SMARTer Entrepreneurs

FREE QUICK CARD

DELIVERY I QUICK CARD SD-01

Who really does the work?

A week of noting your hours, fifteen minutes with the results, and the questions a good coach would ask you.



The practice

Most businesses that sell expertise were not designed. They grew one hire at a time, and the mix that resulted quietly decides your margin and your workload.

Clients buy your best thinking, your experience, or efficiency, and each needs a different mix of senior and junior people. A ten-person consultancy's owner spent 300 hours a year on a report a consultant could write. Handed down at an hourly price, the business gained about £3,200; at a fixed price, about £25,500 (an illustration).

Who does the work

Senior, not counting you: paid time (example only: 65%)
Middle (run client work day to day): paid time (example: 68%)
Junior (work under supervision): paid time (example: 55%)
Your hours last week on new problems (nobody has solved it before)
Your hours last week on familiar problems (solved many times)
Your hours last week on routine work (steps could be written down)
One service you could hand down, and its price now (a report, by the hour)

Paid time: the share of hours available (about 1,700 a year) clients paid for. The figures are examples, not targets.

Try this this week

For five working days, note each half hour of client work as new, familiar or routine. Then total the routine hours.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CARD

Coach yourself

Fill in the front first. Then take fifteen minutes with these, in writing.

1. If your routine hours went to someone else, what would you do with them, and what would that be worth?
2. Look at your three paid time figures. Is the busiest level the one you would choose to be busiest?
3. What happened the last time you tried to hand this kind of work over?
4. What would someone need from you to do it: a checklist, an example, a month of checking?
5. If it arrived on time, done by someone else, what would the client notice?
6. When your week of notes is done, what will you move, and who would notice if it drifted back?

If you catch yourself saying...

You hear yourself say	Try asking instead
"It's quicker to do it myself"	Quicker this week, or quicker this year?
"Nobody else does it properly"	What would it mean about you if someone else did it 80% as well?
"I couldn't put my prices up on them"	What do you think they would actually say if you asked?

ONE HARDER QUESTION

If a client is paying for efficiency, why are they getting your most expensive hours?

Keep it going

Decide who reviews paid time by level each quarter, and where. Put 3, 6 and 12 months from today in the diary. If it slips, look at your own week only.

When to get help

Margins and tax: your accountant; repricing contracts: a solicitor. If moving work changes anyone's role or pay, talk to an employment adviser first.

What a coach adds

This card gives you the questions. What it cannot do is notice which one you avoided. It is one of the SMARTer practice cards, covering the ten key areas of a business that sells expertise.

> Talk yours through with your SMARTer coach and mentor: book a Discovery Call at smarterentrepreneurs.co.uk

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