A COMPANION TO THE SMALL-BUSINESS GUIDE

99 Days to Build, Lead & Sustain

Daily affirmations and lessons for a successful small business and a lasting legacy

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A daily practice companion to **Build It. Lead It. Sustain It.** by the founder of Knight Shield Risk Management.

Explore the full business guide →

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Start here

Read one day at a time. Say the affirmation, read the lesson, and put the action into practice. Record the date, what you did, and what changed. Use your own convictions to reflect on the faith and philosophy that inform the author’s leadership.

What success and wealth mean here

Success means building a dependable business and a life you can sustain. Wealth includes financial stability, time, health, family, peace, knowledge, and the ability to serve others.

Build · Days 01–33

Picture the business, test demand, price the work, and prepare to deliver.

Lead · Days 34–66

Make your principles visible in your decisions, team, and supervision.

Sustain · Days 67–99

Keep customers, strengthen the business, and prepare what others can carry forward.

Reading and section references

Security company growth supplement

Explore the full business guide →

DAYS 01–33

Build

Visualize the business before you commit to building it.

Start with what you have and who you can help. Choose a promise you can keep, test the demand, and learn what it costs to deliver before expanding the commitment.

Vision, thought, and stewardship

Earn new customers

Price the work and protect cash

Put the operating plan in place

Vision, thought, and stewardship

DAY 01

Picture the business you want to build

I begin with a clear picture of who I will serve and why.

Lesson A vision turns ambition into choices. Picture a business people can depend on, the work it will do well, and the life you want that work to support.

Put it to work Describe your ideal workday in three years. Name the customer, the promise, the people who help keep it, and the freedom you want to preserve.

Reading note Stephen R. Covey’s habit of beginning with the end in mind gives the vision a practical starting point.

DAY 02

Put what you have been given to work

I use what has been entrusted to me with care and initiative.

Lesson In Matthew 25:14–30, Jesus tells of three servants entrusted with different amounts. Two put what they received to work. One buries his share. The author applies this teaching to time, skills, relationships, and opportunity.

Put it to work List three resources already available to you. Pick one and put it to work for a specific person this week.

Reading note Read Matthew 25:14–30 for the full Parable of the Talents.

DAY 03

Cultivate the thought that serves the work

I can replace an unhelpful assumption with a useful action.

Lesson James Allen compares the mind to a garden. Repeated thoughts shape conduct. Test an assumption against evidence, then choose a thought and a behavior that support the business you are building.

Put it to work Write one belief that is keeping you still. Test it against one fact and choose one small action you can take today.

Reading note Read James Allen’s As a Man Thinketh, especially the discussion of thought and circumstances.

Vision, thought, and stewardship

DAY 04

See ownership as a real possibility

I can learn the habits and skills that ownership calls for.

Lesson Dennis Kimbro connects belief, purpose, and Black economic achievement. Confidence grows when you study people whose experience gives you a useful example and practice one skill you see them apply.

Put it to work Identify a business owner you can learn from. Write one question about a skill they had to develop.

Reading note Read Think and Grow Rich: A Black Choice by Dennis Kimbro and Napoleon Hill.

DAY 05

Raise the standard you expect of yourself

I set a standard I can work toward and prove.

Lesson Orison Swett Marden’s writing invites readers to examine what they believe they can do. In business, a stronger expectation earns its place through preparation, honest limits, and completed work.

Put it to work Choose one capability you have been underestimating. Set a small test and write down what would count as progress.

Reading note Read Orison Swett Marden’s He Can Who Thinks He Can.

DAY 06

Rehearse the hard conversation

I can prepare and speak plainly under pressure.

Lesson A clear opening helps you avoid circling the issue or over-explaining.

Put it to work Say aloud your first two sentences for a conversation you have been delaying.

Vision, thought, and stewardship

DAY 07

Ask for specific feedback

I can use feedback to improve my work.

Lesson Specific questions help people give you information you can act on.

Put it to work Ask a colleague which part of your last proposal or explanation was hardest to follow.

DAY 08

Name your limits

I can be confident and clear about my limits.

Lesson An honest limit protects the customer and gives you space to find the right help.

Put it to work Identify one promise you cannot reliably keep and write a clear way to explain the limit.

DAY 09

Test your idea small

I earn the right to expand through evidence.

Lesson A pilot tests demand and delivery while keeping commitments small enough to adjust.

Put it to work Define one low-cost test, a deadline, and the result that would justify a second test.

Earn new customers

DAY 10

Choose what your business can do unusually well

I choose the work my team can deliver with distinction.

Lesson In Good to Great, Jim Collins describes the overlap between genuine commitment, what an organization can be best at, and what drives its economics. A small firm can test that overlap in one market and one offer.

Put it to work Name the customer, the service your team can deliver unusually well, and the number that would tell you it is financially viable.

Reading note Read Jim Collins's explanation of the Hedgehog Concept from Good to Great.

DAY 11

Ask about the work

I listen before I recommend a service.

Lesson Discovery improves when you understand what happens today, where it breaks down, and what a good outcome looks like.

Put it to work Ask a prospect what they have already tried and what a better result would look like.

