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Pitfalls: Avoid These 5 Mistakes, with Steven Neuner and Ryan Cassin

Shannon Waller: Hi, Shannon Waller here and welcome to Team Success. Oh my gosh, today I am back with Steven Neuner and Ryan Cassin of Superpowers, and we are on episode five of how to really elevate the whole conversation around assistants, being leveraged, being supported, what to do. And today we're going to talk about what not to do, which I think is completely cool and fascinating. And literally I'm leaning into the microphone of the camera right now, because we've called this one "Pitfalls—Avoid These Mistakes." So this is what not to do, and I'm sure that you guys have created this list out of, A, what you've done and didn't work so well. And B, what you've seen a lot of other people do that doesn't work.

So I'm excited to share this wisdom. There's five key points, and you also have a lot of coaching about how to not make the big errors that other people have made. So thank you for sharing this wisdom with us. For me, this is gold. We all love coaching entrepreneurs on how to be more successful in teamwork. You have your specialty, I have mine, but I feel like we're so like-minded in this. So just thank you for your generosity and sharing all of your insights.

Steven Neuner: Thank you for having us here. It's always great to be a part of this community and just all learning and growing together. I would say I've made none of these mistakes. I've been totally perfect in all of my assistant teamwork. So every mistake that you've heard here is 100% about Mr. Cassin here.

Ryan Cassin: I'll fill in the blanks. Gladly. Glad I have a role to play here.

Steven Neuner: Bet you wish you would have gone first now, buddy.

Shannon Waller: Steven's never made any mistakes ever.

Ryan Cassin: I'd like to get his wife on the record on that one, please.

Shannon Waller: 100%. 100%. I really love the tone that we're taking with this. I actually do lean into these things, and this is one of the interesting characteristics about entrepreneurs. This is how the story goes. When executives or corporate people are talking to one another, they're sharing their successes. And not that entrepreneurs don't, but they are more interested in hearing from other people, what did you do that didn't work? What traps should I avoid? What should I not do? Share what didn't work. And here's what I did that I thought was going to be a huge win that was a total disaster. We love the learning stories. I think this is going to be fun, first of all. And this is in the spirit of improvement. This is in the spirit of being useful. This is in the spirit of saving someone else the pain that we went through, and there's a generosity to that.



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I love the lightheartedness, I love the learning, I love the spirit of improvement. I always love the coaching. This is a lighthearted way to talk about a serious subject and knowledge that's been very hard-won I'm sure. And it's really fun to be able to share it in a way that you're not bad or wrong if you make these mistakes. It's simply what works better and what doesn't. So the spirit that we're talking about this with, to me is just as important as the actual content. And it's great to be able to laugh at your mistakes. I was talking with Dan Sullivan about this actual topic this morning, about transforming things and not judging yourself harshly. He goes, "Okay, you're going to make mistakes, but don't do it again. Don't relive it and beat yourself up over it. That's not the point."

The point is to learn from it. Our tool is The Experience Transformer, so that you can learn what to do differently next time. That's how you get smarter. So just go, okay, learn from it, move on, which is what we're going to be sharing today. All right, so let's talk about "Pitfalls—Avoid These Mistakes." We're going to talk through a number of common pitfalls that entrepreneurs can fall into when working with an assistant. So this is really very specific—what to do, what not to do. And the first one is delivering growth goals abrasively. So what does this look or sound like? Because we all have growth goals. There's things that we want to accomplish, but there's an effective way to do this and a not-effective way to do this. So let's start with the not effective.

What does it look or sound like when someone's not delivering the goals properly or in a way that works? Ryan?

Ryan Cassin: The biggest thing we see here is, it's twofold. A, impatience. We're primarily talking to a Quick Start audience here. There's an expectation that in that Quick Start, everything is up and running and running perfectly from the get go. Folks are looking for those quick and easy wins up front, and they're looking for that early affirmation that the relationship is on the right path. Part of being able to have this relationship is knowing that you've got the right-fit executive assistant and you're looking for signals early on that you have that right-fit person. And there's that heightened awareness of every little thing. If you think about a five-year relationship, any one project is contributing to a very large body of work. The average is very hard to move.

You know who that person is and what they're capable of. But early on in particular, you're setting that average with every single task. And so that's one of the biggest challenges we run into, is just that overall sense of impatience rather than taking the long view of the relationship.

Shannon Waller: I heard a great quote. It's from Rick Rubin in a book called *The Creative Act*, which he said, "Impatience is an argument with reality." And I was like, damn.



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Ryan Cassin: This is brilliant.

Shannon Waller: That's a really good one. My hand was raised. It's like, yep, that would be me. I represent that remark. It's being impatient with reality. And it's so true. But I think your point about the easy wins is also quite relevant. We're not good at delayed gratification, and we often take those early wins as a signal that things are going well, or if they're not there, a signal that things are going bad and we should bail. So how do you marry these two things together? That need for quick wins—it's not even a want sometimes, it's a need—with, at the same time, not coming across like a jerk about presenting those goals?

Ryan Cassin: Absolutely. I think the decision or maybe the mindset that needs to be determined by the entrepreneur, the person working with the executive assistant, the Strategic Assistant, right from the get-go needs to be, is this person, is my assistant going to be responsible for menial work or meaningful work?

Shannon Waller: Menial or meaningful work.

Ryan Cassin: And if it's menial, your impatience remains high, your expectations remain unhinged from reality. You're setting yourself up for a really bad relationship where the amount of friction can never be overcome. Versus meaningful work, which is, you're taking the time to invest in the relationship in ways that don't immediately translate to results. Reading your assistant into what your vision of the future is. What are your annual goals, quarterly goals? Where are you going with the business? What are the challenges you're facing? What are the ways that you're taking the time to really bring your executive assistant up to speed so you have that mind meld so that your assistant is now looking at the world in the same way that you do because that's where the opportunity for extraordinary results comes from.

Shannon Waller: There's so much I love of what you just said. Steven, I know you want to weigh in.

Steven Neuner: I would just say, another part of this is awareness. Part of the reason why we are so passionate about getting this message out to everyone is because awareness is a crucial thing. Entrepreneurs sometimes are riding five or six rollercoasters at once.

Shannon Waller: That's a good one.

Steven Neuner: We would oftentimes never say things to other people that we would say to ourselves. Well, who are the closest people to us? A lot of times, it's our assistants, it's our spouses, it's our children. And so it's quickly, just by proximity, it's a very close relationship,



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and then over time it's a deep relationship. I think awareness is a big tap on the shoulder, like, hey, this is a person, and people matter.

