



"Not all entrepreneurs are the same. Neither are all businesses. In this engaging book, Joe Abraham helps you sort it all out and find the path that's right for you."

—SETH GODIN, author, *Linchpin*

# Entrepreneurial DNA

The Breakthrough Discovery That Aligns  
Your Business to Your Unique Strengths

Self-assessment tools

Strategies that fit your profile

Action plans to optimize your business

JOE ABRAHAM

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## [ i n t r o d u c t i o n ]

I vividly remember the experience of watching my first-ever television show. It was the late 1970s in New Delhi, India. Dad didn't see the point of us owning a TV, given that there was one national channel that delivered a few hours of fuzzy programming each evening. Our neighbors, however, had just bought a brand-new TV and invited me and my sisters to come over on a Wednesday night to watch an "American" show with them.

I was just beside myself in excitement. Not only was I going to get to see what a TV looked like, I was going to get my first real taste of America! I don't think I slept very well the night before. I remember tossing and turning in glee, just hoping and praying for daybreak so I could begin the official countdown to that coveted experience.

The day of the event, I remember bragging to my friends at school and on the playground about my elite invitation for later that night. By the time 8 p.m. arrived on the clock, I was bouncing off the walls. No sooner did my mom give us the okay to walk politely over to the neighbor's house, than I was pounding on their door, begging to be let in. A few minutes later, we were sitting cross-legged on a beautiful Persian rug, ready to take in the entire experience. "Who cares about the food and drink?" I remember thinking to myself, "Let's get this amazing device turned on!"

When the lady of the house finally walked over to turn the unit on, my heart skipped a beat. A few seconds of snowy fuzz eventually gave way to the breathtaking black-and-white footage of Lucy and Ricky Ricardo bantering back and forth on the *I Love Lucy* show.

I was in awe. Instantly I was transported to Lucy and Ricky's living room and kitchen thousands of miles away. It felt like I was right there with them.

That was a big night for me. I had experienced something amazing out of a 13-inch black-and-white screen. "This is the most incredible thing ever," I thought to myself. "I can't imagine anything better than this."

You and I now have the luxury of knowing that a 13-inch black-and-white TV with rabbit-ear antenna was not the end of TV innovation. Today as I pen the words on this page, my six-year-old is nagging me about the latest 3-D High Definition television that we absolutely *have* to own.

"Really? A high definition TV in 3-D?" I asked him. "Oh yeah, Dad. It's as thin as your computer screen and you put on these special glasses, and the stuff feels like it's coming out of the TV right on top of you," he replied.

Things change so fast, don't they? Black-and-white TV seems like the dark ages now.

I hope you'll feel the same way about *old-school entrepreneurship* once you are done with this book.

Here's why.

For centuries, entrepreneurs have been put in one big box. We have been told that we are all the same. That is the single biggest misconception in entrepreneurship—the one-size-fits-all approach to business startup, growth, and exit. Since we were assumed to all be the *same* (kind of like the borg in *Star Trek*), it was assumed that we should all have the same modus operandi in business and life.

In *old-school* entrepreneurship, Donald Trump, Sir Richard Branson, and Gary Vaynerchuk weren't different from you—they were a *better version* of you.

In *old school* entrepreneurship, if you didn't work an insane amount of hours, love marketing, selling, negotiating, and firing people, you were the inferior version of the genuine article.

In *old school* entrepreneurship, if an idea worked for someone else and it didn't work for you, you were the one with a big "L for loser" on your forehead.

I find it interesting that entrepreneurship—the source of every great innovation—has not experienced any true innovation of its own. We have been operating with a century-old playbook, a playbook that is the equivalent of that 13-inch black-and-white TV I first watched Lucy and Ricky on.

Sitting cross-legged on that Persian rug that night, I thought things could never get better than black-and-white television. After all, Lucy and Ricky looked and sounded great. At least, that's what I thought, given the paradigm in which I was living.