DAY 12

Build a referral habit

I earn referrals by doing work people can describe.

Lesson Satisfied customers can make better introductions when they know whom you help and what result to mention.

Put it to work Ask a satisfied customer for one introduction and provide a short sentence they can forward.

Earn new customers

DAY 13

Open respectfully

I can start a sales conversation without pressure.

Lesson A clear reason for calling and a request for permission respect the other person’s time.

Put it to work Draft a twenty-second cold-call opening that names a relevant problem and asks one question.

DAY 14

Qualify before quoting

I check the fit before I invest in a proposal.

Lesson Budget, timing, authority, and delivery capacity can change whether an opportunity makes sense.

Put it to work Add those four checks to your next lead record and document what still needs an answer.

DAY 15

Make the scope concrete

I write proposals my team can deliver.

Lesson Concrete deliverables and assumptions help customers compare offers and avoid misunderstandings.

Put it to work Mark what is included, excluded, and dependent on the customer in one open proposal.

Earn new customers

DAY 16

Show the proof

I let relevant evidence support my claims.

Lesson A short example with a clear result is often more useful than a long list of promises.

Put it to work Write a three-sentence case example stating the need, the work, and a result you can verify.

DAY 17

Follow up with purpose

I give each sales follow-up a clear reason.

Lesson A follow-up can help the buyer decide by answering a question or clarifying the next step.

Put it to work Send one useful follow-up with an agreed date or a specific proposed next conversation.

DAY 18

Keep the pipeline honest

I track real movement in my sales pipeline.

Lesson A large list of names can disguise a shortage of qualified opportunities. Record each lead’s next action and evidence of interest.

Put it to work Review five leads. For one priority account, map the sponsor, budget owner, and procurement contact.

Price the work and protect cash

DAY 19

Separate personal and business money

I keep business and personal transactions visible and distinct.

Lesson Clear records make it easier to see what the business earns, owes, and can afford.

Put it to work Review your last ten transactions. Flag any mixed expense and note how to record it correctly.

DAY 20

Know the difference between profit and cash

I watch when money actually moves.

Lesson A profitable job can still strain cash when payroll and suppliers come due before the customer pays.

Put it to work Map expected receipts and required payments for the next four weeks.

DAY 21

Know the full cost of delivery

I price work with the full cost in view.

Lesson Direct labor, supplies, supervision, rework, and overhead can all affect whether a price is sustainable.

Put it to work Estimate the total cost of one service and compare it with what you charge.

Price the work and protect cash

DAY 22

Calculate break-even

I know how much work covers my recurring costs.

Lesson When contribution per job is positive, dividing fixed costs by that contribution gives a starting estimate of the jobs needed to break even.

Put it to work Subtract variable cost from price for one offer. Divide monthly fixed costs by the result and round up.

DAY 23

Protect the next payroll

I plan for payroll before other spending competes with it.

Lesson A cash calendar makes upcoming obligations visible. Confirm dates, cleared funds, and a backup before committing surplus.

Put it to work Mark your next two payroll dates and note which expected receipts are still uncertain.

DAY 24

Manage what customers owe

I follow up on invoices before a late payment becomes a cash problem.

Lesson Track outstanding invoices by due date and make expectations clear at the start. Small delays can compound.

Put it to work Review unpaid invoices and assign one follow-up owner and date for each overdue item.

Put the operating plan in place

DAY 25

Make the plan usable

I turn strategy into a short list of decisions.

Lesson A business plan gets stronger when it names the customer, offer, capacity, financial limits, and next test.

Put it to work Update one page of your plan. Name the manager, cash buffer, and demand evidence you need before expanding.

DAY 26

Map the work end to end

I know how a customer request becomes delivered work.

Lesson A simple process map reveals gaps between sales, scheduling, delivery, billing, and follow-up.

Put it to work Draw those five steps for one service and name who receives the work at each handoff.

DAY 27

Give each function an owner

I make ownership clear across the business.

Lesson Small teams often wear several hats. Each function still needs someone accountable for keeping it running.

Put it to work List sales, operations, people, finance, and customer care. Assign an owner and a backup where possible.

Put the operating plan in place

DAY 28

Standardize the handoff

I pass along what the next person needs to succeed.

Lesson A handoff is complete when the receiver understands the next action, deadline, and constraints.

Put it to work Create a checklist for one handoff that regularly needs clarification.

DAY 29

Measure the bottleneck

I use one good measure to locate the next improvement.

Lesson A late result may start much earlier in the process. Measuring wait time at each step reveals where work stalls.

Put it to work Time one recurring order, assignment, or invoice and mark where it sat idle.

DAY 30

Define when to stop and check

I give people permission to pause work when quality is at risk.

Lesson A clear stop point prevents a problem from moving downstream. Pair it with a contact and a restart decision.

Put it to work Choose one warning sign and write who can pause, who reviews, and who clears the work.

Reading note Toyota’s production system, developed with Taiichi Ohno, uses stops to surface abnormalities and prevent defects from continuing downstream.

Put the operating plan in place

DAY 31

Keep your commitments visible

I track what I promise people.

