

A BUILD WEALTH PARTNERS WORKSHEET

The Owner's Money Map

Companion Checklist

Build Wealth Partners

Fee-only financial planning and business consulting for business owners

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How to use this

This is the companion to *The Owner's Money Map*, free alongside the guide at buildwealthpartners.com/book. It is the same seven exercises, with the explanation stripped out and the blanks left in, so you can work through them without flipping back and forth.

You do not need the guide to fill this in, though each exercise reads better with the chapter behind it. Work in any order. Most owners find one exercise is obviously theirs and start there.

Two things worth knowing before you start.

Nothing here goes anywhere. This is a document you fill in for yourself. There is no account, no upload, and no one on the other end of it.

Dates matter as much as the answers. Every exercise has a date field, because most of the value in this document comes from filling it in twice, a year apart, and seeing what moved.

About these exercises. Each one is a general educational framework, not individualized investment, legal, or tax advice. Every result relies entirely on the information you put into it and cannot account for your full circumstances, so no number, score, count or short list you produce here should be the basis for a financial decision. Consult your own advisors about your specific situation.

Filled in on: _____

Exercise 1. Your Independence Ratio

Chapter 1. About twenty minutes. You need a rough figure for every asset you and your household hold.

Step 1. List each asset. For each one, answer: would this still be worth roughly what it is worth today if the business had a bad eighteen months? Yes is independent. No is dependent. If you are arguing with yourself, it is dependent.

Business-dependent (company equity, a building the business leases from you, receivables, equipment specific to your operation):

_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Business-independent (diversified brokerage, funded retirement accounts, personal cash, paid-down residence, unrelated real estate):

_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Step 2. Dependent total \$ _____ Independent total \$ _____

Step 3. Independent ÷ (both added together) = _____ %

What it means. Under 10 percent: essentially everything you own rises and falls with one company. 10 to 25 percent: a second base exists but would not carry a household for long. Above 25 percent: a real second base exists, and the question becomes whether it is exposed to the same risks the business is.

My ratio today: _____ % **Date:** _____

Same date next year: _____ %

Exercise 2. Reserve Range and the Thirty-Second Test

Chapter 2. About thirty minutes. You need three months of business bank statements.

Step 1. Monthly fixed burn. Only what the business must pay if revenue went to zero.

Rent \$ _____ Core payroll \$ _____ Debt service \$ _____

Insurance \$ _____ Essential recurring \$ _____

Three-month average, call it B: \$ _____

Step 2. Low end. Start at 3 months of B. Then add:

☐ +1 month, revenue is seasonal or lumpy

☐ +1 month, top three customers are more than half of revenue

☐ +1 month, no line of credit you could draw on today without applying

Total months: _____ $\times$ B = **low end** \$ _____

Step 3. High end. Low end + 2 months of B = **high end** \$ _____

Step 4. The thirty-second test. For every portion of cash above the high end, start a timer and name what it is for. Not a category. An actual use with a rough date.

\$ _____ is for _____ by _____

\$ _____ is for _____ by _____

\$ _____ is for _____ by _____

\$ _____ **ran the clock out.** This is the cash to move first.

Date: _____

Exercise 3. Score Your Split Against All Four Forces

Chapter 3. About fifteen minutes. You need last year's W-2 and any K-1 or distribution records.

Step 1. Salary \$_____ Distributions \$_____ Split _____ / _____

Step 2. Mark each force **built for it**, **working against it**, or **nobody checked**.

Payroll tax. Was the salary figure chosen to hold payroll tax down, and can you say who chose it and when?

Retirement contribution room. Does your salary figure support the contribution you actually want to make?

Lender optics. If you applied for a mortgage or a business loan in the next eighteen months, would your documented income read the way you need it to?

Entity rules. Does your entity give you a split to manage at all, and if it is an S-corporation, has the salary figure been tested for reasonableness recently?

Step 3. Count of "nobody checked": _____ out of 4

Two or three is the normal result. Raise that count in your next tax conversation rather than the raw numbers.

Date: _____

Exercise 4. Eliminate Down to a Short List

Chapter 4. About five minutes. Cross plans off as you go.