Shannon Waller: I love that. In fact, one of the things, one of your coaching points here, is really recognizing with whom you're working. And we've touched on this a little bit before. So, almost by definition, and you guys would know this because you use profiles, yes. Is that most assistants are not Quick Start. Most of them have more, from a Kolbe standpoint, kolbe.com, are much more Fact Finder/Follow Thru, which they need to be because they need to get that kinda work done. They've got the mental energy for it that you don't. But from a personality side, they don't tend to be as fast-paced. The way that their task focus tends to be quieter, much more even paced. They're not slow paced, but they're even paced. But when you're moving, when you're riding five or six rollercoasters at once, it can look slow. It's not. It's just even.

One of the coaching points I got from my previous executive assistant, Nicole, she goes, "I know I am a support person. I know that is my best role. I've been in a bunch of different roles." Super smart, super capable. She goes, "I know that I am the best in this role." And I was like, that self-awareness blew me away. First of all, I'm like, okay, you're my human just because you know that. And I needed someone to support me, because as I'm riding the five or six rollercoasters, which feels very true right now for me, I need someone who's got my back. Like, "Shannon, have you eaten? Did you get your tea?" All the little caring things. And I want someone to care about my future. I want someone who's going to be aware of that.

So one of the things that you kind of let me little secret in, is you say they're much more empathetic. They are largely empathetic people, and entrepreneurs are passionate people. These are general stereotypes, but I have to say they're stereotypes for a reason.

Ryan Cassin: They ring true. For sure. And one of the things that we sometimes run into, and it's a little—call it a pink flag, maybe not a red flag, because I think it's well-intentioned—is sometimes folks will say, well, I just need a copy of myself or I need a second me to be able to get the kind of results I need out of this relationship. And what we try to do is shift their mindset that they need a complement to them, not a clone of them. Because the skills, the ability to do the things that are difficult for entrepreneurs to complete, the follow through and being able to get things implemented, those are things that require a different, complementary skillset and, frankly, personality, than what a lot of entrepreneurs have.

There's tremendous value in what entrepreneurs bring to the world, but there are also limits to what they're capable of doing themselves, and that's where you need to bring in somebody like an executive assistant, or, heck, for that matter, it's the reason we hire to begin with, is to find people who are better than we could possibly be at the different roles and tasks in the



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business. And so looking for that complement and not a clone is so critically important. And there are ways, I think, to address some of that Quick Start anxiety, especially early on in the relationship. One of the things that we coach our executive assistants on is, even if a project is going to take considerable time to complete, there's nothing that stops you from being responsive right away and feeling like there's this momentum and energy to the project, that your assistant is aware of what you've asked for and is going to take action on it.

And that alone can really lower the pressure of the relationship early on and build that confidence that you've got somebody who is going to be on top of it for you and is going to be able to complete the tasks for you and be able to finally help lessen the load that you have on your plate.

Shannon Waller: One of the other ways to state a pitfall is, do not clone yourself for this role. That is one of the very worst mistakes you can make. Because then the person's going to want your job, not to do the job you want them to do. Why would you do that? This is where we buy personality. Sometimes, we buy the passion, we buy the energy, and we're like, great. I want a complementary me, but with the same kind of like... not realizing they're going to completely burn out on those tasks. Once you have expanded the bandwidth, and I think I may be repeating myself, but one of our clients, once he learned about Kolbe, but it applies to a bunch of things. He goes, "Before I knew about Kolbe, I thought everyone was just like me, only not as good."

And I can't say it without still cracking up. It was so funny. And that's the lack of awareness that you want a complementary human who might look different, they look calmer than you do, and that's a good thing, not a bad thing. So yes.

Steven Neuner: And no matter what they are that is different, they're not a lesser entity. They're not a lesser entity. And again, back to what I said earlier, people matter. And look, in the spirit of, I've never done this before, AKA I've done this before. I know these things. We help people with these things, but even just the other day, I delivered something probably a little bit rough. Here's the trick, the real F word. I'm sorry, will you forgive me? I was an idiot in the moment. I was stressed about this and that. I'm sorry. It doesn't have to be a thing. But the problem is, sometimes we forget to go, if we're thinking lesser entity and we don't treat them like they are, which is truly, truly a crucial team member for you, those little nicks add up to someone that's really empathetic over time and they turn into big wounds.

Shannon Waller: So wise, so wise, yes. Please forgive me. It's a really good line. And to really treat people as people, as they are your support partner. I've talked about that before. That's what I call my Katrina now. She's my support partner, which means the implication is equal, complementary but equal. Don't be arrogant is what I was thinking of as you were talking.



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They're not better than us, they're just different. They don't need the limelight, they don't need the attention, and they have a massive contribution to make.

Steven Neuner: I like equal in form, unique in function.

Shannon Waller: You guys have all of these great things, like genial or meaningful, complementary or clone. Say that again, Steven?

Steven Neuner: Equal in form, unique in function.

Shannon Waller: So good. Look at all these drops of wisdom. Ryan.

Ryan Cassin: There's a temptation here to look at it just purely from the, is the executive assistant performing? Is the executive assistant doing the right thing? And certainly that's the general nature of the direction of the relationship, especially early on. But I think one of the other things that limits growth in the relationship, that we see quite a bit, is an entrepreneur's desire to project him- or herself as perfect. I think oftentimes we're expected to have all the answers or appear in control or seem bulletproof as a leader of the organization. This is how we inspire confidence in our team. And that may be well and good. That may be your leadership style with your team, but I would just caution that that really limits the surface area of things that your executive assistant can support you with.

And so being you, flaws and all, I think is an important piece of a really high-functioning relationship. And it shows up in ways that are, I think, unexpected over the course of the relationship. If you can have that really authentic, open, transparent, honest back and forth.

Steven Neuner: No matter how ridiculous it is, literally, Ryan and I, Mr. Cassin and I had a meeting earlier today, and I'm known for getting into deep work and getting lost in time, losing time. And so he had something he needed to tweak just a few minutes. And so it was, assistant changing the calendar, sending text message, all those things. And I previously felt super ridiculous. It's all scheduled. Why the hell can't I just stay on track with time? But it just is what it is. And so having someone that will go so far as to call you or whatever, to give you that extra nudge, may seem ridiculous, but if it's what you need, it's what you need.

Shannon Waller: And you have to ask yourself, who's judging that? Compared to who? We have all of these conversations in our head that frankly were put there. We did not create them. If we didn't have some of that, we would just say, here's how I need help. And I'm laughing because I had someone- Conversation with Dan ran late, so I'm like, could you please let this person know? And then I had to chat them in the Zoom, and then I literally had someone kicking me out of a meeting to join this Zoom, right? It's on my link, so I had to go open it.