Lesson A promise buried in a message thread is easy to miss. A short list with owners and dates protects reliability.

Put it to work Capture your open commitments in one place and confirm the most urgent deadline.

DAY 32

Choose your standards

I practice the standards I ask of others.

Lesson Your team learns from the trade-offs you make under pressure. A standard becomes credible when you apply it to yourself.

Put it to work Pick one standard you enforce and audit your own last three decisions against it.

DAY 33

Speak to value

I can explain the value I bring in ordinary language.

Lesson A prospect gains confidence when you can describe their problem, your work, and the expected result without exaggeration.

Put it to work Record yourself explaining your service in thirty seconds. Remove one vague claim.

DAYS 34–66

Lead

Make your principles visible in the way you lead.

The author connects Ma’at with truth, justice, balance, and order. At Knight Shield, he describes learning to trust capable team members with real responsibility. Use SHIELD to prepare the handoff, clarify authority, and review the outcome.

The SHIELD working method

Study yourself and your situation.

Handle risk before it handles you.

Install habits and systems.

Equip and empower people.

Lead through pressure and loss.

Develop lasting stability and legacy.

Apply your principles and share authority

DAY 34

Know your first reaction

I can recognize my reaction before acting on it.

Lesson Under pressure, familiar habits can take over. Naming what sets you off gives you a chance to choose your response.

Put it to work Record one recent trigger, your first impulse, and a better first sentence.

DAY 35

Use Ma’at to examine a hard decision

I test a decision for truth, fairness, and balance.

Lesson The author draws on Ma’at as an ethical lens for truth, justice, balance, and order. Ask whose account you have heard, whose interests are affected, and what belongs in the record.

Put it to work Apply those questions to a real coaching, staffing, or customer decision. Write the part of the story you still need to verify.

Reading note The Met describes Ma’at in relation to truth, justice, and equilibrium.

DAY 36

Adapt how you lead

I give people the support their work requires.

Lesson A beginner needs a demonstration and close feedback. A capable colleague may need authority, the outcome, and a check-in.

Put it to work Ask one person what would help them complete the assignment with less guesswork.

Apply your principles and share authority

DAY 37

Make it safe to tell you the truth

I listen when someone sees a risk I missed.

Lesson Machiavelli warned rulers about flatterers. At Knight Shield, the author applies that lesson through Ma’at: the person closest to the work should be able to raise a concern and expect a fair hearing.

Put it to work Before your next decision, ask someone who does the work what you might be missing. Repeat their concern in your own words and write down what you’ll check.

Reading note Read chapter 23 of The Prince on advisers and flattery.

DAY 38

Put SHIELD to work at Knight Shield

I prepare people to carry responsibility with me.

Lesson The founder describes learning to trust capable team members instead of carrying nearly everything himself. SHIELD turns that lesson into preparation, clear authority, and follow-through.

Put it to work Choose one recurring decision you can hand over. Name the person, their authority, the backup, and the first review date. Use the SHIELD checklist at the start of Lead.

DAY 39

Protect the future

I can choose a response my future self will respect.

Lesson Anger can make an immediate reply feel urgent. A measured response leaves you more options.

Put it to work Draft a response to one frustrating issue. Read it again after ten minutes before sending.

Hire and train for the work

DAY 40

Start with the job

I define what the work requires before I recruit.

Lesson A clear job definition guides selection, training, and feedback. Use examples of what success looks like on an ordinary shift.

Put it to work List the three most important results a new hire needs to deliver.

DAY 41

Use common questions

I give candidates a fair and consistent chance.

Lesson Job-related questions and common scoring criteria make comparisons more useful.

Put it to work Write three questions for a role, then describe what a strong answer includes.

DAY 42

Test a realistic task

I look for evidence people can do the work.

Lesson A short, role-relevant exercise can reveal how a candidate handles a common problem.

Put it to work Design one hypothetical work scenario and decide how you will score each response.

Hire and train for the work

DAY 43

Set up day one

I prepare the first day before someone arrives.

Lesson Access, schedules, training materials, and an available contact give the new person a fair start.

Put it to work Write a day-one checklist and name the person who will walk through it.

DAY 44

Demonstrate, then observe

I check understanding through practice.

Lesson People often need to see the work done, try it, and receive feedback before doing it independently.

Put it to work Demonstrate one task, observe a practice attempt, and note one thing to coach.

Reading note Madam C. J. Walker helped women build careers through a network of trained sales agents.

DAY 45

Tie training to a decision

I teach people what to do when a situation changes.

Lesson Training that covers only routine cases leaves employees guessing when something unusual happens.

Put it to work Add one realistic exception to a training exercise and rehearse the escalation route.

Hire and train for the work

DAY 46

Use the first ninety days

I build early check-ins into a new role.

Lesson Early conversations can catch missing training, unclear expectations, and barriers that would otherwise become habits.

Put it to work Schedule check-ins at thirty, sixty, and ninety days with one outcome for each.

DAY 47

Promote for the next job

I consider the responsibilities of the new role.

Lesson Strong performance in one job does not automatically demonstrate readiness to coach, schedule, or make decisions in another.

