter Eight: The Builder

The 3-Legged Stool: The Business Format Franchise Prototype

Now we have all three legs.

Leg One: The Client Fulfillment System. The system that delivers the transformation. Awaken the Dream. See the Vision. Tell the Story. Launch the Mission.

Leg Two: The Lead Generation System. The system that brings people to the door. Story, Vision, Invitation. Measured, tracked, repeated.

Leg Three: The Lead Conversion System. The system that turns the Customer who bought once into the Client who comes back for more. Built into the quality of the experience itself.

Three legs. One stool. And the stool has a name: the Business Format Franchise Prototype.

This is the Practice. Not in the casual sense of that word – not "my practice," the way a doctor or a lawyer says it. The Practice in the E-Myth sense: the first complete, working, turnkey unit of the business. The thing that can be operated by ordinary people to produce extraordinary results. The thing that works without the founder standing over it every minute of every day.

The Practice is proof of concept. It is the moment when the founder can step back, look at what they have built, and say: it works. Not because I am here. Because the system is here. The 3-Legged Stool stands on its own.

Ray Kroc's first McDonald's – the one in Des Plaines, Illinois – was the Practice. It was the Business Format Franchise Prototype. It was the proof that the system worked, that ordinary people could operate it, that the hamburger would taste the same every time, that the experience would be consistent, that the economics would hold. Once that Practice was proven, everything else followed. The second location. The tenth. The hundredth. The fifty-thousandth. All of them reproductions of the Practice. All of them standing on the same 3-Legged Stool.

That is what the Builder builds. Not a business. Not yet. A Practice. One single, complete, turnkey unit that proves the system works. And once the Practice is proven – once the 3-Legged Stool is solid, once the Client Fulfillment System

delivers, once the Lead Generation System brings people to the door, once the Lead Conversion System turns Customers into Clients – then, and only then, is the founder ready for the next step.

The next step is the Business. The Practice replicated seven times. Seven Practices, each one identical, each one operating on the same 3-Legged Stool, each one producing the same extraordinary result. Plus the turnkey Management System that holds all seven together.

But that is the Launcher's work. And after the Launcher, the Grower's work: the Enterprise, which is seven Businesses – forty-nine Practices – plus the turnkey Leadership System. And then the Great Growing Company. The end product of every startup worldwide.

The Builder does not build all of that. The Builder builds the first Practice. The foundation. The prototype. The proof.

So I ask you – you, the founder reading this – do you have a Practice?

Not a business. Not a brand. Not a website. A Practice. A single, complete, turnkey unit with a 3-Legged Stool: a Client Fulfillment System that delivers transformation, a Lead Generation System that brings people to the door, and a Lead Conversion System that turns Customers into Clients.

If you have all three – designed, documented, measurable, teachable, operable by someone who is not you – then you have a Practice. And a Practice can be replicated. And replication is the path to the Business, the Enterprise, and the Great Growing Company.

If you do not have all three – if even one leg of the Stool is missing or broken – then you do not yet have a Practice. You have a hustle. And a hustle cannot scale. A hustle is you, running faster and faster, hoping the stool will somehow balance on two legs or one. It will not. It never does.

The Builder builds the Stool. All three legs. Solid, tested, proven. And then the Builder says to the Launcher: it works. Now take it to the world.

But that is the next chapter.

For now, build. Build the Practice. Build the 3-Legged Stool. Build it so solidly that it stands without you.

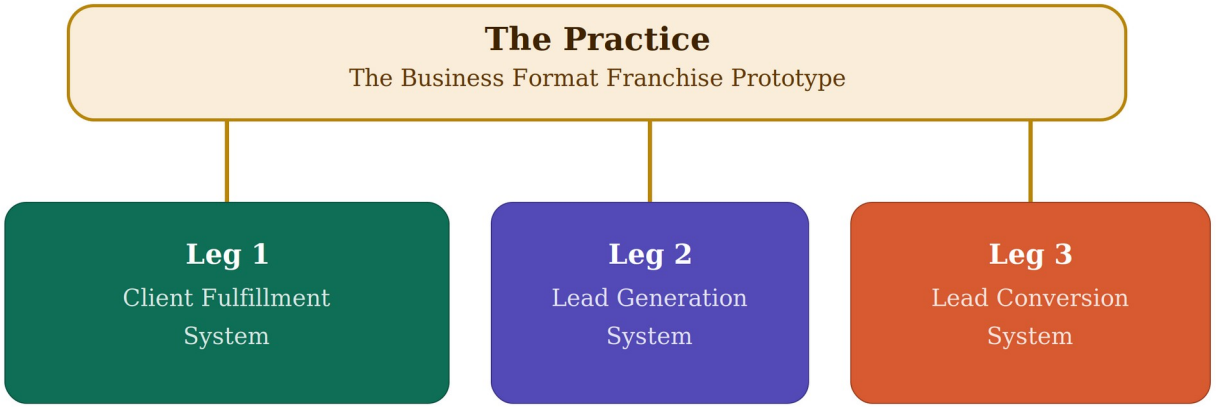
Because when it does, you are free. And freedom is what every founder has been dreaming of since the day they started.