I want to give kudos to the folks who built the first black-and-white TV. They did an amazing thing. Without them, my kid wouldn't have a reason to drag me to the gadget store to buy a 3-D HDTV. The same is true of the good folks who have written books and taught classes on old-school entrepreneurship to date. They paved the way for what you and I are about to learn together now.

But it is time to move on.

The old-school, one-size-fits-all, black-and-white version needs to be archived in a museum somewhere. Instead, there is a whole new way for you and me to look at entrepreneurship. It is a whole new paradigm for how we can live and operate as entrepreneurs. I want to invite you to experience this next generation of entrepreneurship in its *multidimensional, rich, color, high fidelity coolness*.

In our short time together, I plan to introduce you to a game-changing paradigm in the world of entrepreneurship called Entrepreneurial DNA. In the first part of this book, you and I are going to focus on what I call the Discover process. The Discover

process is all about you figuring out what type of entrepreneur you really are. You'll learn about the tendencies, predispositions, strengths, and weaknesses of your unique entrepreneurial DNA (also called your BOSI Profile).

Next, we'll dive into the Design Process. The Design Process is all about you taking what you have learned and crafting a breakthrough strategic plan for your business that (for the first time) is built around your unique gifting.

Finally, we'll talk about the Deploy Process. This is where the rubber hits the road and you execute your breakthrough strategic plan into the marketplace.

I hope you are ready (for the breakthrough) and willing (to pull the trigger) to see what the next generation of entrepreneurship is all about.





## **Your Entrepreneurial DNA Drives Your Business Strategy**

### **Maybe It's Just Me!**

I am sure you have found yourself in the same position I have. Arms thrown up in the air questioning how the entrepreneur next door pulled off a feat you couldn't. What is really frustrating is when it appears as though he or she spent *half* the energy getting it done. Maybe it was a marketing campaign or a product launch. It could have been a sales strategy or a hiring decision. The bottom line is that he or she did it better and/or faster than you could have. When things like that happen, you find yourself saying, "Maybe it's just me."

### **Maybe It's Just Your Type**

You probably have some history with dogs. You either have one, or grew up with one, or saw your neighbor with one. When you see a dog, you instantly recognize it as a dog. Because dogs are dogs, right? Generally, they have ears and good hearing, a nose

with an acute sense of smell, four legs, and fur. They run, they play, they bark, and they leave land mines on the lawn.

Some breeds, though, are specifically bred based on their natural gifts. Think about the genetic and phenotypic differences in these breeds. Imagine being a basset hound taking on a greyhound in a sprint to the finish line. Imagine being a golden retriever going head-to-head against a pit bull in a job interview for “scary guard dog.”

Even playing field? I don't think so.

It's just the same with people. We share some characteristics, but each of us has a unique and distinct makeup. When it comes to entrepreneurship, some of us are “purebreds” and carry a distinct set of characteristics and gifts. Others of us are “mutts” who have a blend of various strengths and weaknesses.

But, read any book on entrepreneurship and the authors will say the same thing. “You are an entrepreneur—so here is the silver bullet on how to become a better \_\_\_\_\_” (fill in the blank with marketer, leader, communicator, negotiator, candlestick maker).

Attend any seminar for entrepreneurs and the speakers will say essentially the same thing. Hire an expert to write your business plan, design a go-to-market strategy, or generate online traffic, and the same anthem will start to play.

However, these “gurus” are all making the same fatal assumption that you are like *every* other entrepreneur out there. Think about any popular program you've seen out there. It usually has the founder's name built into the title like “Tom's Selling,” “Barb's Branding,” or “Tim's Negotiating.” Essentially what they are selling is this:

1. “I figured out a way to become successful in \_\_\_\_\_ (selling, branding, negotiating, Internet marketing, flipping real estate, etc.).”
2. “I took my step-by-step action plan and success blueprint and put it into my \_\_\_\_\_ (home-study, live seminar, online membership) program.”