Put it to work Name two skills the next role needs and identify evidence for each.

DAY 48

Teach the teacher

I help supervisors learn to coach.

Lesson A capable supervisor needs practice giving feedback, demonstrating standards, and checking whether people can apply them.

Put it to work Ask a supervisor to teach one task and explain how they would check understanding.

Build good employee relations

DAY 49

Notice before judging

I distinguish what I observed from what I assumed.

Lesson Facts give both people something to discuss. Assumptions about motive can push them into defending themselves.

Put it to work Rewrite one complaint as a description of observable events.

DAY 50

Have the conversation early

I address problems while they are still manageable.

Lesson A brief, respectful conversation can clarify expectations before frustration becomes a pattern.

Put it to work Invite someone to discuss one small issue privately and state the purpose in advance.

DAY 51

Ask what each person needs

I look for the interests underneath competing positions.

Lesson Two people may disagree on the solution while sharing a need for predictability, fairness, or coverage.

Put it to work Ask each person what they need the arrangement to accomplish and summarize both answers.

Reading note Mary Parker Follett looked for solutions that address both sides' underlying interests.

Build good employee relations

DAY 52

Listen without deciding too soon

I can hear competing accounts before drawing a conclusion.

Lesson Hurrying to agree with the first story can blur which facts are still uncertain.

Put it to work Write down one point both people agree on and one point you need to verify.

DAY 53

Keep a route for concerns

I make it clear where employees can raise concerns.

Lesson A reliable reporting route gives people a way to ask for help even when their direct supervisor is involved.

Put it to work Name a second contact for concerns and make that information easy to find.

DAY 54

Take complaints seriously

I respond to concerns promptly and discreetly.

Lesson Acknowledge the concern, document it, and involve the designated person. Check in afterward for adverse changes.

Put it to work Review a fictional complaint and outline your first three actions.

Build good employee relations

DAY 55

Resolve the work issue

I turn an agreement into behavior people can follow.

Lesson An agreement works better when each person knows what to do differently and when you will review it.

Put it to work Turn one informal understanding into a specific action for each person.

DAY 56

Protect everyone’s dignity

I can be direct and respectful at the same time.

Lesson Discuss performance privately and describe what needs to change. Give the other person room to respond.

Put it to work Replace one character judgment with a clear description of a work behavior.

DAY 57

Follow up after resolution

I check whether the agreement is holding.

Lesson One good meeting helps. Follow-up shows whether the change survived the next work cycle.

Put it to work Put a follow-up date on one agreement and decide what evidence you will review.

Practice fair discipline

DAY 58

State the standard first

I make expectations clear before judging performance.

Lesson People can change a behavior more readily when they know the standard, how it was communicated, and how success will be measured.

Put it to work Confirm one key standard appears in writing and is explained the same way across teams.

DAY 59

Document what happened

I write records that others can verify.

Lesson Dates, actions, sources, and impact make records useful. Separate first-hand observation from what someone reported.

Put it to work Rewrite a recent incident note using only facts, sources, and the next action.

DAY 60

Ask before drawing conclusions

I give people an opportunity to explain.

Lesson A performance gap can reflect unclear instructions, lack of training, missing equipment, or a decision the employee made.

Put it to work Ask what happened, what got in the way, and what support would close the gap.

Practice fair discipline

DAY 61

Correct privately and promptly

I address the issue with respect and clarity.

Lesson A private correction gives room for a candid conversation and keeps the focus on the work.

Put it to work Prepare a three-sentence opener stating the standard, observation, and question.

DAY 62

Name what improvement looks like

I define the change and how I will check it.

Lesson A useful improvement plan describes the expected behavior, available support, deadline, and follow-up.

Put it to work Translate one vague instruction into an observable result with a review date.

DAY 63

Check for consistency

I review comparable situations before deciding.

Lesson Fair decisions take context into account. A consistent process helps you explain different outcomes with facts.

Put it to work Compare how two similar issues were handled and note any documented differences.

Practice fair discipline

DAY 64

Coordinate serious decisions

I involve the right people when consequences are significant.

Lesson A serious outcome deserves careful review of the facts, records, policy, and relevant obligations.

Put it to work List the roles that should review a serious discipline decision before it is communicated.

DAY 65

Plan a dignified meeting

I can deliver difficult news clearly and respectfully.

Lesson A planned meeting reduces improvisation. Confirm what can be shared, what happens next, and who owns the transition.

Put it to work Outline the opening statement and the practical information the employee would need afterward.

DAY 66

Check the system too

I hold myself accountable for conditions I control.

Lesson If several people miss the same standard, look at the instruction, tools, scheduling, and supervision as well as individual choices.

Put it to work Pick a repeat issue and test one change to the process that supports better performance.

DAYS 67–99

Sustain

Leave something that others know how to carry.

Keep the business useful to customers while protecting cash, time, family, and health. Use the last days to identify one asset or practice someone else can learn, use, and pass along.

Keep customers engaged

Serve well and repair mistakes

Protect health, time, and relationships

Prepare someone else to carry it

Keep customers engaged

DAY 67

Plan the first week

I set up the relationship before the work gets busy.