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She's like, I have to kick you out because Katrina said I needed to do this so you can be on time for your next thing. Yes, we both had that experience today and it's cool.

And this is why being transparent, to go back to your point, Ryan, about the goals, the other factor here is long term. If you're just looking for a short-term person to do a task, that's not what we're talking about here. This is someone who's going to be your partner for your long term, your three-year, your one-year, your three months in terms of what you want to accomplish. So they have the context. And this is the other thing I know from the types of profiles that phenomenal executive assistants have, they need context. And you providing your longer term goals is the map. If you just give them this little task, they can only see the next two steps ahead. If you're giving them the map, they can see it miles down the road and they can help plan. And frankly, their capabilities for that are better than most of ours.

So you're just shooting yourself in the foot if you do not do that, and do it graciously, do it kindly, almost like you would with a client. They're not you. And the last point, I'm amazed I remembered all these, if you would try to pretend you're perfect, they see through you in about three seconds, because you'll mess something up, you'll get impatient. You'll be like, ugh, I don't want to do that right now. And then if you still pretend to be perfect, they just know you're lying to yourself and everybody else. So why even bother? And it's so much more liberating, say, this is me, this is what I have mental energy for, this is what I don't. Sorry, I'm being grumpy today. It's not you. Just being super honest. First of all, it takes way less energy and it creates a much more trusting relationship.

I can't imagine doing it any other way, to be honest. What you see is what you get with me, that's for sure. All right, let's go to point number two, which I think is hysterical. And I love how you've articulated this: task hoarding. So what is task hoarding and why does it matter?

Ryan Cassin: It's that scenario we run into where the entrepreneur is holding onto everything so tightly that they're not giving their executive assistant an inch to even come up and help them. This shows up in a few different ways. Certainly there's the baton that you've got there is the perfect example. This shows up in some unexpected ways as well. We run into this a lot. So we'll check in with folks at the 30-, 60-, and 90-day point in the initial onboarding to make sure things are on track. We're talking to the entrepreneur at the 30-, 60-, 90-day mark, but we're talking to their assistant every single week in coaching calls to make sure that the relationship is on track. And one of the interesting things that we see sometimes is that the feedback we get from assistants is that they're being ignored.

So their messages that they're sending or calls that they're making are being ignored by the entrepreneur. They're turning out to be the blocker. And sometimes that's an adjustment period and getting used to the new relationship in a new, more efficient way ultimately to work. But oftentimes what we found, one of the pernicious hidden ways that that shows up is task



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hoarding. That they're just not comfortable giving their tasks to someone else because they don't have confidence that anyone can do it as well as they can. And it's a really deeply limiting mindset. And I find that even folks who've hired for other people on their team for different areas, the tasks that we find that the entrepreneurs are still holding onto that are not a good use of their time are the hardest ones for them to delegate because they're probably competent or excellent at them, and in many cases to use some Coach Unique Ability terms, but they're not the Unique Ability tasks. And so they hold onto them tightly and they don't delegate those very easily even though they've delegated other things in their business and they consider themselves to be very effective delegators otherwise.

Shannon Waller: Yes. And the other reason I find that people do not—this is something we are all intimately familiar with—the other reason why people do not hand stuff off is they've been burned before. They have scar tissue. So they've handed it off, they've trusted someone, probably the wrong "Who," because they didn't have the process for hiring the right one. The person dropped the baton. I literally have a baton from Amazon in my hot little hands right now, is like, oh, this is too important. And the things I see are email. I'm curious to see yours. Well, it's email, scheduling, and travel. Those are the three things that I hear about the most often. I'm curious to see if that compares to your list.

Ryan Cassin: Very much so. Email is deeply personal. It is the ultimate expression of "nobody can do it as well as I can." It feels very personal. There's a lot of context involved. There's a lot of, "I've known this person for five years and I'm not comfortable having somebody else involved in the relationship," which is fine. But again, that can be very, very limiting when you multiply it across every relationship that you possibly have because email is the catch-all for all of those people. I certainly see it email. Travel's funny because we run into two different groups: the people who love to do it themselves, and then the people who really geek out on all of the points and all of the different ways to optimize travel. Folks go down that rabbit hole quite a bit.

Shannon Waller: Yeah, they do.

Ryan Cassin: There's also sometimes discomfort just communicating preferences there. And I think you can see this more broadly in task hoarding is, I have a certain way that I like things done, or I have a certain way that I like to travel. Maybe you like to sit at the front of the plane. Maybe you like to get the nice five-star hotel, right?

Shannon Waller: Aisle seat, second one behind the bulkhead. I have my preference.

Ryan Cassin: Absolutely. Everybody does. And sometimes those preferences are uncomfortable to communicate for folks. There's anxiety, there's head trash about "I like to fly



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first class everywhere I go, and that's important to me because I arrive more rested and refreshed and less stressed." And we sometimes see that people will hold onto tasks where they're uncomfortable communicating their preferences on them, and that it really limits how useful the relationship can be over the long haul, over something that ultimately your assistant doesn't really care about. They don't care. They just want to make sure that they have the opportunity to do it right for you. And if you don't have that communication, they'll never understand, well, why is it that he's holding onto this one particular thing that I'm perfectly capable of doing? Where's the distrust? Where's the disconnect in the relationship?

Shannon Waller: And they end up taking it personally, by the way.

Ryan Cassin: Without a doubt.

Shannon Waller: And so let's see if we can get rid of some of this head trash because I think this is important. And again, it's that fear of being judged. And I think a lot of assistants will be shocked to hear that the reason why you're not being handed off stuff, and I call it having a "Delegation Death Grip," and you have this whole team around you, or this great person, and you're still holding onto the whole thing. I demonstrate this. I put someone in a rolly chair, I'm like, "Okay, I'm going to pass you this task, and then I want you to take it from me." And I start working backwards and the chair moves. It looks like I've handed off, but I haven't really, right? I'm not letting go.

And I think, again, going back to my previous point, assistants would be shocked to find out that the reason they're not getting stuff is because the entrepreneur is afraid of being judged. And thought to be too arrogant, too snotty, too hoity-toity, too throwing the money around, whatever the excuses are. And to your point, they don't care. They actually just want you to have what you want, and you don't need to justify it. Steven, is that what you were going to say?

Steven Neuner: Yeah, yeah. Just that sometimes that humility or whatever that can be thought or framed as is actually a form of arrogance, because they don't necessarily want to be you, right? They have their own, again, seeing them as equal in form, unique in function, they have their own things that they care about, and those aren't your things. So it's very freeing if you can release those and definitely strengthens that teamwork.