They just didn’t know how to build it.

Now you do.

The 3-Legged Stool

The Business Format Franchise Prototype = The Practice



The four steps:

1. Awaken the Dream
2. See the Vision
3. Tell the Story
4. Launch the Mission

The three contacts:

1. Story
2. Vision
3. Invitation

Creates the Customer

The conversion:

Customer becomes Client

Built into the quality of the experience itself

No closers needed

"If even one leg of the Stool is missing, you do not have a Practice. You have a hustle. And a hustle cannot scale."

-- Michael E. Gerber

“All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.”

— Walt Disney

Chapter Nine: The Launcher

The Launcher takes the Practice to the world.

The Builder built the Practice. The 3-Legged Stool. The Business Format Franchise Prototype. The single, complete, turnkey unit that proves the system works. Lead Generation brings people to the door. Lead Conversion turns the Customer into a Client. Client Fulfillment delivers the transformation. Three legs. One stool. Solid.

But one Practice is not a Business. One Practice is a proof of concept. It is the first McDonald’s in Des Plaines, Illinois. It is the first Apple Store on Michigan Avenue. It is the prototype. And a prototype, no matter how perfect, serves only one community, one market, one neighborhood. The Dream was never to serve one neighborhood. The Dream was to transform the state of small business worldwide.

The Launcher is the personality that bridges the gap between the prototype and the world. The Launcher looks at

the Practice and asks a question that none of the previous personalities have asked: can we multiply this?

Not grow it. Not expand it. Multiply it. There is a critical difference.

Growing means making the existing Practice bigger. More clients, more staff, more space, more revenue, all in the same location, all dependent on the same people, all requiring the founder to manage an ever-larger operation. Growing is what most founders try to do. And growing is what kills them. Because a bigger practice is still a practice. It is still dependent on the founder. It just has more moving parts, more problems, more complexity, and more ways to fail.

Multiplying means creating a second Practice that is identical to the first. And then a third. And then a fourth. Each one operating on the same 3-Legged Stool. Each one producing the same extraordinary result. Each one staffed by ordinary people operating the same turnkey system. Each one standing on its own, without the founder's hands on the controls.

That is what Ray Kroc did. He did not make the Des Plaines McDonald's bigger. He made a second one. And a third. And a hundredth. Each one identical. Each one turnkey. Each one operated by people who had never met

the founder but who could produce the same result because they were following the same system.

The Launcher does this. The Launcher takes the proven Practice and replicates it. Not once. Seven times. Seven Practices, each one a reproduction of the original, each one operating independently, each one serving its own community, its own market, its own neighborhood.

Why seven? Because seven is the number at which the founder can no longer manage each Practice individually. Seven is the number at which management by walking around, management by personal attention, management by being there breaks down. And that breakdown is not a failure. It is a feature. Because it forces the creation of something the founder has never needed before: a turnkey Management System.

The turnkey Management System is the layer that sits on top of the seven Practices and holds them together. It is not the founder managing seven locations. It is a system managing seven locations. A system of reports, metrics, standards, reviews, training protocols, quality controls, and accountability structures that ensures every Practice performs the way the prototype performed, without the founder visiting each one every day.

The seven Practices plus the turnkey Management System equals the Business.

Not the Practice. The Business. A different thing entirely. The Practice is the unit. The Business is the organism. The Practice proves the system works. The Business proves the system scales. The Practice can be run by one team. The Business requires management. And the Management System must be as turnkey, as designed, as documented, as teachable as the Client Fulfillment System itself.

