

**THE NEW
TALENT
PLAYBOOK**
Podcast

Action Kit

**9 Things Great
Owners Do That the
Rest Don't**

Featuring Rob Levin

Episode 1 - Season 6

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What separates great business owners from good ones? After hundreds of conversations and decades of observation, Rob Levin has distilled nine critical practices that define exceptional leadership. This is about working smarter, focusing on what truly drives value, and building a culture that attracts and retains top talent. In this action kit, you'll explore the strategic pillars that separate the best from the rest: understanding your unique ability, making time for strategic thinking, building great culture, removing poor performers quickly, and creating systems of accountability.

1. Discover & Leverage Your Unique Strength

The foundation of exceptional business ownership starts with understanding your unique strength (Rob refers to this as your unique ability). That intersection where your greatest value, your passion, and your distinctive talent meet. Dan Sullivan of Strategic Coach defines this as the combination of three elements: (1) something that drives tremendous value for your business, (2) something you genuinely enjoy doing that gives you energy, and (3) something you are uniquely good at that others don't possess.

Most business owners spend only 15-20% of their time in their unique ability zone. Top performers flip that ratio, spending closer to 80% of their time doing what only they can do best.

Map Your Unique Strength

Complete each section to identify where your unique ability lies:

1. What activities in your business drive the MOST value? (List 3-5 activities)

2. What activities give you ENERGY rather than drain it? (List 3-5 activities)

3. What are you UNIQUELY good at that others struggle with? (List 2-3 abilities)

My Unique Strength Statement:

What % of your time do you currently spend in your unique ability zone? ____ %

What is ONE activity you can delegate this week to spend more time on your unique strength?

2. Protect Your Strategic Thinking Time

In a world of constant emails, urgent requests, and daily fires to put out, the ability to step back and think strategically is what sets exceptional leaders apart. Strategic thinking time is non-negotiable; it's the space where you evaluate how your customers are changing, how your competitors are evolving, how your team is developing, and where your business needs to pivot next.

Create Your Strategic Thinking Ritual

Design your weekly strategic thinking practice:

When will you block time for strategic thinking each week?

Day: _____ Time: _____ Duration: _____ hours

Where will you go to eliminate distractions? (Not your desk!)

What are the 4-5 key areas you need to evaluate regularly?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer changes & needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Team development & gaps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing effectiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

What "urgent" tasks typically interrupt your strategic time?

3. Build & Maintain a Great Culture

Culture is perhaps the biggest lever of your success as a business owner. It's not a soft skill or a nice-to-have, it directly dictates who you hire, who stays, who leaves, and how you get the most out of your talent.

Culture Assessment & Action Plan

Rate your current culture on these dimensions (1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent):

Statement	Rating
We have clearly defined values that guide decisions	
We recognize and celebrate employee achievements regularly	
Team members feel psychologically safe to share ideas	
We hire for cultural fit as much as technical skills	
Poor performers are addressed quickly and fairly	
Communication is transparent and consistent	
Employees understand how their work contributes to company goals	
We invest in continuous learning and development	

Based on your ratings, what are your TWO biggest culture gaps?

1. _____

2. _____

Recognition Practice:

What is ONE new recognition practice you can implement this month?

4. Remove Poor Performers Quickly

Great business owners understand a critical truth: **you are what you tolerate**. When poor performers stay in your organization, whether they're toxic culturally or simply can't deliver results, your A players notice. They watch what you accept, and they either step in to compensate (breeding resentment) or start looking elsewhere.

There are two categories of poor performers:

1. People who perform well but are cultural poison, spreading negativity and dragging down morale
2. People who fit culturally but can't get the work done, whether due to a hiring mistake, personal challenges, or role evolution.

Both need to be addressed swiftly and fairly.

Performance & Culture Matrix

Evaluate your current team using this framework (1=Low, 5=High):

Team Member Name	Performance Level	Cultural Fit

What to do with each quadrant:

- High Performance + High Culture Fit = Keep, develop, promote
- High Performance + Low Culture Fit = Address behavior immediately or exit
- Low Performance + High Culture Fit = Provide coaching, set clear 30-day goals
- Low Performance + Low Culture Fit = Exit quickly and respectfully

Honest Assessment: Are there any team members you have been avoiding addressing?

5. Create Systems of Accountability

Great business owners don't micromanage: they create systems that make accountability clear, measurable, and fair. Everyone in the company has defined KPIs and assigned projects. A players love accountability systems because they consistently knock their goals out of the park. These systems also prevent the need for micromanagement, you manage the scoreboard, not every play. When everyone knows what winning looks like, your job shifts from controlling to coaching.

Build Your Accountability Framework

Design or refine your accountability system:

1. Do you currently use a formalized operating system?

Yes - Which one? _____ **No** - Consider EOS, Scaling Up, or custom

2. List the key roles in your business and their primary KPIs:

Role/Position	Primary KPI #1	Primary KPI #2

How often do you review progress on KPIs and projects?

- Weekly
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Inconsistently (need to improve)

What are your current quarterly priorities/rocks (top 3-5 for the company)?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Accountability Gap Analysis:

Where is accountability breaking down in your business?

What is ONE system or meeting you can implement to improve accountability?

"You are what you tolerate."

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