Shannon Waller: Well, and to some extent, if you're really focused on that, that's your ego talking. That's not about you being the most effective you can be. And you don't have to justify what you want, but nor do they. I don't know anyone who wants to sit the very back of the plane, to be perfectly honest, but maybe just getting on a flight's a big deal. Who knows? You're not in that person's shoes, as Dan would say. This is why sometimes entrepreneurs



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hearing from team members, "No, I really want to support you." This is something, if you're an assistant listening to this, you're like, maybe that's why he or she isn't giving me these things. You're like, you know I don't care where you sit. You know I don't care what pillow you want at the hotel. I'm happy to provide those things for you. If it makes you happier, that's what I want. That almost needs to be communicated. Does that make sense?

Ryan Cassin: I think this is where the more meta conversations and the EQ of a really great assistant play a role. And so rather than saying, trying to hammer the same question, how can I help you do this? How can I do your travel? Can I get into your email inbox? Having the broader conversation about what are the blockers or what's getting in the way or how can I be more effective for you in this particular area? That's one way to do it. One of the other ways to do it too is just to say, "Okay, I understand. To use an example, you want to take care of your own travel. Do you mind if I sit in on a Zoom with you and just watch you complete it so I can see how you think through it?" And that bares all, right? It eliminates those barriers that exist or the unspoken things.

And now your assistant has a playbook that they can themselves run and they've seen how you think through a particular decision, and now they're able to do it for you in the future. It evaporates or unfreezes that aspect of the relationship.

Shannon Waller: I love that. And this is why the Strategic Coach tool The Impact Filter is so good. In fact, at one point it was called The Delegation Filter. Because you get to set your success criteria. Here's what a really great trip looks like. Here's what a really great plane flight looks like. Much less the whole trip. I literally have, this is not very complimentary to myself but I might, please give me the idiot's guide to travel. I need to know A to B, B to C, C to D, all the things spelled out. Do not assume anything. Because I'm going to glance at this. I'm probably not going to look at it until about two minutes before I need to be in the limo or on the plane or whatever. So I need, spell it out, pretend I know nothing. Because that way, I don't have to.

And that made a huge difference because before there were assumptions made, information was omitted. And now it's like, well, I don't worry about it. It's both on a piece of paper and in an app, and I am good to go. Because they're looking at it weeks in advance. I'm looking at it as I'm in the airport. So hopefully I've gotten most of my ego out of the way. I don't care what someone else thinks, and I know she thinks it's fine anyway, so it doesn't bother me, but I'm like, give me the idiot's guide to travel, because that's what I need.

Steven Neuner: And back to the original point too, this is about having a longer term, not a short-term investment mindset. Ryan just gave a shortcut to unlocking that if there is some friction, and we've got a lot of those, but ultimately it's back to investing in that relationship



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and creating understanding. Those are not things that you can microwave. It can be more of a crock pot.

Shannon Waller: Oh my gosh, you guys have the best way of talking about things. I think the other part of that too, if I think of pitfalls that I see, is that when you're really committed to that longer term future and you want that freedom, you are more likely to let go of the darn baton. If you're uncertain about your future or feeling skittish or scared about it, you are going to hang onto stuff.

Ryan Cassin: Nature abhors a vacuum. And this is one of the things that we do run into, which is, I've had my hands so tight on the wheel for the things that I've done for so long that I don't know what I would do with the extra time. And that can only come from inside. That's up to you. That's where your leadership, that's where your vision has to fill in the blank. And to your point, when you fill in that blank, that vision has to be so strong. And it has to be so compelling and so exciting that there's no other option for you, that not delegating those things—even if you're excellent at them—not delegating those things becomes a blocker to living your bigger future.

Shannon Waller: 100%. It's interesting, it comes from you, and a couple of our clients have taken many sabbaticals, so four to six weeks roughly. And one of them was feeling super sketchy about what to do when he came back. And Dan had this great coaching point. He said, "Ask your team what they want you to do." The truth is, your team knows the highest and best use of you even if you don't. The cool thing about taking time away from your business, you have to delegate. You have to pass off that baton. But then they'll know what they need you for. They know how you can provide the most impact and positivity for the business. So ask them. I'm sure it will align with your Unique Ability. But it's interesting because that fear factor stops so many people from delegating effectively. We've all seen that for years. So I think that's key.

Let's go more onto that, one of the other pitfalls, and this is number three, is having a short-term mindset. So that goes to what we were just referencing. Are you sharing your short-term goals or your long-term goals? And you pointed out, Ryan, a couple of times, and you said, "Your assistant will need patience and intentional investment up front." We've talked about that. "The time to learn you." Not time to learn the job, but time to learn you.

Ryan Cassin: That's right.

Shannon Waller: Let's talk about that, because I think that's a brilliant way to put that.



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Ryan Cassin: The way that we think about this is, if you're looking at the first 90 days, and even then that's a pretty small amount of time relative to what we think a really productive relationship looks like, which is multi-year, right? But in the first 30 days, your assistant, and I think we've talked a little bit about this briefly in the past, your assistant's getting to know you, and this is the basic things. What are the ins and outs of your business? Who are the important people in your life? At 60 days we're looking for "understand you." You have shared context and vocabulary when you're talking about things. And then at 90 days, anticipate you. Being able to see around the corner, act on your behalf. But you don't just get there magically by putting in 90 days of showing up to work. There's a lot of back-and-forth conversations that have to happen.

And so I think we've outlined that 30-, 60-, 90-day framework in the past. But what's really important are all of the questions that have to get answered in each of those phases for you to be on track. And one of the things that we really encourage folks to do is not judge based on the last experience that you had, sort of to that average, that first project or two, your average is very, very small, and then you do 100 projects together and the hundred and first project doesn't really affect the average that much. So are you judging your experience by the last interaction that you had or are you seeing the full picture of growth? And are you putting together that plus or minus? Are they living into your values and making progress on that?

So for us, it is a lot of work and a lot of intentionality that goes into building that complete picture in the first 90 days.

Shannon Waller: You know what this reminds me of? Steven, you'll know because you've coached this. Is one of the things that we find really important to communicate with someone new is, what does success look like in the role? We talked about that. But the second part is the few things that drive you crazy. And one of our cool tools is called The 4x4. So it's like, here's how you can be a hero. Here are the results I want you to pay attention to. Here's the characteristics I want. Here's how you can be a hero to me this quarter. But the fourth box, which is kind of like the third rail on the subway, is what drives me crazy? And it's interesting, Ryan, because I was thinking about that as you're saying, we tend to evaluate someone's performance on the last experience with them, the short term rather than the whole picture.