Think about what this means for the founder. The founder who started this journey as a Dreamer – alone with a Great Result that nobody else could see – now stands at the head of a Business. Seven Practices. A Management System. Dozens of people operating a system that was once nothing more than an idea in the founder's imagination. The Dream has become real. Not as a single office in a single city. As a Business with reach, with presence, with impact.

But the Launcher's work is not just about replication. The Launcher's work is about letting go.

Every founder who reaches this stage faces the same terrifying moment: the moment when the Practice must operate without them. The moment when they must trust the system more than they trust themselves. The moment when they must accept that the guide in Practice number four, in a city they have never visited, is delivering the same "Oh, my goodness" experience that they delivered personally in Practice number one.

Most founders cannot do this. Most founders say they want to scale, but when the moment comes, they cannot let go. They hover. They micromanage. They fly to Practice number three because they heard the guide deviated from the script. They insert themselves into every decision, every hire, every client interaction, and in doing so, they destroy the very thing they build. Because a system that requires the founder's presence is not a system. It is a dependency. And dependency cannot scale.

The Launcher lets go. Not recklessly. Not blindly. The Launcher lets go because the system has been designed to hold. The 3-Legged Stool was built by the Builder. The Management System was designed with the same precision. The people were trained. The metrics are tracked. The quality is measured. And the Launcher trusts the design.

That trust is earned, not assumed. It is earned through the rigor of the previous five personalities. The Dreamer dreamed big enough. The Thinker saw clearly enough. The Storyteller told the truth powerfully enough. The Leader enrolled deeply enough. The Designer built precisely enough. The Builder tested thoroughly enough. And because all of that was done right, the Launcher can do the hardest thing of all: step back and let the system run.

So I ask you – you, the founder reading this – are you ready to launch?

Not to grow. Not to work harder. Not to add more clients to your already overwhelmed Practice. Are you ready to replicate? Building a second Practice that is identical to your first. To trust the system enough to let someone else operate it? To build the Management System that holds multiple Practices together without your hands on every lever?

If you are not ready, go back. Go back to the Builder. Make sure the 3-Legged Stool is solid. Make sure the Practice works without you in it every day. Because if the Practice depends on you, replication will break it. You cannot multiply dependency. You can only multiply a system.

But if you are ready – if the Practice stands on its own, if the system holds, if the "Oh, my goodness" experience happens every time regardless of who is operating it – then launch. Replicate. Build the second Practice. And the third. And the seventh. Build the Management System. And watch the Dream begin to multiply.

The Launcher takes the Practice and turns it into a Business. And then the Launcher hands the Business to the Grower and says: now take this to the world. Build the Enterprise. Build the Great Growing Company. Finish what we started.

