

Start My Consulting Business

Stop whining. Take action. *Change your life.*

Breakthrough Consulting

Week 1: Find & Eliminate Barriers

Homework

There's a lot of homework for this week, but it's going to lay the foundation for your success as you move through the course, as well as after you complete the course.

1. **Log every task** you do on your business. In a separate section of your notebook, keep a daily log of every task you do in your consulting business--including tasks, videos, and homework for this course. Every task you do for your business brings you one step closer to your goals, whether they're short-, intermediate-, or long-term goals. You'll be building up a long list of actions you've taken to show how much you've accomplished, marvel at your efforts, and show how far you've come. To log your progress, I recommend an actual paper notebook, since you can carry it wherever you go, and you can use it as a physical reminder. If you dead-set opposed to using paper, then Evernote also works well.
2. Log your feelings throughout the day, and their associated thoughts. This is especially important for negative feelings related to tasks for your consulting business. You want to do 3 things here:
 - 1) Log the feeling.
 - 2) Log the thought that triggered the feeling.
 - 3) If you're using a hidden story, marvel at it, and then replace it with a new story that's more objective, proactive, positive, and action-oriented.
3. List what you think are your highest-value tasks for building your consulting business. For now, it doesn't matter if those really are the highest-value tasks; the point is to list what you THINK are your highest-value tasks. These would be tasks that move you toward your goal. Write down 3-5 tasks. After you've written down your highest-value tasks, for each of those tasks, write:
 - 1) How you feel/react when thinking about doing each task (dread, anxious, overwhelmed, nervous, etc.).
 - 2) The hidden story you're telling yourself about each task.
 - 3) How you'd feel if you'd spent time doing the task or had accomplished the task. The feelings from this step are the feelings you'll use as rewards or reinforcements, and you'll use them to boost your motivation to make it more likely you'll do these difficult but highest-value tasks.
 - 4) A new story that you'll use instead of the old, negative hidden story.

Start My Consulting Business

Stop whining. Take action. *Change your life.*

4. Pick 2 of the following strategies to use this week. You'll eventually want to try them all out, but for now, just start with 2 strategies, and experiment with them to see how they work, and what how you can adapt them so that they work best for you. Log your progress in your notebook.
 - 1) **Precommitment:** Use Stickk.com or HabitForge.com to create habits that you precommit to do. You'll want to design your commitment/habit so that it's targeted to building your consulting business. You don't need to figure out the exact tasks for now, but you may want to, for example, commit to spending, say 3 hours per week building your business. As you move through this course, you can add in more specific tasks from future homework assignments.
 - 2) **Motivation Chaining:** Create a motivation chain for what you expect to be some of your most challenging tasks, such as calling a prospect on the phone. Be specific with your plan, including any prep you'll need to do. You'll use this plan later for times when you need the added motivational boost.
 - 3) **Combine motivations:** Identify things you really WANT to do, and how you might combine them with the things you know you SHOULD do but find difficult. Again, you'll want to be very specific and concrete so that you create a plan that you can use later when you're struggling with getting yourself motivated for a particular task.
 - 4) **Specific schedule:** Plan out specific blocks of time during the next 7 days when you'll work on your consulting business (for example, 3-3:30 p.m. Wednesday). Ideally, put specific tasks in each block of time so you know exactly what you'll work on. The more specific you make it, the easier the task will be when it's time to do it. In essence, you're priming yourself to begin thinking about the task so that it's easier later.
 - 5) **Structure your environment:** Brainstorm ways you can structure your environment to make it MORE likely that you'll tackle high-value tasks and LESS likely that you'll engage in procrastination, busywork, and other time-wasters. For example, you can disable e-mail and calendar notifications so you aren't distracted, or even completely disable your browser to ensure you don't surf instead of work.
5. **Marveling:** Practice marveling throughout your days this week. Note how you feel, and marvel at any:
 - 1) positive feelings
 - 2) hidden stories