3. “Now you can have the *exact* same success I had if you *just* follow my system.”

Really, guru? Really? I can't blame the gurus for doing it. That's how we were all taught in the classroom of *old school* entrepreneurship. As a matter of fact, I built a couple of training companies having made a very similar “you can do it if I did it” claim. The old-fashioned notion was that what worked for the entrepreneur next door would also work for *you*. But you know from experience that isn't always true. Just as our four characters from Chapter 1, you know that you are not built to do the things *every* other entrepreneur does. On the flip side, you've probably noticed others try to duplicate some of your best practices only to fall flat on their faces.

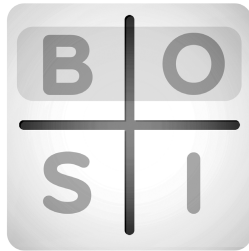
You have strengths, weaknesses, and tendencies that give you a *distinct* modus operandi.

- Maybe you are the person who has thousands of people following you on Twitter or maybe you are struggling to get follower no. 58.
- Maybe you are the one that has the gift to build and nurture long-term interpersonal relationships or maybe you are the type that rips through people faster than a tornado in Wichita, Kansas.
- Maybe you are an entrepreneur who finds marketing and lead generation as easy as flipping on a light switch or maybe you are someone who finds it harder than pushing a bowling ball through a garden hose.
- Maybe you are one of those who starts a business and runs it for 20-plus years, or maybe you are one of those who jumps from business opportunity to business opportunity like a frog hopping lily pads on a pond.

Here's my point. You can't be *all* of the above. The black-and-white, old school version of entrepreneurship assumed you *were*



## The Upper Quadrants (Builder and Opportunist)



**Figure 4-2** Builder and Opportunist Profiles

It is interesting to note that despite their differences, the Builder and the Opportunist DNAs do have some things in common. That's why they fall *together* in the top quadrants. Entrepreneurs who have a Builder-Opportunist or an Opportunist-Builder BOSI Profiles are called "upper-quadrant" entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs tend to have multi-industry experience. They just go about their business careers very differently. The Builder starts, builds, and sells a company. Then the Builder tends to move on to do it again and again—quite often in a totally different industry. The Opportunist, on the other hand, tends to leverage multiple business ventures at the same time with the intent of creating multiple streams of income. At the end of the day, both the Builder and the Opportunist end up having generated income from more than one industry. That's something they both have in common.

Builders and Opportunists share some other traits as well. They both tend to be big-vision, big-picture thinkers. They don't get too excited about being part of a venture that generates a few hundred thousand dollars of revenue in a year. Their juices start to flow when there is talk of being part of multimillion- or multibillion-dollar enterprises.

Upper-quadrant entrepreneurs are also bigger risk takers than their lower-quadrant counterparts. If you've ever seen an entrepreneur light his or her hair on fire and jump off a cliff

(figuratively speaking, of course), I can assure you that his or her top-quadrant DNA was in high gear.

Upper-quadrant entrepreneurs share a common weakness—people—but for different reasons. For the Builder, it is hard to maintain long-term interpersonal relationships because the Builder tends to try to control people. The Opportunist tends to look at people as glorified checkbooks—a source of money, referrals, and more business. In both cases, when left unattended, the Builder and the Opportunist DNAs leave a trail of relational casualties in their wake.

When a Builder and an Opportunist get together, it is an interesting interaction to observe. The Builder takes an instant liking to the positive, energetic Opportunist. The Builder doesn't waste time trying to recruit the Opportunist to become a promoter or salesperson for the Builder's enterprise. The Opportunist, on the other hand, sees the Builder as a perfectly qualified customer for the product or service the Opportunist is already selling. If you think back to the story of Bob and Omar in the hotel lobby, you'll see Builder and Opportunist DNA in action together.