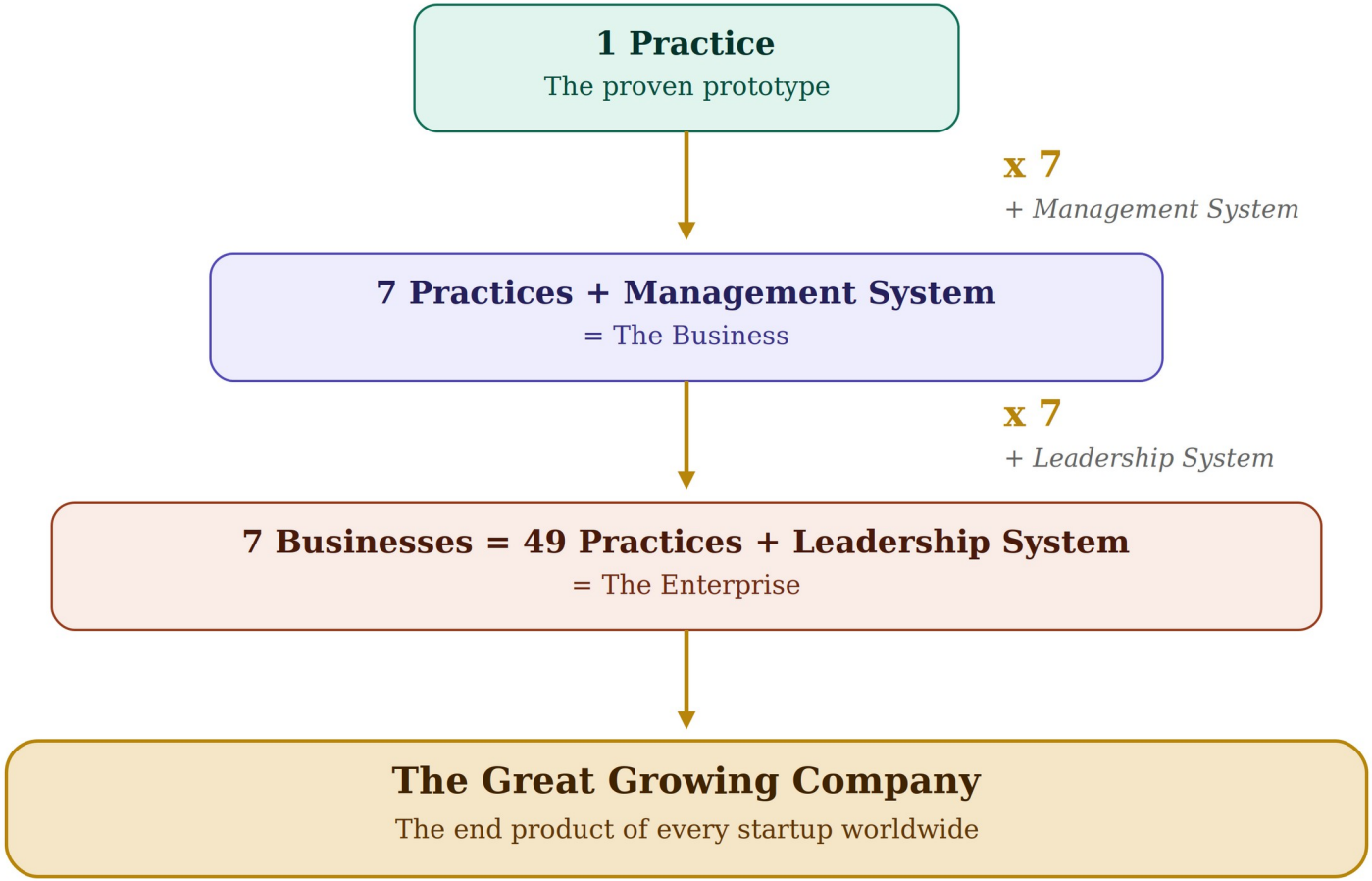
But that is the next chapter. The last chapter.

For now, launch. Launch as though the world is waiting for you.

Because it is.

The scaling model

From the Practice to the Great Growing Company



"You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore."

— André Gide

Chapter Ten: The Grower

The Grower builds the Great Growing Company.

This is the final personality. The eighth step on the Eightfold Path. The Grower takes everything that every personality before has created – the Dream, the Vision, the Purpose, the Mission, the Client Fulfillment System, the Client Acquisition System, the Practice, the Business, the Management System – and brings it to its ultimate expression.

The Great Growing Company.

The Grower's work begins where the Launcher's work ends. The Launcher built the Business: seven Practices, each one a reproduction of the original, held together by a turnkey Management System. That Business is real. It is operating. It serves clients in multiple locations. It is generating revenue. It is proving, every day, that the system works at scale.

But the Business is not the end. The Business is the middle.

The Grower looks at the Business and sees what the Dreamer saw at the very beginning: the Great Result. To transform the state of small business worldwide. Not in seven locations. Not in one city. Not in one country. Worldwide. In every vertical market. In every profession. In every language. In every community. In every country on earth.

That requires an Enterprise.

The Enterprise is to the Business what the Business is to the Practice. The Practice is one unit. The Business is seven units plus a Management System. The Enterprise is seven Businesses – forty-nine Practices – plus a turnkey Leadership System.

The Leadership System is different from the Management System. The Management System manages operations. It tracks metrics. It ensures quality. It holds the Practices together. The Management System asks: are we doing things right?

The Leadership System asks a different question: are we doing the right things?

The Leadership System is strategic. It looks outward, not inward. It asks: where do we go next? Which vertical markets are ready? Which communities need us most?

Which countries are hungry for what we have built? The Leadership System does not manage the Business. It directs the Enterprise. It sets the course. It makes the decisions that determine whether the Great Growing Company grows into its full potential or stalls at the level of a successful Business.

And that is the Grower's domain. The Grower is not an operator. The Grower is not a manager. The Grower is not even a leader in the conventional sense. The Grower is a builder of the machine that builds machines. The Grower creates the system that replicates Businesses the way the Launcher created the system that replicates Practices.