But if someone has touched that third rail with you, it's not pretty. But the problem is, we don't tend to communicate what drives us crazy. And by the way, what drives us crazy with one person is actually what drives us crazy with everybody. So for some people, it's being let- Dan calls it black holes. Where did that go? Something goes into the abyss. Another one is not letting him know when there's breakdowns that he could help with or being overwhelmed and not speaking up would be another one. And that's the thing where sparks fly, and you don't want that to happen. And when Dan shared that with some of his team members, with whom



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he works, they're like, "This is so useful to know because there's all these great ways I can win and four ways I can lose." And it's just so productive for people.

And we feel like we want to be perfect, we want to present the great image. We don't want to have anything that drives us crazy. You're kidding yourself. And communicating that can be super useful. And there's things that drive them crazy too. And I actually like to do an exchange. Like task hoarding, that's just obnoxious. Or ignoring your assistant's request for information. In fact, it was on this Kick-Start Session I was talking that I got to do yesterday, and do you know how many people said that the biggest obstacle to their growth was the fact that they were the bottleneck?

Steven Neuner: Totally. Yep.

Shannon Waller: This happened yesterday. It's like you can be the bottleneck with your assistant and they can't get stuff done. They can't complete their task, they can't complete the project, they can't move ahead to the next step, and they have way more mental energy for following through than you will. So we're kind of causing harm. Do you know what I mean? So that you being the bottleneck drives them crazy, just saying.

Steven Neuner: Well, and one of the things—we talked about task hoarding—one of the things we see from a short-term mindset, the way this gets expressed sometimes, is task dumping. You're here, get busy. I'm going to throw all this stuff on you. Versus investing the time to make sure that they know how to do it well. Well, back to Coach. What is Coach? What do we learn? Impact Filter, right? What a great way to make sure that that delegation is communicating all the information, all the ingredients, crucial ingredients to make that a great delegation.

Shannon Waller: 100%.

Steven Neuner: Do you even need an office? Maybe you're doing drive-by's, like, what about this? What about this? What about this? Or you're just constantly ping-pong. These are ways that they can be a symptom of, again, back to having a short-term mindset.

Shannon Waller: I love that. In fact, I call it the Delegation Drive-By. This is when you whip the baton at someone's head. Or what it looks like is you run by their desk and say, "Hey, can you take care of this for me?" And then you dash. It's like dine and dash, right? You delegate and dash. And they're like, what's this? There's no time for questions, no deadlines specified. How much work do you want them to put into it? What does it relate in terms of priorities to other things? And it does harm because then they can't be successful. Because then you can get super impatient, and why isn't it done yet? You're like, because I thought this was a three-



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week project. They're like, no, I just wanted you to call Joe. And they're like, oh, that would've been useful. So that's, like, how not to screw up.

Ryan Cassin: Some of the other things that we see that are just pitfalls in the same category is not documenting all the learnings that your assistant has gathered. One of the things that we talk a lot about is that we try to find the right-fit assistant, and we hope that this relationship goes the distance, goes for years and years and years. But regardless, you're doing all the work to know, understand, and anticipate along the way. You're building a relationship that even if that one person isn't the assistant you work with a decade from now, there's no reason the person you're working with today shouldn't be documenting all of your preferences, all the ways that you like things done, all the nuances of the relationship.

Because one of the short-term mindset limiters is, you think, well, the relationship's going to go the distance. Maybe not. Something happens, right? Lives change. And maybe you need to find a new assistant for whatever reason. It would be a shame that you had a half-decade's worth of awesome teamwork that just lived in your assistant's head and it's gone, right? One of the things that if you're going to go through the trouble of onboarding a new executive assistant, new Strategic Assistant, make sure that you're creating that long-term road map of here's how you work with me, here's what really effective teamwork looks like in this relationship.

Steven Neuner: Ryan has been gearing up to land this knockout blow. This was actually a mistake that I made. I had a dream assistant named Fern, and we worked together a decade. For good reasons, we decided to go different ways, and we're still great friends and everything else. The gap in knowledge and starting over was so painful, especially when you have a relationship that's operating at such a high level. And so that is baked into our process, is really trying to create that awareness early on. Because they can be hit by a bus. It could be a thousand things that can happen. And the other thing that we see, the way this plays out, is while we're saying don't be shortsighted, don't be short-term-minded here, we have seen entrepreneurs get a little bit of early relief with an assistant. They're so grateful because they were in such a poop sandwich before.

They're eating poop sandwich after poop sandwich, and they get it, someone to just make them eat just a few poop sandwiches. But we can see that early on because of the work we do that maybe the relationship's not just right. And we can see things where it's off track, but the entrepreneur also sometimes wants to settle. And so there's a balance in this conversation. And by having these things documented early on, you're less apprehensive to go ahead and want more in that relationship. And it allows us to help that entrepreneur make that switch when it's needed.



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Shannon Waller: I like that because you really have the focus on long-term growth. So not just settling for short term, but keep maximizing continuous improvement. I'm even more grateful than I was before and I was pretty grateful. So then my previous person, Nicole, I kept raving about how great it was to work with her. And so she kept getting what felt like to her random phone calls. Nicole does not like taking random phone calls. 8 Fact Finder, 7 Follow Thru. She wants to be prepared. So she wrote something called Teamwork Tips and we'll include this in the show notes. And it's basically how to work with me. It's transferable to almost any Quick Start, by the way. It's hysterical. It shares her own knowledge. We actually packaged it. It's beautiful. It's got a cool red cover, all the things, downloadable, but it is a guide on how to work with someone like me.

I hadn't put it in quite this context before, so that's why I'm even more grateful. But it's really, really fun. Now, it's eight pages and you could probably fill a small book. There's more to working with me. But the job turnover is hard if no one's documented that. I can just feel for you, Steven, because no matter how fabulous the next person is and how talented and capable, the learning curve is steep. And there's a lot of things to do and a lot of processes to master and a lot of technologies to figure out.

Steven Neuner: And it is. And what a great gift to the next person. My assistant now is wonderful. We've thought ahead in this process now because of the pain I went through. But what a gift would it have been to show up on day one with that predetermined clarity to how I can deliver value on a base level really fast.

Ryan Cassin: And that would help create confidence in the new relationship much more quickly as well. So you wouldn't be in this position of comparing to somebody you had a decade-long relationship with and expecting the same thing from somebody new. It cuts both ways.

Shannon Waller: 100%. And you also want to keep increasing your self-awareness. So you can say, "Here's what really works. Here are my top priorities. If you handle these three main things, we can work on the rest. Here's how not to drive me crazy. Here's what I'm like when I'm hungry or tired. Here's what I need. Here's what I don't need. So if you were investing time or energy in this, I'm good. Let's focus on these things instead." You can grow too. I am so much of a better, I can't even call myself a manager, but I'm so much easier to support because Nicole trained me. She trained me on how to travel better. She trained me on how to receive support. She trained me on how to communicate.