It makes for some great people-watching to see these two DNAs interact with each other and attempt to get into each other's pocketbook. In most cases, the Builder buys whatever the Opportunist is selling just to get him or her to shut up and consider the career change of coming to work with, and for, the Builder.

If you want to picture a famous top-quadrant entrepreneur in your mind's eye, picture Sir Richard Branson. His book *Screw It, Let's Do It* telegraphs his Opportunist DNA. His track record for having built highly scalable companies across several industries shows his Builder DNA.

Sir Richard Branson's healthy blend of Opportunist and Builder DNAs is what makes him successful in the marketplace. He has the blue-sky, anything-is-possible, failure-is-part-of-success mind-set of the Opportunist DNA combined with the system-designing, brand-building, global-infrastructure-creating of the Builder DNA.



## **The Opportunist DNA: “Who Cares, Let’s Do It”**

We know by now that the quintessential Opportunist is the particular type of entrepreneur who is driven by a desire to acquire wealth quickly and live off the spoils of that wealth for the long-term. We’ll return to our story from Chapter 1 to show you how to best structure your business to take advantage of the distinctive traits of the Opportunist DNA.

### **Overview**

Omar Kelly is a professional multilevel marketer. His mission is financial freedom, and is currently involved in his third multilevel marketing (MLM) venture. He is doing quite well this time, despite some setbacks along the way. Omar also does Forex Trading every morning and is working with his bank on liquidating some investment properties he got stuck with when the 2008 real estate bubble burst.



## **Plug and Play**

To me, one of the greatest things about computers is the invention of the USB port. I can plug in a printer, a phone, a keyboard, and dozens of other devices into a USB port and I'm ready to go. Plug and play. I love it!

When it comes to business, Omar is quite the same way. He loves systems that he can just plug into. Network marketing ventures, franchises, agencies, quick-flip real estate deals, Internet marketing software, and other money-making systems have great appeal. That's because Omar is not interested in reinventing the wheel.

Omar is convinced that making money is all about being at the right place at the right time. It's all about being there at the ground floor. You know the ones: "You put \$1,000 in this week, and in six hours it's turned into this, and in six days, it's turned into some multiple of that, and in six months, it's just turned into \$100,000!"

He gets pretty fired up about finding a piece of real estate that is selling for pennies on the dollar that he could buy, develop, and flip for a huge multiple. Omar's goal is to position himself well in a deal, work hard for a period of time, and then pull the plug, sit back, and enjoy a passive income stream forever.

## **The Natural Born Promoter**

When Omar gets passionate about something, he turns into a promotional machine. He can't stop talking about it. For example, when he got involved with his first MLM company, he heard some anecdotal stories about the incredible results people were having with the company's product. Omar became an "evangelist." He felt he had to tell everyone about this revolutionary new product. Interestingly enough, the same scenario played out in other business ventures. Moments after Omar was introduced to his first quick-flip real estate deal, he was on the phone with his Rolodex of business contacts, letting them know how they could "get in" on the deal.

Being a promoter is in Omar's DNA. When he launched his entrepreneurial career, that promotional power yielded him some

incredible results. His passion and excitement drew people in. Many jumped into business with him.

But now, several years into the journey, Omar has noticed that his influence with people is waning. They aren't jumping on everything he brings to the table. As a matter of fact, some people are to the point of avoiding his phone calls. That frustrates Omar. After all, *he's just trying to help enough people get what they want so he can get what he wants in life.*

### **"I'd Like a Taste of That, Too!"**

It's interesting to walk into an ice cream store and watch people ordering. Guys like me walk right up to the counter and order two scoops of vanilla in a cone. Others, like my wife, stand in awe staring through the glass barrier at every conceivable flavor combination wondering which one to choose. No sooner does she make her choice of chocolate-something-something then she sees someone else with a more decadent selection. Wait! Did she really make the right choice or should she go with the incredible new discovery?