Think about the scale of that. One Practice serves one community. Seven Practices serve seven communities. Seven Businesses serve forty-nine communities. And the Great Growing Company – the Enterprise operating at full scale – serves the world.

That is the math Michael Gerber laid out from the very beginning. The Practice multiplied by seven equals the Business. The Business multiplied by seven equals the Enterprise. The Enterprise, with its turnkey Leadership System, equals the Great Growing Company. The end product of every startup worldwide.

And here is what makes this final step different from all the others: the Grower is no longer built for the founder. The Grower is building for the Dream.

By the time the Grower's work is underway, the founder has been transformed. The person who started this journey as a technician suffering from an entrepreneurial seizure – the baker who forgot how to bake, the plumber who was working himself to death, the accountant who had traded one prison for another – that person is gone. In their place stands an E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur. A person with a Dream, a Vision, a Purpose, a Mission, a Client Fulfillment System, a Client Acquisition System, a Practice, a Business, and now an Enterprise.

But the Grower understands something that even the founder may not yet see: the Great Growing Company must outlive the founder.

This is where Gurdjieff meets McDonald's. This is where the spiritual meets the systematic. The Great Growing Company is not a monument to the founder's ego. It is a vehicle for the Dream. And the Dream – the transformation of the state of small business worldwide – does not end when the founder retires, or tires, or dies. The Dream lives on. The way Steve Jobs's Dream lives on at Apple. The way Ray Kroc's Dream lives on at McDonald's. The way Michael Gerber's Dream lives on in every E-Myth book, every E-Myth

coach, every E-Myth Enterprise that carries the truth forward.

The Grower builds for that permanence. The Grower builds the Leadership System not around the founder's personality, but around the founder's principles. The Grower ensures that the Dream is embedded in the culture, the systems, the training, the standards, and the identity of the Enterprise so deeply that it does not require the founder's presence to sustain it.

That is what it means to work on the business, not in it. The phrase Michael Gerber made famous. The phrase that changed the way millions of people think about entrepreneurship. And here, in this final chapter, we see what it truly means. Working on the business means building the Great Growing Company. Building the machine that runs without you. Building the Enterprise that carries the Dream forward long after you have handed it to the next generation.

The Grower does not ask: how do I make more money? The Grower asks: how do I make this permanent? How do I build something that transforms the state of small business worldwide – not for a year, not for a decade, but forever?

That question – the question of permanence – is the Grower's gift to the Dream. It is the final act of the E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur. The act that turns a business into a

legacy. The act that turns a founder into a force of nature. The act that says: I did not build this for myself. I built it for the world. And the world will carry it forward.

So I ask you – you, the founder who has walked this Eightfold Path with us from the very first page – what is your Great Growing Company?

Not your business. Not your practice. Not your revenue. Your Great Growing Company. The thing that embodies the Dream you dreamed in Chapter Three. The thing that fulfills the Vision you saw in Chapter Four. The thing that tells the Story you told in Chapter Five. The thing that carries the Mission you launched in Chapter Six. The thing that delivers the Client Fulfillment System you designed in Chapter Seven. The thing that acquires clients through the system you built in Chapter Eight. The thing you replicated in Chapter Nine.

What does it become when it reaches its full expression? When it serves not one community but the world? When it operates not through your effort but through its systems? When it outlives not just your involvement but your lifetime?

That is the Great Growing Company. And it is the product of every startup on the planet. Whether the founder knows it or not, whether the founder intends it or not, every startup is either growing toward the Great Growing Company or dying in the attempt. There is no middle ground. There is no “good

enough.” There is only growth or decay. Systems or chaos. The Eightfold Path or the 90% failure rate.

You know the Path. You have walked it in these pages. Dreamer. Thinker. Storyteller. Leader. Designer. Builder. Launcher. Grower. Eight personalities. Eight ways of being. Eight stages of building an E-Myth Enterprise.