I got trained up as a result of my eight-year partnership with her, which you become better as a result of it. I feel like we're completely disabusing this notion that any one person is better. So I love this. It's like, no, you are partners. What did you say? Hang on a second. Equal in form,



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unique in function. Yes. Oh my God, this is so good. All right, the next one, number four, again, how you've articulated this is really interesting. Not seeing trust as a bank rather than a vase. So what does this mean? I'm curious.

Ryan Cassin: When a mistake happens, is that a withdrawal from a trust bank that you've built over time and you are mindful of the balance of, or are you quick to rush to a complete shattering of trust like a broken vase? And we run into this a lot where there's tons of good work, there's tons of reasons to believe that the relationship is on the right track, but one mistake and you're back to square one. I get it, it's a deeply personal relationship. It is probably the most personal professional relationship you're going to have. And so the stakes are really high. But understanding where you are in the relationship and on a day-to-day basis, are you making deposits in that trust bank, is a really important perspective to maintain.

Shannon Waller: Very interesting. Okay. So how does one do this? Because again, how people receive information is unique, what is meaningful to them is unique. So what are some ways, let me just put a couple things at you and see if this qualifies under this category. So one of the things that I know is important to Katrina is I'm very appreciative. And appreciation is, she's very tuned into what I need and I need to be tuned into what she needs. So being open with her, sharing what I'm doing, sharing my priorities, sharing my struggles, saying thank you. Are those the kind of things in terms of the trust bank or is it something completely different?

Ryan Cassin: No, I think that's right. But I also think that in our experience, entrepreneurs form trust differently than other people do, because business and life are not separate. On the one hand you'd like to say, well, business is business. But the reality is, we're working primarily with founder entrepreneurs. And so the business is something that they hold in extreme close, personal- It's like a baby. It's practically one of their children, right? And so they don't see it as separate. And I think that that's one of the things that makes that trust, that vase analogy, that image, so real, is because if you do anything to harm the business, it's like somebody's hurting a child of yours, and you just take it deeply personal.

What happens is, if that's your relationship with your assistant and that's how you view trust, you're going to forever hold them at arm's length. They're never going to be in a position where they can help you enough to potentially hurt you. And I just think that that is a missed opportunity in terms of developing that kind of deep relationship that's as effective as it could be.

Shannon Waller: That's a really interesting point. I think the fact that entrepreneurs build trust differently, so any behavior that could put the business at risk, then, is something- it's kind of they're on high alert for. Is that right?



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Ryan Cassin: That's right. And again, if that's your mindset from the start, you're always putting a governor on the nature of the relationship and what's possible. It shows up in every interaction, in every delegation. It is one of the things that limits the possibilities in that relationship.

Shannon Waller: So how do you coach your clients on how to build trust with their assistants?

Ryan Cassin: So the biggest thing here is being intentional about looking for the wins and making sure that they recognize the progress that's being made. Because oftentimes when things are going well, you think, well great. You sort of almost take it for granted. And we have this tendency to, as soon as something goes wrong, we're in problem-solver, 10x, fix-it, dig-in-deep, oh-my-gosh, red-alarms-blaring mode. And that disparity in our reaction and what we focus on as entrepreneurs is, I think, a source of that friction. So helping our entrepreneurs, helping our clients, and having frankly our assistants review that in a daily sync is like, here are the things that are on track, here are the things that go well, is a really important exercise to build up that muscle over time, to make deposits that are intentional into that trust bank.

Shannon Waller: I really like that. Because I think focusing on progress, well, it's a huge part of our Gap And Gain concept. So we're 100% aligned on that. And I think it can be very easy. If entrepreneurs put themselves in The Gap, all the flipping time, and then they tend to put the people around them into The Gap. And as you said earlier, Steven, we tend to talk to the people closest to us the same way we talk to ourselves, which we're not our own best friends all the time. And so they get the brunt of that, but they don't have our personality, nor do they have our ownership of it, because it's our baby. And so really making sure you're acknowledging progress, both your own progress and your assistant's and your work together, it's like, "Hey, I'm really pleased with how this is going.

Whereas two weeks ago, this didn't go well, yesterday, it did. Kudos on your learning." Even reinforcing growth is huge. Saying what you really appreciate about them, I know tends to go a long way. And again, that for some of us is going to be learned behavior.

Ryan Cassin: In my learning from The Experience Transformer at Coach is, the inclination is of course to use it when you've got a bad experience, but there's this whole other half of The Experience Transformer where you are perfectly allowed and encouraged to use it for a good experience. How do we replicate this again in the future? And so I think it's just so easy to see problems. Our job on a day-to-day basis is to have the problems come to us and to solve the problems and move on, that we miss sometimes the forest for the trees of the good things that are happening.



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Shannon Waller: And just so you know, this is version 2.0, the Transformer, because it used to be called The Negativity Transformer.

Ryan Cassin: This is great. We're getting the inside scoop on the development.

Steven Neuner: Boy, we're going to founders' days. I love it.

Ryan Cassin: I love this.

Shannon Waller: You totally are. And Julia and I, my sister Julia, who was also Unique Ability queen at Coach.

Steven Neuner: Wonderful, wonderful.

Shannon Waller: With whom you were working with today, Steven. How cool is that?

Steven Neuner: Brilliant.

Shannon Waller: She is. She's phenomenal. Is that we realized that it wasn't only negative experiences that you wanted to transform. If anything, you wanted to capture what worked at a really good experience. And then, since so many of us are Maximizers, we want to replicate that and make it even better next time. I just looked at one for our Couples Connection. Here's all the great things that worked and here's what we could keep improving. And we have to capture that because we don't do them every day. So it's important. And it's a much nicer term than the postmortem. That's just an ough term. It's a way to learn from your experience, positive or negative. So, spot on, Ryan.

Steven Neuner: Well then my friend, to give a nod to our friend Lee Brower, also a coach with Strategic Coach, the enemy of thriving is arriving. And so there's always these really great opportunities in the celebrations and the wins.

Shannon Waller: Celebrate the wins like crazy. I'm like, okay, we're going to do it again. What needs to be even better next time? It's a fun process.

Steven Neuner: There's just really basic, once you've got that mindset instilled, once you've identified that and it opens up the relationship, then back to what you asked earlier, I think there's really, really basic simple ways to do this. Dan's Referability Habits are really wonderful ways to build that trust. It's show up on time, do what you say you're going to do, say please and thank you, and finish what you started. And I probably said those out of order because I'm



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borderline [unintelligible]. But if you do those things consistently, guess what. Great relationships form, trust builds.