Omar has something in common with my wife's ice cream selection challenge. He picked business opportunity no.1 (the weight-loss MLM company). However, no sooner had the rubber hit the road on marketing that opportunity, than his upline Bill told him about business opportunity no. 2 (the online marketing system). A few weeks later, he was on a mastermind teleconference and was introduced to a real estate investment opportunity where he could get in for as little as \$50,000 and walk away with as much as \$600,000 once the landowner had secured "the deal" with a potential developer. But Omar would have to move quickly to get his position in the real estate investment.

Fear of loss drives Omar. This fear is so strong that he often cannot say no to whatever comes across his plate. This is the Achilles' heel of the Opportunist. Say no to a money-making deal? Just the thought of missing out on such a deal drives him nuts. What if someone else makes the money . . . *and he doesn't?*



regulatory restrictions. An Opportunist becomes a caged panther when forced inside a box or made to sit in a cubicle. Evaluate the opportunity being offered to you carefully. If there are several management layers of decision making or if you will have to jump through too many hoops to get something done, there is a chance the fire in your belly will die quickly. The lower your Opportunist DNA, the less of a yellow flag this becomes.

### **Some Tips on Partnerships and Alliances**

By nature, Opportunists tend to partner with other Opportunists. It's just so darn convenient. After all, birds of a feather flock together right?

But is that the optimal scenario for reaching your goals and dreams? As you read through this section, you have probably figured out that an Opportunist-Opportunist partnership, though fun, could simply accentuate weaknesses of the DNA and deter success. With that said, I have seen many situations where two Opportunists partnered together have done fairly well. The primary takeaway value of this partnership is the sheer camaraderie and support that comes from being in business with a like-minded individual.

But there are a couple of better options. They may not be as "easy" interpersonally, but I can assure you, they typically work out to be more profitable for all involved.

### **Specialist DNA Partnered with Opportunist DNA**

It goes without saying that a cross-quadrant partnership has its benefits. After all, the strengths of the Specialist DNA offset the weaknesses of the Opportunist DNA. Refer back to my comments on having Secondary Specialist DNA, in the previous chapter, and you'll see how those differences play out.

I am reminded of an American Express TV commercial where one partner (the face man/sales guy) is on the road calling in the results of his road trip to his business partner (the brew mas-

ter) back home. Each call comes with more good news of sales of their micro brew to bars and pubs around the world. "We're going to need more equipment," says the happy Specialist partner. Meanwhile, the happy Opportunist partner is traveling the globe doing what he loves.

That same scenario plays itself out successfully all over the world. When an IT guy (Specialist DNA) teams up with a sales guy (Opportunist DNA), the two can build a very successful company together. The sales guy can focus on landing new accounts and keeping the cash register ringing. The IT guy can focus on servicing the customer and managing the office environment.

A cross-quadrant partnership will also have its tough days. Yin-yang relationships have their ups *and* downs. It is imperative for one of the partners to have the final say in the business so as to avoid stalemates and drawn out sessions of mental gymnastics. I have found that partnerships where the Specialist has the majority interest perform better for the long term than those where the Opportunist has the final decision.

### **Builder DNA Partnered with Opportunist DNA**

A healthy Builder-Opportunist partnership is a sight to behold in the marketplace. These two DNAs work well to generate massive market results (albeit with significant interpersonal challenges).

I've mentioned it before, but it bears repeating. A Builder's ability to create highly scalable systems and brands just makes it easier for Opportunist DNA to take that brand to the marketplace with a big bang. When an Opportunist is teamed up with a Builder, the sky is the limit on growth and income generation. It's worth repeating again that every franchise, MLM, agency, and dealer organization is essentially the partnership of a Builder and an Opportunist. The results speak for themselves.

As an individual with Opportunist DNA you just have to know that all this success and upside comes with a price. Builders will want to dominate and control every conversation, situation,

and decision. If you are willing to let the Builder “win” most of the time, you will have a prosperous journey. If you can figure out how to make your Builder partner “feel” like he or she won, even though you know you got what you wanted, then consider yourself miles ahead of the pack.

