

## BONUS CHAPTER

# THE SURPRISING REASONS YOU NEED TO DELEGATE

While The Hard Work Myth delved into **how** you can achieve more, without working harder, this bonus chapter will explain **why** you need to start working less.

The negative impacts of working long hours are huge and stretch across almost all areas of your life - both personal and professional.

The sacrifices so many entrepreneurs make in order to try and grow their businesses are completely unnecessary and only serve to harm their futures, not enhance them.

Businesswoman, Marissa Mayer, believes that burnout is about resentment and “you beat it by knowing what it is you’re giving up that makes you resentful.”

If you’re tired of missing your children’s bedtimes, stop making excuses. If you’re tired of not being able

to enjoy yourself, stop restricting your finances. If you're tired of feeling tired, stop working so much.

You don't need to be burning out - there's no reason to be making these sacrifices and more.

The following five reasons why you need to delegate may surprise you but they're incredibly important to know and I hope they convince you to change the way you currently work.

First off, doing everything yourself will have a major impact on your relationships. Now, you might think a few late nights and working extra hours on the weekend aren't a big deal but these extra hours are having a big influence on your relationships, especially with your children.

I was oblivious to the hurt I was causing my daughter working so much, until she told me how upset she was that I would always be on my phone or laptop instead of playing with her. Not only is this lack of communication emotionally damaging, but it also has a major impact on your children's long-term success.

A group of researchers at MIT, Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania, have found that parents who engage early age children in back-and-forth exchanges help to develop, foster and improve their

communication skills - a key skill for success in life. Additionally, a number of studies have indicated that children with stronger communication skills are more likely to have healthier relationships, longer marriages, higher self-esteem and overall life satisfaction.

These studies show how helping children develop social and emotional skills is vital if parents want to help them to succeed in later life. Working long hours means it's impossible to spend enough time with your family where skills like these can be developed. And this lack of communication doesn't just affect your children, it also affects you too.

According to a study by Dr. Michael Freeman, a clinical professor at the University of California, 30% of all entrepreneurs experience depression. That's a large number, but it's not surprising when you consider the isolation and pressure we endure. And unfortunately, for many entrepreneurs, it's too much. Since 1999, there's been a 30% rise in suicide in America, and sadly, it's how many high-profile entrepreneurs like Kate Spade, Anthony Bourdain, Aaron Schwartz and Jody Sherman, have died.

One of the biggest reasons entrepreneurs suffer from depression is the connection between the high expectations we set and reality. The greater the difference between the two, the more stressed we feel.

Temporary stress is normal and can actually be healthy, but chronic stress can be extremely dangerous – it's chronic stress that leads to depression, substance abuse, social withdrawal, insomnia, suicidal thoughts and more.

It's so important to stop putting so much pressure on yourself – remind yourself that doing so will only result in you feeling less motivated and focused and therefore, less likely to succeed. You also need to seek professional help if you need it. There's no shame in admitting you need support - most people suffer from mental health problems, and the sooner you get help, the quicker you'll be able to positively move forward.

It's also vital that you take care of your body. The impact stress can have on your physical health is huge. It can lead to weight gain, heart problems, fatigue and more, so make sure you try your best to exercise regularly and get seven to nine hours of good sleep per night.

## **TAKE ACTION**

Think about your relationships. Do you feel like you spend enough time with your family or friends? If not, slot out a chunk of time every day in your calendar and dedicate it entirely to spending quality time with these people.

Are you exercising? Eating well? Getting enough sleep? Again, if the answer to these questions is no, start getting into healthy habits by planning your days. Keep time free to do some exercise, prep your meals in advance and try and go to sleep at the same time every night.

Something else you need to be more mindful of is multitasking. A lot of people think they can multitask, but the fact is they can't. Studies have shown 98% of people are unable to, plus researchers suggest that multitasking can actually reduce productivity by as much as 40%!

What we're actually doing when we're 'multitasking' is switching our focus between tasks. We feel like we're doing more, but we're actually doing less and losing time because we're constantly refocusing. A

big reason why a lot of entrepreneurs do everything themselves is because they like to be in control.

Handing tasks over to someone else can be scary and doing them all yourself means you know they're being done well - except they're not.

When I started my first business, I liked to do most tasks myself and thought I could. I'd take on 5-6 complex jobs every day because I thought the more I did, the quicker my business would progress.