Shannon Waller: He's actually added a fifth one. I know, right? Which is be appropriate. So show up on time, do what you say, finish what you start, say please and thank you, and be appropriate. And I have to say, this is probably a good one for this conversation because sometimes, especially if we don't have any filters on that day, well, what's appropriate can be different depending on your audience. But we can be a little wild.

Steven Neuner: So was I okay with poop sandwich? Is that what you're telling me?

Shannon Waller: I think that's perfectly appropriate.

Steven Neuner: All right, good. Just making sure.

Shannon Waller: There's other words that I would be like, oh.

Steven Neuner: I don't want to get canceled here, I just want to-

Shannon Waller: No, you're not being canceled, you're all good. But I think, remember your audience and remember that they're empathetic and you're passionate. So, sometimes our passion can just be triggering for other people on a good day, much less a bad day. But even just showing up on time. If you want to put money in the bank for trust, show up on time. At least 80 to 90% of the time. We're allowed to reschedule if we're in deep work or something like that or push back because of a meeting. But don't leave people guessing. They're trying to support your calendar and you doing what it is that you said you wanted to do, and then you just going MIA, not a good look. Just saying. So really important. It's a work in progress for all of us, everyone. Assistants or entrepreneurs or anyone else, to do those five Referability Habits and credibility habits.

That's the other word. They're not just referability, they're credibility. So, if you want to be a credible human, do those five things. Raise your kids to do those five things. That'd be good. And I think that's also, from any team member's perspective, not doing those five things actually does harm. And I know for me, if someone is not what I would consider gracious or generous or kind to a client, that erodes my trust. That's like a 10x mistrust thing right there. I can handle internal stuff ish. No. If someone's nasty to another team member, I'm also not cool with that. But if someone does something to damage the work relationship with a client, that's not good. I know that that's one of my hotspots. Those are one of my triggers, if that makes sense. That's just not cool.



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And I have less control over that than I do my internal team. I love my team and I want them well taken care of, but I can usually work out those conflicts, but one with a client, that's more dangerous. That'd be my take. All right. Last one to touch on is thinking of and using your assistant as a task completer. So that's a pitfall.

Ryan Cassin: So oftentimes when we meet folks who don't have assistants, one of the things that they've conditioned themselves to is playing this neverending game of whack-a-mole. And what they do is, they get their assistant into that game as fast as possible so they don't have to keep playing whack-a-mole anymore, and the moles are popping up and now the assistant's knocking them down and things are great. And certainly that's, again, the relief valve. That is a nice quality of life upgrade. And that's the beginning of a good relationship. But it is also a pitfall because, as Steven alluded to before, it settles for good when the relationship could be great.

Shannon Waller: Nice.

Ryan Cassin: Because if your assistant isn't anticipating you, looking around the corner, being that strategic partner, then you aren't getting as much value out of that relationship as you could. And the other way to think about that is, you don't have to invest in that relationship as much if you only expect your assistant to be playing the game of whack-a-mole. And so you let yourself off the hook from having to go deeper in that relationship, from having to be really intentional about forming a strategic partnership, because you've relegated your assistant from the get-go to playing this eternal game of whack-a-mole.

Shannon Waller: That's interesting. And I think for someone who's truly an executive assistant, and we talked about that in our first two podcasts, that's a subpar challenge.

Ryan Cassin: That's right.

Shannon Waller: They're executive for a reason. There's other types of people who are task completers, you can buy them on the crowdsourcing platforms and stuff like that. But if you actually want someone who has this level of capability, and I remember, I'm pretty sure this is accurate, but I remember there's an intelligence profile called Wonderlic, and apparently the number that you want for an executive assistant, so this is an IQ test basically, is only one different from attorney. Last time I checked, attorneys you need to be kind of smart. Is that up for debate, Steven?

Steven Neuner: I know a lot of attorneys. I'm just kidding.

Shannon Waller: There you go. Okay. Well, maybe the kind of attorney you and I would want.



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Steven Neuner: Yes, yes.

Shannon Waller: But the point is you've got a really smart, really committed, engaged, striving executive assistant available to you that you've invested time, money, and training in getting to that point, and then only giving them—back to your comment earlier—menial tasks rather than meaningful ones is doing them a disservice.

Ryan Cassin: That's right. And it's doing you a disservice as well as the entrepreneur, as the person who's the boss in this relationship. I think one of the other ways that we see this play out, and it is really dangerous because it ultimately ends the relationship, is if you view your executive assistant as really good at just doing the task completion and they've done a great job subbing in for you at your whack-a-mole game, you start to say, "Ooh gosh, what other tasks around the organization could they be responsible for completing?" And now you're fractionalizing that assistant's time with, "Hey Bob, these tasks can be taken off your plate." "Sally, these tasks can be taken off your plate." And now your assistant is playing whack-a-mole for three or four different people, and they're completely burnt out. They're completely dissatisfied because they're not feeding their growth mindset. They're constantly chasing their tail, to mix metaphors.

And then the other piece of it is, nobody in the business is satisfied because they only see a small fraction of the time that the assistant is giving them. So you lose all the proactivity, you lose all the anticipation of looking around the corner, and everybody's upset to boot because they aren't getting enough time for the tasks that they've given to the assistant to do. And ultimately we see that the executive assistant as a shared resource is one of the fastest ways to end the relationship. And it happens because you view them nearly as a task completer or sometimes because you have guilt about having an executive assistant and you want everybody else on your team to have an executive assistant as well, so they might as well just have yours.

Shannon Waller: Fractionalizing your assistant. Brilliant. And been there, done that.

Ryan Cassin: Did it go well?

Shannon Waller: Terrible. Several times terrible. I made this mistake with multiple people, just saying. And it's because, to your point, I didn't have the confidence that I could justify a dedicated assistant for myself. Now, I finally did make that decision 10 years ago, and it's been a complete and total life/game changer since then. But I used to share it with two other people. And here's another reason why that doesn't work. Not only do they have to do five people's



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travel or five people's expense forms or five people's whatever, email or triaging somehow. There's five people to get to know.

Ryan Cassin: That's a great point.

Shannon Waller: Right? So their whole point of learning you, and I'll just give you some of the Kolbes of the people they were supporting. So myself—3295 Kolbe, or a Quick Start. They were supporting my sister, Julia—6 Fact Finder, 8 Follow Thru, 3 Quick Start. So, a very organized person. And my friend Catherine, who was also a colleague at the time, who's a Fact Finder and Quick Start, short Follow Thru. If you want to make someone feel like they're crazy, have them support three completely different human beings who have a different way that they want everything done. Oh my goodness, we tortured previous assistants and there was more than one of them. So no wonder no one lasted in that role and couldn't wait to get either out or to a different part of the company. It just did not work. And they didn't last long.