### **Some Typical Statements Made by an Opportunist**

If you have made any of these statements, you have been exhibiting Opportunist tendencies. Given your new knowledge about your Entrepreneurial DNA, think about these for a few minutes and see how they fit with your business.

- I love the idea of working hard for a window of time (two to five years) making a fortune, and then living the life thereafter.
- I have been involved in multiple business ventures at the same time.
- I am surrounded by dream stealers. Some of them are the people closest to me.
- If the right people would just invest in this business venture with me, it would be a huge success.
- I don't mind working 18 hours a day for a window of time if I can enjoy the benefits for the rest of my life.
- I am an optimist through and through. Despite the occasional failure along the way, I am confident I am going to strike it *big* on my current venture.
- I have a hard time saying no to money-making opportunities—especially the ones that don't take a lot of ongoing time.

#### **BOSI BUSINESS STRATEGY ALERT!**

Do you have an advisory board that has the ability to say no to business opportunities for you? If not, you will end up making impulsive decisions that will continue to keep you from reaching your goal of financial freedom.



## **Strategy Three—Optimize Your Team, Part 1: Your Advisory Board**

If you are taking Strategy Two seriously, you are going to need help and support to get through the process. As we have learned in our time together, your BOSI DNA's greatest weakness is your inability to say "no" when a tempting offer comes your way. Take it from me, a guy who gets presented great money-making opportunities every single day. It's hard to say no on your own. If you have any intention of reaching your goal of financial freedom in the next two to five years, you must counter your impulsive side with an objective group of advisors.

With the BOSI Quadrant in mind, I'd like to recommend that you go through your Rolodex and find three to five very seasoned individuals who have BOSI Profiles that *differ* from yours. There is no point surrounding yourself with a bunch of yes people who will want to jump into every money-making deal *with* you. Ideally, your Advisory Board will include one or two Builders (people who have built very successful companies in more than one industry). Then add in a couple of Specialists. Think of attorneys, CPAs, financial planners, and graphic designers. (You know the people who run those businesses you think are utterly "boring"? Yes, you will need two of them on your Advisory Board).

If you can find someone with Innovator DNA, that's great, but an Innovator typically won't add a whole lot of value to your business needs. The bottom line is that you need Builder and Specialist DNAs on your Advisory Board. If you need some help, use the free relationship analyzer tools available in the BOSI online community and optimize your Advisory Board from there.

"Wow, Joe, I'm not going to do this crazy step," you say. "I have to work pretty hard to stay away from these *dream-stealing no-vision-having cynics*. I'm not going to have them advise me. I'll do this one on my own."

Oh, really? How's that going for you so far?

Trust me when I tell you, this is the defining difference between *successful* Opportunists and *struggling* Opportunists. Some



of my closest friends have tons of Opportunist DNA and the ones that have built an optimized Advisory Board have stayed out of trouble. They have made money faster and they are closer to their goals than ever before. The Opportunists who skip this strategy make a ton of money for six months to a year and then lose it all, and then start the cycle all over again.

Now here is what you do with your Advisory Board prospect list. Ask them to be part of your Advisory Board. Their only obligation is to evaluate any and all business opportunities and decisions that come your way and advise you on your involvement. That is it. They do not have to check in with you every week or every month. They do not have to babysit your finances (or know anything about your finances). You just give them the full authority in your life to *vote for or against* your involvement in a business venture. If they vote yes, go for it. If they vote no, walk away. It's that simple.

If your Advisory Board does not hear from you for a whole year, that's okay. It just means that you have not considered a new business venture in that long (if you're being honest, they'll hear from you, though). The goal of this Advisory Board is for people, who are not like you, to help you slow the process of jumping into a venture to a pace where wiser, discerning decisions can be made. They will help you avoid a lot of lost money, time, and heartache. An advisory board is a critical part of your success journey.