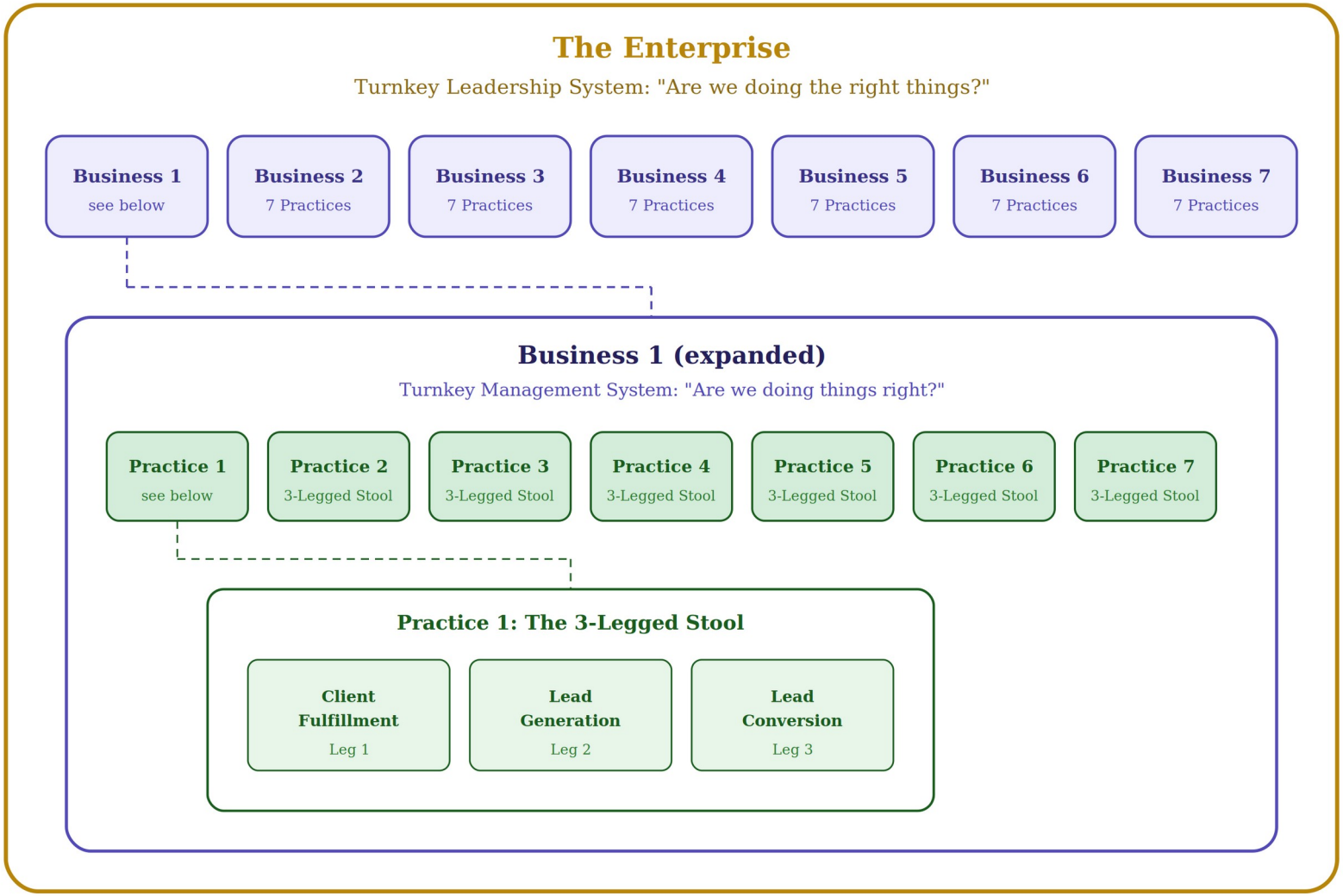
The question is no longer whether you know how. The question is whether you will.

Will you dream the Great Result? Will you see the Vision in four dimensions? Will you tell the Story that sets the lost ones free? Will you take the Mission to the world with courage and conviction? Will you design the Client Fulfillment System with the precision of a watchmaker? Will you build the 3-Legged Stool and prove the Practice works? Will you launch the Business and let go? Will you grow the Enterprise into the Great Growing Company that outlives you and carries your Dream to every corner of the world?

If you will, then you are The E-Myth Startup Entrepreneur.

And the world has been waiting for you.

The Great Growing Company



"To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all."

— Oscar Wilde

Chapter Eleven: The Invitation

So here we are.

You and I have walked a very long way together, through these pages, through these Eight Discrete Personalities, through this Eightfold Path that I have spent the better part of fifty years discovering, inventing, testing, failing at, succeeding at, and ultimately coming to understand as the only way I know to build a startup that works.

And now you are holding this book in your hands and you are feeling something. I know you are. Because I have sat across the table from thousands of people just like you, in city after city, in country after country, and I have watched what happens when the truth lands. When the Dreamer wakes up. When the Thinker begins to see. When the Storyteller finds the Story that was living inside them all along. When the Leader feels the Mission rise in their chest.