Lesson A clear kickoff tells customers who to contact, what to expect, and how changes will be handled.

Put it to work Send a kickoff checklist naming the owner, first milestone, and communication cadence.

Reading note Peter Drucker treated creating and keeping customers as central to the purpose of a business.

DAY 68

Make results visible

I help customers see the work and its value.

Lesson The routine work your team does may be invisible to the customer. Report outcomes in terms that matter to them.

Put it to work Send a short update with one outcome, one open issue, and the next milestone.

DAY 69

Check in before renewal

I discuss needs before a contract is due to end.

Lesson A renewal conversation works better when there is time to adjust scope, price, or service.

Put it to work Pick one upcoming renewal and schedule a conversation well before the decision date.

Keep customers engaged

DAY 70

Ask what changed

I stay curious about how the customer’s needs are changing.

Lesson The original scope can lag behind new conditions. Asking early gives both parties time to respond.

Put it to work Ask one client what has changed since the work started and whether their priorities have shifted.

DAY 71

Give feedback a route

I make it easy to tell me when something goes wrong.

Lesson Customers need a clear contact and a predictable response. Otherwise, an issue may surface only when they leave.

Put it to work Confirm each customer knows where to raise a concern and when to expect a reply.

DAY 72

Notice quiet accounts

I pay attention to customers I hear from least.

Lesson Silence can reflect satisfaction, frustration, or a change in priorities. A useful check-in removes guesswork.

Put it to work Ask one quiet account what is working and what would make the service more useful.

Keep customers engaged

DAY 73

Protect value under pressure

I discuss budget changes honestly.

Lesson When the customer needs a lower price, adjusting scope can be more sustainable than absorbing the same work at a loss.

Put it to work Prepare two scope options and show what each option delivers.

DAY 74

Make billing predictable

I prevent avoidable surprises on invoices.

Lesson An unexplained charge can undo trust built through good service. Document changes while people still remember agreeing to them.

Put it to work Compare one invoice to the scope and explain any change before sending it.

DAY 75

Earn the next conversation

I treat retention as work worth scheduling.

Lesson Engagement stays consistent when someone owns the next touchpoint and the reason for it.

Put it to work Add a thirty-day check-in to each priority account and name the person who owns it.

Serve well and repair mistakes

DAY 76

Answer with a next step

I can give a useful response before I have every answer.

Lesson A prompt acknowledgment and a specific update time reduce uncertainty while you investigate.

Put it to work Write a short acknowledgment you can use when a customer reports a problem.

DAY 77

Define dependable service

I deliver service people can recognize and verify.

Lesson Service quality improves when standards are observable. Courtesy and follow-through should be specific enough to coach.

Put it to work Choose one service standard and name the behavior that shows it was met.

DAY 78

Own the missed promise

I take responsibility for the part I can correct.

Lesson A clear acknowledgment signals that the customer will hear facts, actions, and follow-through.

Put it to work Write one sentence naming what was missed and one sentence stating what happens next.

Serve well and repair mistakes

DAY 79

Separate impact from intent

I can listen to the effect of my work on someone else.

Lesson A good intention can coexist with serious inconvenience. Understanding the impact helps you choose a remedy.

Put it to work Ask a customer which disruption mattered most to their team.

DAY 80

Put an owner on the repair

I keep corrective work attached to someone and a date.

Lesson A correction without a person and a deadline is easy to lose when normal work resumes.

Put it to work Assign one outstanding customer repair with a due date and a verification step.

DAY 81

Detect the repeat

I fix what keeps producing the same complaint.

Lesson Recurring issues often point to unclear expectations, missing tools, or a weak handoff.

Put it to work Group three recent complaints and look for one process they share.

Serve well and repair mistakes

DAY 82

Close the loop

I verify that the correction worked for the customer.

Lesson Marking an internal task complete says little about whether the customer’s situation improved.

Put it to work Ask the affected customer whether the fix worked and record the response.

DAY 83

Know when to escalate

I bring in the right person before a problem gets larger.

Lesson A frontline employee needs boundaries on what they can resolve and a route for urgent or unusual issues.

Put it to work Write one escalation threshold and a backup contact for the team.

DAY 84

Know when to end well

I can exit a poor fit with professionalism.

Lesson Some relationships require a planned transition. Follow the agreement and make ownership of open work clear.

Put it to work Review one difficult account and outline a clean handoff if continuing becomes impractical.

Protect health, time, and relationships

DAY 85

Protect the person doing the work

I treat my health as part of my ability to lead.

Lesson Sustained performance takes recovery. Everyone pays when a plan depends on constant exhaustion.

Put it to work Put one realistic recovery block on your calendar and protect it this week.

DAY 86

Notice your workload

I pay attention when the work repeatedly exceeds my capacity.

Lesson Repeated late nights can signal missing coverage, unclear priorities, or too much work for the current staffing.

Put it to work List the three tasks that most often push your day late and choose one to redesign.

DAY 87

Build a backup

I make it possible for work to continue when I step away.

Lesson Backup coverage protects clients, employees, and the owner. Give the backup access to the information they need.

Put it to work Write down the first three things someone needs to cover one of your duties.

