

## OPENING STORY – LOST IN THE WOODS

- In May of 2019 Amanda Eller went missing in a Hawaiian forest.
- Half way through the hike she stopped to meditate. She got disoriented.
- Found 17 days later, clinging to life.
- She was surviving minute to minute in the NOW, but didn't know where the NEXT was (parking lot)
- She was lucky to be found alive.
- Many entrepreneurs' companies are clinging to life. Or perish unceremoniously...lost.

## BACKGROUND

- What is the biggest challenge your business faces?
- Most people don't really know.
- We instead simply address the next thing.
- Saying "We focus on urgent to the disregard of the important."
- The reality is we pick the apparent and make it urgent.
- Our urgency (our effort) needs to go to the important.
- The Eisenhower Principle — "The urgent are not important and the important are never urgent."
- The important are activities that have an outcome moving our goals forward. The urgent demand attention and usually serve someone else's goals.

## THE CHAIN

- Imagine a chain with 25 links between us.
- The goal is to make the chain stronger.
- We could simply work on every link in any order... but that won't help.
- A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. You can strengthen all the links, but if the weakest link is not improved, it will continue to break.
- A chain is only ever as strong as its weakest link.
- First find the weakest link, then strengthen it, and the entire chain is stronger.
- A business is like a chain. It has a chain of events and activities. It has elements that are linked together.
- Entrepreneurs often say, "I'm working on everything, yet nothing seems to work."
- The problem is entrepreneurs are strengthening all the links in their business, and until they improve the weakest link, the chain will continue to snap at the same spot.
- You must find the weakest link, strengthen it, and the entire chain becomes stronger. Then find the next weakest link.

## SURVIVAL TRAP

- **3 STEP DEMO**
  1. Draw A with a circle around it (now);
  2. Draw three arrows in any direction away from A(choice);
  3. Draw B (next) in one of the corners of the paper.
- How many arrows point to B? Why not all of them? Because you can't go to B if you don't know where B is.
- If no arrows point to B, we go to another A and try to escape again, going in circles like Amanda Eller.
- If an arrow or a few point to B, that is called happenstance. It is the worst scenario, because we think we are making momentum, but don't know where B is. Luck is not a method we can count on.
- We need to know the NEXT. Where B is going to B

## COMMON DNA

- Peel back the skin of humanity and we are the same.
- Peel back the business skin and it is the same. All businesses have a common structure. I call it the 25 core needs of business.

## MASLOW HIERARCHY

- **DEMO** – Draw the 5 levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
  - **Physiological** (basic biological survival); **Safety** (protection from harm); **Belonging** (need for community and companionship); **Esteem** (need for recognition and significance); and **Self Actualization** (living purpose, achieving one's full potential and serving a greater good).
- The foundational needs must always be adequately served before we can satisfy higher level needs.
- We can be experiencing Belonging when out to lunch with a dear friend, but the second you choke on the hamburger you are eating, we immediately go to the base (Physiological) trying to dislodge the blockage. The base must always be adequately satisfied.
- We are wired into ourselves. Our gut indicates when there is a problem. We can feel when we want or need something.
- We are wired into ourselves, but we are not wired into our business. Our gut does not serve us nearly as well in business. We need to adhere to the Business Hierarchy of Needs and use empirical data and analysis to know what the business needs.

## BUSINESS HIERARCHY

- **DEMO** – Draw the 5 levels of the Business Hierarchy of Needs
  - **Sales** (creation of cash); **Profit** (creation of stability); **Order** (creation of efficiency); **Impact** (creation of transformation); **Legacy** (creation of permanence).
- Just like Maslow's hierarchy, the foundation must be adequately served before we can serve higher level needs.
- Sales is the oxygen for a business. Profit is the absorption of the oxygen into the business body. Order is the muscle. The first three levels are what your business must get to have strength.
- The two highest levels are how your business contributes.
- Impact is when a business systemically transforms the lives of all (or most customers) for the better. This is not the one off "you changed my life" but most people feel their life is transformed.
- Legacy is when the business is designed to serve lifetimes to come.
- **STORY:** EcoFiltro — Founded by Philip Wilson in Guatemala. His company brings clean water to Guatemala. And...more disposable income and clean air. People burn less wood.

## APPLY TO YOUR BUSINESS

- Always start at the base and ask if it is currently adequate to support the level above it.
- This is like building a structure. Don't build a massive foundation (of sales) and put a tiny shed of profit above it. It will collapse in. Each level must be able to support the level above it, but not overwhelm the level below it.
- Don't build a weak foundation and then crush it with too big of a level above it. For example, don't have a small volume of sales and try to extract massive profit from it. Don't try to build tremendous order (efficiency) throughout the organization without having consistent profit and so forth.
- Empirical data is critical. This is not a game of hunches. It is a science of data.
- Take a free starter exam at [FixThisNext.com/your-uniquely-named-link](https://FixThisNext.com/your-uniquely-named-link)
- **OPTION:** Have participants take the exam live on their phone or computer. Then do hot seats of what people find.
- **STORY:** University of Ole Miss identifies a sales problem: the campus is not attractive enough. They prioritize it and the application rate steadily climbs

## GET TO GIVE

- The popular saying is "give to get" but that doesn't work in business. You must get in order to give.
- You can't skip levels. The downfall of many businesses is they have a socially impactful purpose, but skip the stages of sales, profit and order to go right to impact. That is a 4th floor in thin air and it collapses.
- The first three layers are about getting. Your business must get sales, and profit and order...in order to give through impact and legacy.
- Some business owners may choose to stay at the GET level. That is OK. No judgement.
- **STORY:** I know a business owner who has a business like a cash ATM. It has constant cash and needs none of his time. He plans to golf 5 times a week. There is nothing wrong with that. His business is strong and feeds the economy. I just wonder if at some point, he will round the 18<sup>th</sup> hole for the 100<sup>th</sup> time and say, is this all there is?
- The GIVE stage is something where you contribute to more than the economy, you are contributing at the highest level of the human journey.
- **STORY:** Philp Wilson of EcoFiltro said he is not a business owner as much as a business steward.

## CONCLUSION

- Most business owners are in a rat race of their own making.
- Right now you can open your email and there are dozens if not hundreds of things that demand your attention.
- Our gut is not a good guide.
- It feels good to get shit done. But if you are getting shit done, that means you are doing shit.
- Right now you have a choice. Continue to work on everything, or start working on the right thing.
- Your business will reveal what that right thing is. You just need to look at the DNA.