Something is stirring in you right now. I can feel it from here.

But I also know something else about you. I know it because I have watched it happen ten thousand times. I know that tomorrow morning you will wake up, and the phone will ring, and the emails will pile up, and a client will have a problem, and an employee will call in sick, and the bank account will need attention, and the landlord will want something, and your spouse will ask you what is wrong, and you will say nothing, and you will go back to work, and these pages will sit on your nightstand, and the fire you are feeling at this very moment will begin to dim.

Not because the fire was not real. It was real. It is real. But fire needs tending. A Dream needs a room to live in. A Vision needs a space in which to take shape. A Purpose needs silence before it can speak. A Mission needs a place from which to launch.

That is why I created The Dreaming Room.

Not a seminar. Not a workshop. Not a conference. A room. A space. A sacred, intentional, carefully designed space in which you and I sit down together and do the work that this book has been preparing you to do.

In The Dreaming Room, we do not talk about your business. Not at first. We do not look at your spreadsheets. We do not analyze your market. We do not discuss your competition. We do not do any of the things that every other business program in the world does, because every other

business program in the world starts in the wrong place. They start with the business. We start with you.

We start with the Dream.

I will ask you the question that I have asked thousands of founders before you, the question that stopped every single one of them in their tracks, the question that no one else had ever thought to ask them: What is the Great Result you are here to produce in the world?

And then I will wait. And the room will wait. And the silence will do its work. Because in the silence, with the noise of the world shut out, with the emergencies on hold, with the inbox closed and the phone turned off and the busy, busy, busy, busy of your daily life finally, mercifully, paused – in that silence, the Dream speaks. It always does. It has been waiting to speak. It has been waiting for years, sometimes for decades, buried under the weight of everything you believed you had to do, everything you believed you should be, everything the world told you was practical and realistic and reasonable.

The Dream is not practical. The Dream is not realistic. The Dream is not reasonable. The Dream is the Great Result. And it has been waiting for you to give it a room.

That is what The Dreaming Room is. A room for the Dream.

And once the Dream has spoken, we move to the Vision. I will help you see it. Not in abstractions. In the four dimensions. Visually: what does it look like? The colors, the surfaces, the glow. Emotionally: what does the client feel when they walk through your door? Functionally: can the system operate without you? Financially: does the client say "is this all it costs?"

And then the Purpose. I will help you find the Story. The great problem your Dream is here to solve. The lie that your clients believe. The pain they carry that no one else has named. I will help you name it, because until you name it, you cannot heal it. And until you can heal it, your business has no soul.

And then the Mission. I will help you declare it. Out loud. In that room. To my face. Not on a website. Not in a business plan. To another human being who will look you in the eye and say: yes. That is real. Now go do it.

That is what happens in The Dreaming Room. Dream, Vision, Purpose, Mission. The first four steps of the Eightfold Path. Not as words on a page. As lived experience. As the beginning of the beginning of everything that follows.

I have been doing this work since 1977. I have written thirty-eight books, twenty-three of them for specific trades and professions. I have spoken to millions of people. I have trained coaches and consultants and franchise operators

and E-Myth Masters on every continent. And I will tell you, with everything I have: the most important work I have ever done, the work that transforms people most profoundly, the work that turns technicians into entrepreneurs and businesses into enterprises, happens in The Dreaming Room. Not on the page. Not on the stage. In the room.

Because a book can show you the path. But only a room can help you walk it.

You have read the map. You have studied the terrain. You know the eight personalities, the Eightfold Path, the Dream, the Vision, the Purpose, the Mission, the Client Fulfillment System, the Client Acquisition System, the Practice, the Business, the Enterprise, the Great Growing Company.

You know it all. And knowing it is not enough.

Come dream with me.

Come sit in The Dreaming Room and discover the Dream that has been waiting inside you since long before you picked up this book. Come see the Vision so clearly that you could paint it on the wall. Come find the Story that will move your clients to tears. Come declare the Mission that will take your truth to the world.

Come do the work that only you can do, in the space that was built for exactly this moment.

The Dreaming Room is waiting for you. I am waiting for you.

And the world is waiting for what you will build when you leave.

Michael E. Gerber The Dreaming Room

Michael E. Gerber Companies

www.michaelegerbercompanies.com