Protect health, time, and relationships

DAY 88

Make movement practical

I choose physical activity I can do consistently.

Lesson A routine that fits your schedule is easier to maintain during a demanding week.

Put it to work Put a short walk or movement break between two recurring commitments.

DAY 89

Ask for help earlier

I seek support before problems isolate me.

Lesson Leaders who acknowledge strain make it easier for others to speak up and help.

Put it to work Tell one trusted person where you have been stretched and request one specific kind of support.

DAY 90

Notice strain in the team

I pay attention to patterns that may point to overload.

Lesson Repeated errors or missed handoffs can reflect workload and unclear systems. Ask about support before making assumptions.

Put it to work Check in with one team member about workload, tools, and barriers.

Protect health, time, and relationships

DAY 91

Set work boundaries

I can be available and still protect time to recover.

Lesson Predictable hours and an emergency route help people distinguish routine matters from urgent work.

Put it to work Write your response hours and name the channel for an urgent issue.

DAY 92

Stay present at home

I give people I love focused attention.

Lesson Providing and being present both take time. A protected commitment at home makes your definition of wealth visible.

Put it to work Choose one family commitment and put it on your calendar before the week fills.

DAY 93

Count what money supports

I measure wealth in health, freedom, relationships, and service.

Lesson Money can create choices. How you use those choices shows what you value.

Put it to work Write one way a recent business decision affected your life outside the business.

Prepare someone else to carry it

DAY 94

Plan for absence

I prepare my team to cover critical work.

Lesson Continuity depends on knowing who can take over and how they find reliable information.

Put it to work Ask a backup to walk through one critical process without your help and note what is missing.

DAY 95

Make good work repeatable

I build stability through small choices I repeat.

Lesson Darren Hardy’s compound effect emphasizes what repeated choices produce over time. A brief weekly review of coverage, client concerns, and cash makes it easier to act before a problem grows.

Put it to work Choose one check to repeat each week. Give it an owner, a time, and a record you can review after four weeks.

Reading note Read Darren Hardy’s The Compound Effect.

DAY 96

Change one thing at a time

I test changes so I can learn what worked.

Lesson A short trial with a before-and-after measure helps you decide whether to expand or undo a change.

Put it to work Choose an improvement, set a one-week trial, and decide what you will measure.

Reading note W. Edwards Deming urged managers to keep improving the processes that shape quality.

Prepare someone else to carry it

DAY 97

Build a cash reserve

I save for disruptions while I have room to act.

Lesson A reserve creates options when demand slows or a client pays late. Pick a target connected to your actual obligations.

Put it to work Choose a first reserve goal based on essential weekly outflows and set a transfer date.

Reading note Warren Buffett compared ready cash to oxygen: easy to overlook until you need it.

DAY 98

Reinvest with a purpose

I give surplus a job before I spend it.

Lesson Reinvestment can improve service, reduce risk, or build capacity. Compare the expected benefit and what happens if demand falls.

Put it to work Rank three uses for surplus and name the result that would justify the best one.

DAY 99

Prepare what the next generation can use

I prepare people and assets to carry the work beyond me.

Lesson Proverbs 13:22 speaks of leaving an inheritance to children’s children. In the author’s business application, legacy includes skills, relationships, records, and assets that someone else can actually use.

Put it to work Name one asset or practice to pass on, a willing person, and the first transfer step. Test whether they can use it without you.

Reading note Read Proverbs 13:22. Discuss what an inheritance would give someone the ability to do.

Reading and section references

Chapter numbers refer to **Build It. Lead It. Sustain It.** and **SUNS of Men**. The reading notes connect the author's application to the texts and thinkers that inform it.

01–09 Build	Guide 1–5, 24–27; SUNS 19–23, 36
10–18 Build	Guide 2–5, 11–15; SUNS 19, 34, 37
19–24 Build	Guide 7–10, 21–23; SUNS 33–38
25–33 Build	Guide 3–6, 16–19, 22, 58; SUNS 32–37
34–39 Lead	Guide 18, 24–28, 55; SUNS 20, 22, 32, 37
40–48 Lead	Guide 29, 32–33, 40–42, 54, 56; SUNS 23, 31–32
49–57 Lead	Guide 27, 29–31, 38–39, 45–46, 50; SUNS 22, 27, 32
58–66 Lead	Guide 38–39, 43–44, 51–53; SUNS 22, 32–33
67–75 Sustain	Guide 11–12, 16–17, 20–22; SUNS 26, 34, 37
76–84 Sustain	Guide 14, 16–20, 58; SUNS 22, 26–27, 33
85–93 Sustain	Guide 1, 21–22, 25–27; SUNS 15, 21, 30, 38
94–99 Sustain	Guide 7–10, 21–23, 55; SUNS 30, 33–38

Read the sources

Day 01 Stephen R. Covey · The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Day 02 Matthew 25:14–30 · Parable of the Talents, KJV

