



GUIDE 07

The *Draft*

Chapter 7 of the book: Plans, Decisions and Leadership

HAL

"The buyer walked."

BEV (O.S.)

"So what are you going to do?"

HAL

"Ask around."

BEFORE YOU WATCH

Read Chapter 7 before Tuesday. Have the book open to the Your plan exercise and keep a pen on the page.

Bring the plan you have right now for your chief aim, however rough, and the last decision you made that went badly. Both get used.

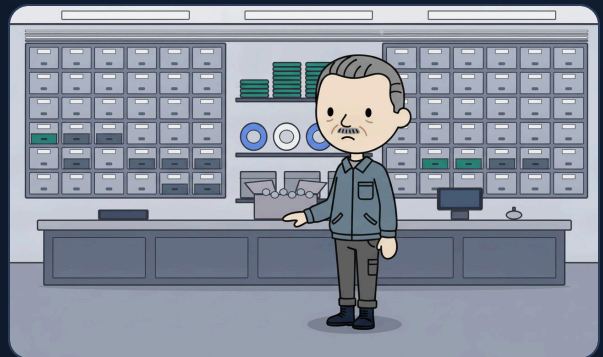
THE SCENE

Hal's buyer walks. He tells Bev he'll ask around.

Wednesday he fixes his brother's sink and gets told not to sell.
Thursday Bev tells him he doesn't have to decide anything this year.
Friday a customer asks who fixes her water heater when he's gone,
and a text says sell to the big outfit. Saturday the man at the parts
counter mentions that the big outfit just hired Marisol, nineteen, the
vo-tech graduate who asked Hal for a ride-along in October.

Tuesday, Walt asks who Hal asked. Five people, six answers. Walt
asks which one is his.

Hal looks at the page under his aim. Six weeks in, the plan has
never been written down.



THE IDEA

The *idea*

No plan survives first contact. Every salesperson learns it
the first week: the pitch that worked on paper meets a real
customer and comes apart.

Amateurs take this as evidence that planning is pointless.
Professionals take it as evidence that the first plan is a draft.
You plan, test, fail, and plan again, until something works.
Temporary defeat is information about the plan. The only
person who is ever actually beaten is the one who decides,
privately, that they are.

Plans. When a plan fails, replace it. When the replacement
fails, replace that. We only see the plan that finally worked
because nobody writes up the eleven before it. Before you
start, run a premortem: it is a year from now and the plan
has failed completely. Write the story of how. People are far
better at explaining a failure that has already happened
than at predicting one. And take the outside view: how long
did this kind of thing actually take other people? Plan for
that.

Leading. Nobody reaches a large aim alone. Every serious
plan involves other people, which means every serious plan
involves leading them, by consent or by force, and history is
a long record of force failing. Your value, in any market, is
set by the useful service you can render or the useful
service you can get others to render.

Deciding. People who get what they want reach decisions
quickly and change them slowly, if at all. Opinions are free,
and priced accordingly. Other people's opinions are mostly
their fears wearing a costume, and the people who love you
are the worst offenders. They do not want to see you hurt,
so they steer you away from risk and call it advice. One-way
doors cannot be undone and deserve slow deliberation.
Two-way doors can be reversed and should be made fast.
Most decisions are two-way doors. And judge a decision by
the information you had and the process you used, not by
its outcome, because the world has luck in it.

Use your own mind. Gather facts from people who have
them. Then decide, and let the outcome teach you.

THE MEMO

MEMO

THE PATTERN, NAMED

SUBJECT

The Opinion Poll

CC

One plumber. One buyer, gone. A brother, a wife, two customers, a parts counter.

MOVES

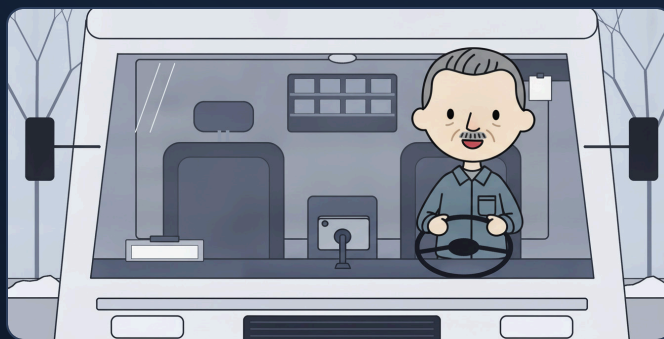
Buyer walks. Ask around. Each answer is the plan for a day. Nothing gets written. The apprentice takes another job.