And then, finally, I felt like I need a full-time assistant for myself. That was eight years before her life took a different direction, and we're still close friends. She just emailed me. It was our 10-year anniversary. And so she messaged me on the day. She goes, oh, 10 years since we met. And that's a day that's just burned in my brain because she's so transformative. She's such a great human. It's like that was a pivotal day, but I made that mistake more than once. So good. Don't do what we've done. Steven.

Steven Neuner: Can I throw in a bonus here?

Shannon Waller: Please. I was actually hoping there was a bonus.

Steven Neuner: Well, just one that came out of this conversation here that I was reminded of, making myself, which is, well, let's make it positive. Make sure you enroll your team and your significant other, your spouse, and avoid [unintelligible]. Because in some small entrepreneurial businesses, which I was when we first brought up my first assistant on, I didn't realize that some of the currency that people were receiving was time with me. And so they were threatened by the idea of an assistant taking time away from me. And they would come with not directly sabotaging-type stuff, but little things, little comments that are just kind of seeded. And so thankfully I didn't jump or react on it, and I just asked a lot of questions. And what I really discovered was, they didn't like that lack of direct, immediate, instant access to me.

Shannon Waller: That is spot on.



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Steven Neuner: Helping enroll them in the impact, the outcomes, how it'll be better for them long term. They eventually understood that, but I had to enroll them in it and really support my assistant in that way to be my leader.

Shannon Waller: Yes. That is such a spot-on comment, Steven, because that is a currency, and I've seen it. The assistant gets the heat because they're trying to protect your time. And I've seen that with other leaders too. When you put someone, it looks like in between you and someone else who's used to being able to walk into your office, call you, what have you, they take it really personally. So making sure you communicate, as you said, support your assistant and let everyone else know, very critical point.

Steven Neuner: And when they see you with them strategically at your best, they will get it. Again, this is one of those things, it takes a little bit of, for some people, a little courage or whatever, but they will see it if you bring that intentionality to this relationship and you get the results that are possible through it, and they won't want anything to do with you. My wife is best friends with my assistant. They go, we already figured all that out. Don't worry about it. Just do what your calendar says.

Shannon Waller: Well and eventually they'll see that as an asset. They'll like, oh my God, thank God I don't have to deal with you on this stuff anymore. They'll actually get what they want faster. And this is also true- It goes back to the point earlier with email and thinking that you have to be the one because you know the relationship and everything. Turns out that what people really want are quick answers. It can take me forever to get back to something and my assistant could have handled it a week ago. So you learn that you're not quite as special as you thought, as part of this process. So yes, I think getting everyone on board, explaining your "why." And there's another really great point here too. Proactive assistants are the key to exponential growth. So, not fractionalizing them. Don't shortcut your growth. This is a partnership that can grow exponentially.

And I had this brainwave, because we've been talking a lot about 10x is easier than 2x, so we have this 10x model, and then we have a Unique Ability model. Ryan, you were talking about some of the different categories. And it came to me, this is a flash at Couples Connection, that Unique Ability is 10x, it's exponential. Excellent ability—superior skill, but no passion—is 2x. Competent is 1x. Incompetent is -10x. So, if you imagine being supported by a Unique Ability executive assistant, Strategic Assistant, support partner, whatever term you want to use, but let's use executive assistant, who's Unique in his or her role, which allows you to be Unique in yours, that is exponential. It's amazing the transformation that can happen as a result of that.



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So, not compromising that. The point that you've written, Ryan, I think it was you. I'm like, yes, yes, and yes. Steven, do you want to weigh in on that one?

Steven Neuner: For a lot of entrepreneurs, we work with all different entrepreneurs at different levels, but for many entrepreneurs, this is that, Ben talks about, right? And Dan. For some of them, this is the 80%.

Shannon Waller: Right. Yes.

Steven Neuner: This is the 80%.

Shannon Waller: To get rid of to get to your-

Steven Neuner: To get rid of for the transformation to occur. Literally, this is it. They just do this one thing, they may be 80% of their way to their 10x.

Shannon Waller: That's so exciting. Ryan, what do you want to weigh in with?

Ryan Cassin: We see this transformation happen every day, and that ultimately is the great reward in seeing these relationships grow, is the new things that are possible. And so, when you've got that strong vision, you've got that vision of the bigger future. I think having that as your North Star and being really clear on what that is, I think that that's the biggest missing piece for some folks who don't get as much out of this relationship as possible, because the urgency and necessity of it is less relevant for them. And so being really dialed in on that, one of the things that we get with some of our high Fact Finders is, what can I do to prepare? Or maybe they're anxious about it, and they don't want to quite pull the trigger yet. It's like, how do I get my ducks in a row? What do I need to have prepared beforehand? How do we get set up for success in this relationship?

And a lot of that can be taken care of. But the one thing that we can't do, and the assistant certainly isn't able to do on day one, is to have that super compelling North Star that says, here's where I've got to go. I need a new member of my team to make it possible.

Shannon Waller: I love that. So that circles back, like share your goals in a passionate, calm way rather than abrasive way. And share your future. Don't keep it a secret. Share the map. To go back to what we were talking about, don't just share the next step that needs to be done, the tasks, but share the bigger picture. And then you'll have this incredible other talented, capable, unique person, unique function to support you doing that. And that's the recipe for success. So just to wrap up, thank you, thank you, thank you. The direction that these pitfalls give to what not to do, and then also obviously what to do, I think is really profound. And I love



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how they got created, which is out of experience of what not to do, which is how all the best learning happens, The Experience Transformer actually.

I think you've just given incredible direction about how to have this be not only a successful relationship, but an ongoing, long-term, exponential progressive maximizer relationship. I love that there's no settling. I love all the high standards. That's how I roll. I just really appreciate both of your input into this. It's fun and it's fascinating, and it gives great direction.

Ryan Cassin: Always a delight. Thank you so much, Shannon. This has been a great conversation.

Shannon Waller: Thank you.

Steven Neuner: Been wonderful and just special thanks to you and to all of the amazing attorneys that are in Strategic Coach because they're not like the other attorneys I talked about earlier.

Shannon Waller: I could not agree more. I love that. Awesome. All right, well, our next episode is coming up shortly, and I'm excited about this one because the next one is "Winning Formulas: What The Highest Performers Are Doing." So, we talked about what not to do, and now we're going to find out in our next episode what the best people are already doing. So, stay tuned.

Steven Neuner: Can't wait.