I know that I am giving you some pretty tough pills to swallow. I promise that it gets easier from here. I can also assure you that the results you will see from Strategies Two and Three will be *game changing* for you and your business.

## **Strategy Four—Optimize Your Team, Part 2: Your Coach**

A coach is going to pick up where your Advisory Board leaves off. Let's say you've completed Strategy Two and Strategy Three. That means you're actively involved in a safe, long-term business venture that has been vetted by people who are *not* like you. Now it is time to make sure that someone is going to keep you



## part three

# Building Your Strategic Plan



Would you believe it if I told you that we are two-thirds of the way through our journey together? We are now getting into the most important third of the book where we get to take what you've learned earlier and use it to construct a new strategic plan for your business based on your Entrepreneurial DNA. We'll begin by looking at the key building blocks of a strong strategic plan and then construct your plan using those building blocks.

We are going to focus on seven key exercises. Each exercise builds on the previous one. So take the time to do each exercise, but do so in the order in which they are laid out for you. Only equity stakeholders and key advisors in your company should do Exercises One, Two, and Three. You'll see why as we go through the exercises.

The purpose of the first three exercises is to go back to basics and set up a foundational set of filters that will root out and protect against “free radicals”—pieces of stray strategy or decisions that looked good on the surface but go against your Entrepreneurial DNA. Exercises Four, Five, Six, and Seven are an opportunity for you to bring the rest of your team into the picture. So if you are a Builder, this is where you bring in any contracted experts or your upper-management team. If you are an Opportunist, you definitely want your coach to go through the exercises with you. If you are a Specialist, this would be a great opportunity for you to put your marketing firm to the test. If you are an Innovator, you shouldn't even consider doing these exercises without your advisor (or advisory team) there to guide you through this process.

Without the right filters in place, a well-intentioned entrepreneur could make changes to his or her business that could be devastating. When we do the brand positioning exercise, you are going to discover *who* your target audience is. You are going to learn to listen to that very specific group of people in your marketplace so that you stay on course, servicing *their* needs. However, you will also learn to ignore the noisemakers that were never supposed to be your customers in the first place.

These first three exercises also serve another significant purpose. As you make operational, HR, and business development decisions in Exercises Four, Five, Six, and Seven, the results of the

first three foundational exercises will act as filters through which you will make go and no-go decisions.

**QUICK ALERT:** Don't lose sight of the discovery you have already made about your Entrepreneurial DNA. Let that discovery drive the decisions you make in these exercises. I'll remind you about this as we get into Exercise Four, but keep this in mind even as you lay the foundation in Exercises One, Two, and Three.



[ chapter ]

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## Designing Your New Strategic Plan

### **Exercise Four: Optimizing the Business to Your Entrepreneurial DNA**

Earlier, I took you through seven Business Optimization Strategies for your Primary Entrepreneurial DNA. Here is where you get to bring those strategies back and literally install them into the operating structure of your business and life.

In this exercise, you will present your Entrepreneurial DNA to your team. Tell them about the strengths, weaknesses, and frustrations of your Primary DNA. Describe any Secondary DNA you have. Teach them what you have learned about how the BOSI Quadrant works and how certain strengths and weaknesses are either enhanced or compensated for by other DNAs.

“But Joe, I’d be showing my team my dirty laundry,” you say. Exactly!

Listen, I know plenty of CEOs who think they are demigods in their business. They assume that because they are owners, they

have to appear omnipotent and omniscient. How is that working out for you so far?

The fact is, your team already *knows* most of your strengths and weaknesses. If you have a Primary Builder DNA, do you think they are going to be shocked and amazed when you talk about the Builder's ability to manipulate people and get them to do things they don't want to do? Take them out for a test drive and watch everyone grin and giggle as you describe your DNA. They already know!