OUTCOME

He polls the county and decides nothing.

The poll is tempting because it feels like diligence. You are talking to people, taking notes, weighing things. But every answer you collect is somebody else's fear about your life, and while you carry them home one at a time the plan stays unwritten, the slow decision stays unmade, and the fast decision stays unmade too. Asking around is a way of not writing it down.

THE REWIND



Before he asks anybody anything, Hal writes. The plan as it stands, in four lines. The premortem, in one: a year from now it did not sell because nobody could see the three years. Then draft two, the handover year by year. Then the doors: selling is one-way, so he gives it the year; a Saturday ride-along is two-way, so he decides it now and calls Marisol. She has already taken the job across the county. She says yes to Saturdays, at eight, which is her time and not his, and he lets it stand. That night he rates himself on the chapter's leadership list and circles the one he has always done and the one he tried for the first time at lunch.

What it cost: the buyer is still gone, Marisol is a Saturday and not an apprentice, and the sale has a year on it instead of a month.

THE PAGE, IN THE EPISODE



HE'S NEVER HAD ANYONE TO TRY IT ON

Chapter 7: Plans, Decisions and Leadership

APPRENTICE. 3 YEARS. VO-TECH, 2 DAYS.

DRAFT 2

~~BUYER PAYS.~~

~~I STAY ON~~

~~3 YRS.~~

~~A YEAR FROM NOW~~

~~THIS FAILED BECAUSE:~~

~~NOBODY COULD SEE
THE 3 YEARS.~~



- courage under pressure
- self-control
- a sense of fairness
- decisiveness
- clear, definite plans
- doing more than you're paid for
- a personality people like
- empathy and understanding
- command of the details
- full responsibility
- cooperation
- making it safe to speak up

A wish is a feeling. A goal has edges.

THE PAGE

The *Page*

1. Your plan, then the premortem. Write your plan for your chief aim as it stands today. Then: it is one year from now and this plan has failed. Write how.

THE PLAN:

HOW IT FAILED:

What you will change in the plan because of what you just wrote:

2. Leadership inventory. Rate yourself 1 to 5 on each. A 1 means needs major work. A 5 means mastered, in thought and in action. If you give yourself a 5, ask someone who will tell you the truth whether they agree.

Courage that holds under pressure	Self-control
A strong sense of fairness	Decisiveness
Clear, definite plans	The habit of doing more than you are paid for
A personality people want to be around	Empathy and understanding
Command of the details	Willingness to take full responsibility
Cooperation: getting people to work together	Making it safe for people to speak up and disagree

Start with your weakest. Spend one week on it, deliberately, every day. Then move to the next. Do not repeat a trait two weeks running.

3. The doors. Think of your last decision that went badly. Was it a one-way door or a two-way door? Did you decide on bad information, out of hope, or against your gut? Separate the quality of the decision from the quality of the result.

4. Your two scripts. One to say to yourself before a decision, to get past the fear of making it. One to say afterward, if it turns out badly.

BEFORE:

AFTER:

The full set is in Chapter 7. Do those too.

THIS WEEK

This Week

- 1.** Write your plan, then the premortem. The plan as it stands today, four lines. Then a year from now, it failed. Write how. Change one thing in the plan because of what you wrote.
- 2.** Sort your next three decisions. One-way door or two-way door. Decide the two-way ones this week. For the one-way ones, write what you would need to know first.
- 3.** Your before line and your after line. One sentence to say before a decision, to get past the fear of making it. One to say after, if it goes badly. In your own words, and short enough to remember in the moment.

DAY	DID IT	ONE LINE ABOUT IT
Day 1	☐	
Day 2	☐	
Day 3	☐	
Day 4	☐	
Day 5	☐	
Day 6	☐	
Day 7	☐	

GO CHECK

The planning fallacy and the outside view: Daniel Kahneman.

The premortem: Gary Klein.

One-way doors and two-way doors: Jeff Bezos.

Resulting (judging a decision by its outcome): Annie Duke.

Psychological safety as the strongest predictor of a high-performing team: Amy Edmondson, later confirmed in a large internal study at Google.

NEXT TUESDAY

DEZ

"Eight hours at the fair. Sold nothing. I'm done."

Chapter 8, Persistence and Habit: Dez takes one chair to the craft fair and brings it home, and Walt asks the table who is still reading their statement twice a day.