What actually happened was that I pretty much never got the tasks done, and if I did they were rushed and only half as good as they could have been.

It was at this point that I realised I was making a massive mistake - I was drowning in work. It was like filling a bucket up and up and up. At some point it's going to overflow if you leave the tap on, and that spilled water is wasted energy, ideas, and work.

When you put it this plainly, it's easy to see how pointless doing it is. I decided to stop trying to do so many tasks a day and start prioritising the most important tasks I needed to get done. By realising my bucket has a limit, I was able to fill it with the tasks that really matter – around 2-3 a day – and delegate the less important ones that usually spilled over.

Use the Eisenhower Matrix to find out what these tasks are and make sure you set aside 2-3 hours every week to plan what your focus should be.

A report by software company Geneca shows that “80% of organizations report that they spend at least half their time on rework”. This is a massive amount of wasted time that will only slow these companies down and edge them nearer to being one of the 50% who fail in their first five years.

All of this stress can be avoided, just by spending a few hours each week planning how you’re going to achieve your goals in the coming weeks, months and years.

Carina Lawson, Founder of Ponderlily, is someone who knows first-hand the dangers of not doing these things. As well as running her business, she also works as the manager of academic operations at a large university.

She used to do everything herself but doing so much meant that it was impossible to find the time to properly plan and she found herself close to burning out. “I knew I needed help, I was sleeping at 3am or sometimes 4am doing correspondence for our business,” says Carina. “I simply couldn’t run all aspects of it.” It was only when she got an assistant

that she was able to turn things around. “Having someone take care of correspondence, research, and communication with suppliers has made my life so much easier,” exclaims Carina. “Thanks to my super assistant – who plays a pivotal role in our business – I can actually sleep at a decent time.”

Carina’s story shows just how vital delegation is to achieving more, and the impact it can have on your business and life if you don’t.

Another entrepreneur who knows just how important an assistant is, is Fergus Dyer-Smith. The Founder and CEO of Wooshii, a video content company, his business experienced rapid growth early on, which was great financially but painful mentally.

Like Carina, he was stuck in a rut trying to do everything himself, which meant most of the time he wasn’t working on the things he needed to. “So much of my day was taken up by tasks that were either repetitive or not helping us move forward,” says Fergus.

Once he got an assistant though, everything changed. His assistant allowed him to focus on the tasks that would help his business grow even more and gave him the organization he needed to effectively run Wooshii. “There are so many parts of



my life that are now just taken care of and it is so handy to know that almost any time of day you have support if you need it. Booking flights and meetings, doing research and sorting out bills are all just now magically taken care of,” says Fergus.

Both Carina and Fergus’ experiences show just how important an assistant is in order to get ahead.

Without one, neither would have achieved the success they currently have. Each of the reasons outlined in this chapter show just vital it is to delegate.

A lot of entrepreneurs think they can do everything themselves or that the endless work will be worth it in the long-run, but it’s just not true.

Hard work doesn’t equal success and the only way you can get the work/life balance you want and achieve more is to delegate.

Why are you sacrificing time with your children? Why are you putting your health at risk? Why are you burning yourself out?

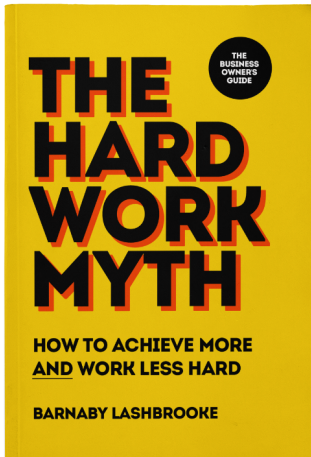
You don’t need to be doing any of these things in order to be successful, so why do them? I’ve been where you are. I’ve almost given up countless times

because of the impact working so hard was having on my health, relationships and more. And it was only when I stopped working myself into the ground and started working smarter by delegating a good chunk of my work, that I finally achieved the success - personally and professionally - that I'd dreamed of.

So, stop making unnecessary sacrifices and start using the tips and listening to the advice in *The Hard Work Myth* to get out of your rut and propel your business forwards.

### **TAKE ACTION**

Set aside some time to think about the sacrifices you currently make trying to grow your business. Do you sacrifice time with your children? Your mental health? Your holidays? Write a list and make a plan of what you can delegate to overcome these issues. Use the tips and advice inside *The Hard Work Myth* to help you to stop working so much and reassure you that working smarter is the answer!



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