1. Does anyone other than you and your spouse work for the business full time and meet the plan's eligibility rules?

☐ Yes → cross off **Solo 401(k)** [] No → Solo 401(k) stays, and you may be done

2. If you have eligible employees: would you contribute the same percentage of compensation for every one of them that you contribute for yourself?

☐ Yes → SEP-IRA stays [] No → cross off **SEP-IRA**

3. Are you prepared to make the required employer contribution every year, including tight years?

☐ Yes → SIMPLE IRA stays [] No → cross off **SIMPLE IRA**

4. Do you have both a compressed number of working years left and cash flow stable enough to commit to a sizable fixed contribution annually?

☐ Yes → defined-benefit stays [] No → cross off **defined-benefit plan**

Still standing: _____

What this exercise does not answer, and what to bring to the conversation instead: how much to fund, whether your current salary figure supports that funding level, whether this year's establishment deadline has already passed, and whether switching from a plan you already run is worth the disruption.

Date: _____

Exercise 5. Write the Policy, Then Date It

Chapter 5. About twenty minutes. This one produces a document rather than a finding.

The evidence. The last three times money came back out of an outside account, a retirement contribution, or a savings goal to cover a business need. Trigger in six words or fewer.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Is it the same trigger more than once? [] Yes [] No

The floor. The balance in _____ does not go below \$_____ for any reason.

The cadence. \$_____ leaves the business on _____ whether or not it feels like a good month.

The re-entry rule. Money only comes back out of _____ through:

☐ a documented loan with written terms

☐ a decision made at least seven days after the request

☐ written sign-off from _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Keep this page where you will see it during a tight month.

Exercise 6. Find the Oldest Date

Chapter 6. About thirty minutes, most of it hunting for documents. Write the date printed on the document, not the date you think it was.

Document	Date on it
Will	
Buy-sell agreement (if you have co-owners)	
Beneficiary designation, retirement account 1	
Beneficiary designation, retirement account 2	
Beneficiary designation, life insurance	
Who has authority if you are incapacitated	

A missing document counts as a date, and the date is the day you started the business.

Your own timeline. The year of each significant change: a co-owner joining or leaving, a marriage, a divorce, a child, a move, a year the business changed size in a way that mattered.

The oldest document dated before one of those changes: _____

That one is the starting point. It is a more useful thing to walk into an attorney's office holding than a general sense that the estate documents could use a look.

Date: _____

Exercise 7. The Thirty-Day Test

Chapter 7. About twenty minutes. Pick a real thirty-day window that has already happened, ideally a busy one.

The window I am using: _____

Three things that would have broken. Specific enough to be uncomfortable. Not "client relationships," but which client and what they needed that week.

What would have broken	Who would have handled it	If nobody: document, delegation, or relationship?

Count of "nobody": _____ out of 3

The personal half. If a transition happened this year, how many years of your household's spending would the proceeds need to cover before other resources take over? Not what the business is worth. How many years the money has to last.

_____ **years**

Almost nobody scores zero on the count, and three does not mean a badly run business. It means a business whose owner has never been asked the question.

Date: _____

What this document cannot do

You can complete every exercise here without hiring anyone, and doing so will tell you things about your business that nobody has told you before.

What it cannot do is sit in the room when one number has to work for several people at once. Take the salary and distribution split from exercise 3. That figure has to satisfy your CPA, who is watching payroll tax. It has to work for your advisor, who knows what the same figure does to how much you are allowed to contribute to your retirement plan. And it has to hold up for a loan officer reading your documented income two years from now. Those three are rarely in the same conversation and often have never spoken. The buy-sell valuation from exercise 6 has the same problem: it has to mean one thing, consistently, in the agreement, in the insurance funding it, and in your estate documents.

It also cannot notice when a decision made in one professional's office quietly contradicts one made in another's.

If you want to talk through what these seven pages turned up, you can schedule a conversation with a CFP® professional at Build Wealth Partners at **buildwealthpartners.com**.

Disclaimers

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This worksheet accompanies The Owner's Money Map, a general framework. It provides information, not advice. It relies entirely on information you provide, it cannot account for your full circumstances, and nothing in it should be the sole basis for a financial decision.

This content is for general educational purposes only and is not individualized investment, legal, or tax advice. Consult your own advisors about your specific situation.

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