Day 03 James Allen · As a Man Thinketh

Day 04 Dennis Kimbro and Napoleon Hill · Think and Grow Rich: A Black Choice

Day 05 Orison Swett Marden · He Can Who Thinks He Can

Day 10 Jim Collins · Good to Great and the Hedgehog Concept

Day 30 Toyota Motor Corporation, history of the Toyota Production System

Day 35 The Metropolitan Museum of Art · Maat

Reading notes, continued

Day 37 Niccolò Machiavelli · The Prince, chs. 17–19, 22–23, 25

Day 44 Smithsonian, Madam C. J. Walker Collection

Day 51 “Constructive Conflict” (1925)

Day 67 The Drucker Institute, “Principles”

Day 95 Darren Hardy · The Compound Effect

Day 96 The Deming Institute, “14 Points for the Transformation of Management”

Day 97 Berkshire Hathaway, 2014 shareholder letter, p. 34

Day 99 Proverbs 13:22 · Inheritance for children’s children, KJV

Security company growth

A supplement for owners preparing to take on larger contracts, operate beyond the founder, or enter another market.

Build a branch that can operate without you

Work the numbers before you sign

Understand the politics and build a senior network

Work with enterprise buyers

Decide how to enter the next market

How security companies reached scale

Sources for the security-industry examples

Build a branch that can operate without you

Keep ownership of relationships and accountability clear. A site lead owns the post and shift handoff. An operations manager owns scheduling, backup coverage, inspection, and escalation. A client lead owns the kickoff, regular reviews, complaints, and renewals. Finance reconciles hours, payroll, invoices, and collections. Recruiting and training own readiness before the first shift.

Each owner needs decision authority, a backup, and a way to escalate. A supervisor should know what can be approved on the spot, what must be documented, and when to involve the owner or a designated reviewer. Train someone else to run the weekly review and let them do it.

Open the next market after a local manager can hold the standard and your existing market can absorb a vacancy. Verify company licensing, personnel requirements, and insurance for each jurisdiction and scope before making commitments. In Georgia, check the State Board of Private Detective and Security Agencies for current requirements. [11]

Before accepting a new market

- Name the local manager and alternate.
- Test a no-show, payroll exception, and client complaint.
- Confirm the recruiting pipeline and customer escalation route.
- Document who can stop a launch when a requirement is unresolved.

Work the numbers before you sign

Example: a two-officer site operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week calls for 336 billable officer-hours per week before nonbillable coverage, onboarding, and supervision. It also takes enough trained people to handle absences and avoid building the schedule around perpetual overtime.

At an illustrative $28 in direct cash outflow per officer-hour, the site uses $9,408 per week. Six weeks before the first usable collection would require $56,448 for those costs alone. Add startup equipment, training, supervision not already included, insurance timing, gaps between invoicing and collection, and a reserve for delays.

At a hypothetical $35 bill rate, weekly revenue would be $11,760 and the difference from the illustrative direct cost would be $2,352. That difference still has to support overhead and risk. Replace these example numbers with your own labor, payroll burden, coverage, insurance, and customer-payment data. Then stress-test overtime and an additional two weeks without a receipt.

A bid gets a yes only when

- Operations confirms the launch roster and coverage.
- Finance confirms the reserve survives a late payment.
- The agreement matches the priced scope, changes, invoicing, and acceptance.
- A manager owns customer communication after the sale.

Understand the politics and build a senior network

In a large account, several people can shape the decision. A site manager feels the coverage problem. Corporate security or risk decides what a credible response looks like. Finance asks about cost and continuity. Procurement oversees the process, and executive leadership may approve the commitment. A trusted contact can explain the organization and make an introduction. The owner remains responsible for giving each decision-maker a reason to support the work.

Build relationships before you need a contract. Good introductions can come from a satisfied client, a property manager, a risk adviser, an insurance broker, a production executive, or a prime contractor. Owner-to-executive relationships develop when you offer something useful, such as a relevant case study, a practical observation, or an introduction you can stand behind. Ask who else should be included and follow through when you say you will.

Politics also shows up outside the bid room. Local budgets, leadership changes, and public scrutiny can shift priorities. Follow open meetings, industry forums, and vendor briefings to understand those pressures. Prepare a short, credible account of your performance and make clear who handles the work when the founder is unavailable.

Once a public solicitation is active, read its communication and conflict rules and use the designated channel. Avoid gifts, favors, or requests for inside bid information. Document the contacts and disclosures the process requires. Consult the relevant procurement office or qualified counsel for questions about gifts, conflicts, lobbying, or contributions. Georgia and federal resources are listed below. [12–13]

Put it to work

- Choose three target accounts. Map the operational sponsor, technical evaluator, budget owner, and procurement contact.
- Ask one trusted customer for a specific introduction, with a one-page proof of performance.
- Write down the communication rules when a solicitation goes live.

Work with enterprise buyers

Amazon, Alphabet/Google, and Netflix are examples of enterprise buyers an owner might research. Their own scale also illustrates a useful principle: more locations and more partners increase the need for consistent records, repeatable service, and clear accountability. For a security firm, the commercial question is which site, team, facility operator, production, or prime contractor actually buys the work.