Going through this exercise with them makes you more *transparent*. It proves to them that you are being *authentic* with them. They will respect you more for identifying your dirty laundry. Let me also assure you that the *right* ones will come alongside you and fill delivery gaps like they never had before. They will take ownership in your enterprise at a level you have never experienced. Remember my promise to you at the beginning of this journey? Here is what I said in the opening chapter:

Your company will grow faster because you will be operating within your gifting, your staff and operations will be optimized around who you are, and your marketplace relationships will be maximized.

So do Exercise Four in full transparency and authenticity with your team, and I can assure you, I will have delivered on this promise.

The first thing you are going to do is a mini seminar on your Entrepreneurial DNA. Then talk about the seven strategies, one by one. Finally, let the team weigh in on which of the strategies need to be implemented and which strategies are already in place and performing well.

Here's an example. If you have a Primary Specialist DNA, I made seven strategy suggestions to you in Chapter 10:

- Optimize your strategic plan
- Optimize your business development



- Optimize your advisory team
- Optimize your mastermind team
- Optimize your expert status
- Optimize your work-life balance plan
- Optimize your exit value potential

Let's consider Item five: Optimize your expert status, and dig into it.

**You:** "One of Joe's recommendations is that we build our expert status. Let's start by listing the things we do right now to build our expert status. Then we'll look at some of Joe's specific recommendations. Finally, we'll brainstorm some ideas of our own. The goal is for us to come up with a plan that makes sense. A plan that works for my Entrepreneurial DNA, our company, and our budget. But we want a plan that is in full alignment with our vision, mission, and brand position."

**Team:** "Right on! Let's do it" (or something to that effect).

Now let's consider item two, Optimize your business development, and dig into it.

**You:** "So based on the BOSI philosophy, standing out in a crowded marketplace is a constant struggle for companies like ours. We've got a couple of options here. We can come up with some fresh ideas of our own. That's Option One. Option Two is that we can bring in an expert who can help us craft an outside-the-box marketing plan that still fits my DNA. Option Three is that we just stay with what we have been doing because it is working just fine."

**Team:** "I/we vote for option \_\_\_\_\_."

It's fair to say you get the gist of what this exercise is all about so far.

Step One: Do the BOSI mini seminar.

Step Two: Go through the seven strategies.

The final step is to integrate the new plans that are optimized for your Entrepreneurial DNA into your business operation.

Keep in mind that this is still at the strategic planning and white-board level. You aren't running out to your factory floor making changes at this moment. You are simply finding places in your business that aren't optimized for your Entrepreneurial DNA and optimizing them.

For example, I recommend that all the BOSI DNAs have some sort of ongoing advisory and/or mastermind relationships. If we assume that you agree with the importance of this recommendation, it is at this point that you would look at your current modus operandi with advisory and/or mastermind relationships and come up with a new game plan.

Maybe you'll discover in Strategy Three for Specialist DNA that even though you currently mastermind with other business owners, that they are not the ideal group for you because you all have the same Primary DNA. Now is your opportunity to say, "Okay, in order to be optimized for my DNA, I need to go back to my group and suggest we split up into two groups—allowing a couple of new members to join each group—each with an opposing DNA."

Put differently, this is where you figure out the steps of what needs to be different in your new strategic plan. This is where you identify if you need to seek out a new business coach, digital marketing firm, business advisor, banking relationship, sales system, or marketing plan. Don't feel the pressure to identify the actual resource at this time. All you need to do right now is identify the need. We will get to the action plan in Exercise Seven.

So go through all seven strategies with your team and integrate them (strategically) into your business. Before you finish this session, make sure to do a final, mission-critical step. Take all the great, fresh, and new ideas that came out of this process and hold them up against your BOSI Entrepreneurial DNA, your vision and mission, and your market and brand positioning. Remember what I said earlier: your Entrepreneurial DNA, your vision and mission, and your market and brand positioning will become very powerful decision filters for you as (CEO). If you

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