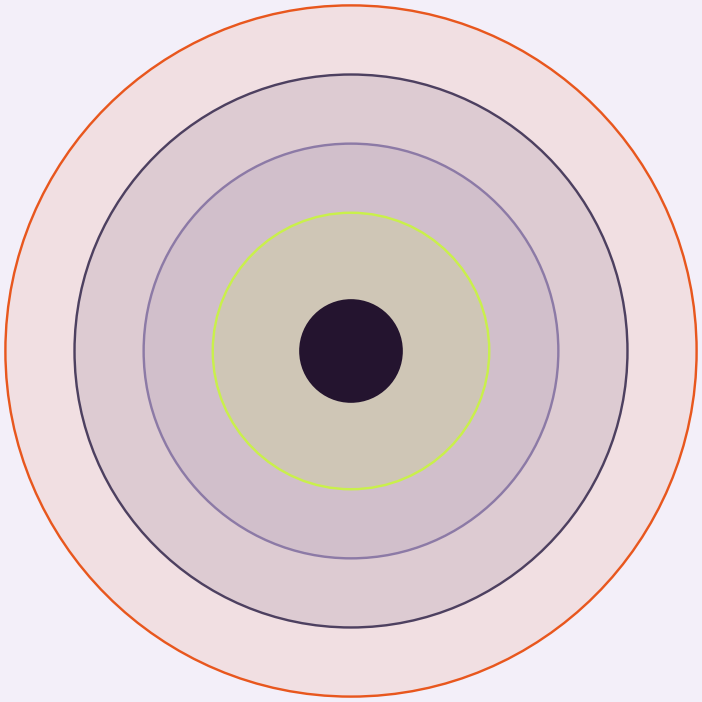


The E-Myth Re-visited

A reading of the book by Michael E. Gerber (1995)

1. ACTION BOOK

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of The E-Myth Revisited, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

Why most small businesses fail: the owner is a Technician who bought themselves a job. Gerber's fix is to build the business as the prototype for 5,000 more — Primary Aim, organisation chart, position contracts, and systems that let ordinary people produce extraordinary results.

Below are the 8 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The fatal assumption: that if you understand the technical work of a business, you understand a business that does that technical work.

Gerber's whole book unfolds from this one sentence. Being a superb baker is not the same skill as owning a bakery, and the gap between them is where most small businesses quietly die.

2 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Every owner is three people at once — Technician, Manager, Entrepreneur — and the Technician wins almost every argument.

His rough split for a typical owner is seventy percent Technician, twenty percent Manager, ten percent Entrepreneur. The Technician wants to do the work today, so tomorrow's business never gets built.

3 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Work on your business, not in it. If it cannot run without you, you did not buy a business — you bought a job.

The line the book is famous for, and the test underneath it is brutally simple: what happens to the revenue if you are unreachable for a month?

4 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Build it as the prototype for five thousand more, whether or not you ever open the second one.

The Franchise Prototype is a design constraint, not an expansion plan. Pretending the second location is coming forces every decision to be written down rather than carried in your head.

5 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Write your Primary Aim before the business plan. The business exists to serve your life, not the reverse.

Step one of the seven is not commercial at all — it is what you want your life to look like. The Strategic Objective is then just the business's job description for delivering it.

6 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Draw the organisation chart for the company you do not have yet, then write your own name in every box you are standing in.

The Organizational Strategy exercise, and the most uncomfortable ten minutes in the book. Most owners find their name in seven boxes and discover the company has no structure, only them.

7 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Innovate, quantify, orchestrate — then start again. What you refuse to measure you cannot improve.

The Business Development Process is a loop, not a project. Innovation without numbers is preference; orchestration without innovation is just a rut written down.

8 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Hire ordinary people and give them extraordinary systems. The system runs the business; people run the system.

His answer to the perpetual hiring complaint. A business that only works when you find exceptional staff is a business with a recruiting dependency, not a model.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] Write your Primary Aim on one page
- [ ] Turn it into a Strategic Objective with numbers
- [ ] Draw the org chart for five thousand locations
- [ ] Write your own name in every box you actually occupy
- [ ] Write one Position Contract for the lowest box

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Replace yourself in one box per quarter, bottom up
- ◯ Quantify one number every week
- ◯ Book two hours on the business, in the calendar

30 days · Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

☐ SETUP 1

Write your Primary Aim on one page

Not the business — the life.

What a normal Tuesday looks like, how much you want to work, what you want to be true at sixty. Everything downstream is judged against this page, so write it before anything commercial.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 2

Turn it into a Strategic Objective with numbers

The money standard (revenue, margin, what you take out) and the opportunity standard (who the customer is, what you promise them).

Gerber's test is whether a stranger could tell if you had hit it.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 3

Draw the org chart for five thousand locations

Every position the finished business needs — operations, marketing, finance, delivery, the lot — as though you were franchising it.

Draw it before you think about who could fill any of it.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 4

Write your own name in every box you actually occupy

Do it honestly, including the boxes you occupy badly.

The count is the diagnosis: seven names on one chart is not a company, it is one person with seven job titles.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 5

Write one Position Contract for the lowest box

Not a job description — the results the position is accountable for, the work it does, and the standard it is measured against.

Start at the bottom of the chart, because that is the job you can hand over first.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Replace yourself in one box per quarter, bottom up

Document it, hire or delegate into it, hold the standard, sign the contract over.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6 ○
7 ○	8 ○	9 ○	10 ○	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Quantify one number every week

Calls answered, quotes sent, conversion rate, time to deliver.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

Book two hours on the business, in the calendar

Same slot, weekly, defended like a client meeting.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

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30 ○						

December 2026

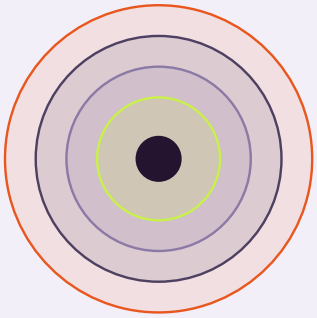
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



Your business is nothing more than a distinct reflection of who you are. So if your business is to change, you must change first.

MICHAEL E. GERBER