Amazon provides Supplier Connect for possible retail and logistics opportunities. A warehouse prospect may value a credible staffing launch, reliable relief, and auditable service records. Confirm whether the facility operator, Amazon entity, or a prime contractor holds the budget for the specific opportunity. [14]

Alphabet/Google publishes a supplier code addressing labor, health and safety, ethics, and management systems. For a corporate or technical site, prepare evidence of supervision, workforce readiness, and incident escalation. Identify which client information your team would handle and how you would protect it. [15]

Netflix publishes a supplier code, too. On a production, identify who contracts for the work and how the locations team communicates schedule changes. A studio, production entity, locations vendor, or prime may have different roles. Confirm the contracting entity and direction of payment for each assignment. [16]

For any of these prospects, start with a specific service and a credible introduction. Read the current supplier rules. Build a packet with relevant references you may share, coverage assumptions, insurance and licensing information, a launch plan, and reporting examples. State the exact relationship if you worked through a production entity or subcontractor.

Enterprise opportunity check

- Identify the site or project, actual contracting entity, and procurement route.
- Document the shift coverage, working capital, reporting, and approvals needed.
- Win a repeatable first assignment before committing resources to an enterprise-wide rollout.

Decide how to enter the next market

Growing from customer referrals fits a service company with a strong local reputation. Ask for introductions to customers with similar operating needs. Win enough work in one corridor to make supervision and backup staffing practical before stretching to several distant sites.

A partner can help deliver in a new market, but assign responsibility for license checks, hiring, training, incident reporting, insurance, and customer contact in writing. Pilot the relationship before depending on it for a major account.

Before buying another business, verify recurring revenue, contract assignment or change-of-control terms, customer concentration, receivables, payroll and classification records, insurance claims, and who will stay after close. Ask the proposed local manager to explain the first 30 days. Have qualified advisers review the deal and verify the applicable requirements before signing.

After a purchase, prioritize continuity. Keep client communication consistent, pay people correctly and on time, reconcile the first invoices, and identify contract renewals. Then align systems at a pace that does not disrupt service.

A 90-day scaling assignment

- Days 1–30: estimate bid economics, name backup managers, and track the five measures.
- Days 31–60: pilot the no-founder operating week and build one concentrated pipeline.
- Days 61–90: make one go/no-go decision based on people, cash, demand, and obligations.

How security companies reached scale

Allied Universal

AlliedBarton and Universal Services of America merged in 2016. Allied Universal went on to acquire G4S in 2021. A national platform needs integration capacity across payroll, reporting, clients, and management. [1–2]

Norred & Associates

Allied Universal announced its acquisition of the Atlanta firm in 2022. Its example prompts an owner to ask what will transfer to a buyer: client relationships, supervisors, contracts, and the ability to deliver without the founder. [3]

International Security Management Group (ISMG)

Universal Protection Service announced its acquisition of the Atlanta-based company in 2014. Prepare for diligence by keeping contracts, personnel records, and site-level results organized while the business is still independent. [4]

Wackenhut

Group 4 Falck purchased Wackenhut in 2002. The example shows how an acquisition can change ownership while the combined organization has to keep client service and management working through the transition. [5]

GardaWorld

GardaWorld describes combining organic growth with acquisitions. It cited its 2019 Whelan acquisition as a way to reenter U.S. security services. A purchase can provide a market presence, but the buyer still has to integrate operations. [6–7]

Blackwater / Academi

Use this federal-contracting example to study oversight. A 2012 Justice Department case involving the company, then known as Academi, resulted in a deferred prosecution agreement. Build independent escalation, oversight, and a documented compliance program before entering sensitive work. [8]

Global Elite Group / Global Security Associates

The aviation security example shows a different path: build expertise in one demanding customer segment and repeat it across locations. H.I.G. announced its acquisition of Global Elite Group from Securitas in 2026. [9–10]

“Global” is treated here as Global Elite Group / Global Security Associates, the aviation-security example. Company histories illustrate different growth paths. They do not establish how any specific award or introduction was made.

Sources for the security-industry examples

[1] Allied Universal: 2016 launch after the AlliedBarton and Universal Services of America merger

[2] G4S: 2021 change-of-control announcement

[3] Allied Universal: acquisition of Atlanta-based Norred & Associates

[4] Universal Protection Service: acquisition of International Security Management Group (2014)

[5] Group 4 Falck: financial disclosure of the 2002 Wackenhut purchase

[6] GardaWorld: company history and expansion through acquisitions

[7] GardaWorld: North American expansion through Whelan Security

[8] U.S. Department of Justice: Academi/Blackwater deferred prosecution agreement (2012)

[9] U.S. Department of Homeland Security: Global Elite Group and Global Security Associates

[10] H.I.G. Capital: acquisition of aviation specialist Global Elite Group from Securitas (2026)

[11] Georgia Secretary of State: Board of Private Detective and Security Agencies

[12] Georgia DOAS: Georgia Procurement Manual, solicitation communications

[13] Acquisition.gov: Federal Acquisition Regulation 3.104, Procurement integrity

[14] Amazon Supplier Connect: supplier consideration for retail and logistics operations

[15] Alphabet / Google: Supplier Code of Conduct

[16] Netflix: Supplier Code of Conduct