

School Counselor Side Hustle

*How School Counselors and
Educators Can Monetize their Time
and Talents Beyond the Classroom*

Russell A. Sabella, PhD
Stephanie M. Lerner, MS

School Counselor Side Hustle: How School Counselors and Educators Can Monetize their Time and Talents Beyond the Classroom

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To Betty, Giuseppe, and Matteo for your love, support, and encouragement. And to all the school counselors, educators, and graduate students with whom I've had the privilege of working, you have taught me much. I am infinitely grateful. – Russ

*To all the Lerner and Gradetsky side hustlers who came before me, thanks for paving the way. Much love,
Stephanie*

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PREFACE

The idea for this book came about on a chilly November afternoon in Dallas, Texas. At a school counselor conference, I (Stephanie) asked Russ to meet me for coffee so I could “pick his brain” over how to start my own side hustle. I had been doing some writing, blogging, public speaking, and some Teachers Pay Teachers (TpT) resource making, but I just wasn’t sure if I was going in the right direction to turn one or all of these opportunities into a lucrative part-time (or even full-time) job. As it turns out, Russ let me know that he is regularly contacted by school counselors who were asking similar questions about how to supplement their incomes. Russ was also telling me that another common question he gets from prospective graduate students considering the school counseling program at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) is, “*What else can I do with a school counseling degree, especially during the summer?*”

As we continued talking, fueled by a couple of Starbucks® Pikes Place coffees, we recognized that school counselors have the expertise and unique skills that allow them to fill a real niche in the side job world! Many school counselors are creative, imaginative, and excellent problem solvers. They provide valuable services, resources, products, and tools to anyone, not just the students and stake holders they serve in education. In fact, we were already aware of many

successful school counselor side-hustlers who were using their talents beyond their day-to-day work schedules to help others across the globe while monetizing their goods and services. Because that's what a side hustle is—a modern day vernacular for an age-old institution: the part-time job, except that you are your own boss. A side hustle is a way to make extra cash that allows you flexibility to pursue what you're most interested in. It can also be your true passion—a chance to delve into app development, jewelry, fashion, life coaching, food, travel, or whatever it is you care about the most without quitting your day job.

Our meeting was the tipping point. We believed we found a genuine need, and we wanted to help. So, in the true spirit of the side hustle, we started brainstorming about how we might co-write a book to share our side-hustle information, curated over many years of trial and error, with a little help from our fellow school counseling side-hustlers. And Voilà; the *School Counselor Side Hustle* was born!

Just a few months after we decided to take on this book, American educators began striking and protesting due to abominable pay, overwhelming and unsustainable working conditions, and sky rocketing health insurance costs. It has become so problematic that educators across the USA can't even make ends meet on their state-decreed salaries. On September 24, 2018, *Time* magazine's issue was dedicated to teachers with its theme "I'm A Teacher in America." The cover depicted one teacher with the caption, "*I have a master's degree, 16 years of experience, work two extra jobs and donate blood plasma to pay the bills. I'm a teacher in America.*" A second photo of a teacher was included in the issue, and the caption read, "*My child and I share a bed in a small apartment. I spend \$1,000 on supplies and I've been laid off three times due to budget cuts. I'm a teacher in America.*" A third teacher shared, "*I have 20 years of experience, but I can't afford to fix my car, see a doctor for headaches or save for my child's future. I'm a teacher in America.*"

TIME reported the pay gap between teachers and other similarly educated professionals is officially the largest gap on record. For comparison's sake, public school teachers in 1994 earned 1.8 percent less per week than other workers with the same education. As of 2017, they are now making 18.7 percent less (Reilly, 2018). School counselors are in a very similar situation. Many school counselors are paid on a teacher pay scale with only a small counselor stipend distinguishing their counselor role from that of their educator colleagues. As we watch several teacher strikes and walk-outs across the country from our living rooms, we wonder how many of them are school counselors since so many of us are affected by similar pay/work conditions and walk in solidarity with our fellow educators. Still ongoing as we write, these events have reaffirmed for us the value in helping our colleagues with accessing additional revenue streams.

Broke is no joke. If this is your reality, we hope this book can provide you with some extra income options to support yourselves and your families. After all, necessity is the mother of invention. If you are struggling in a state or school where you are not compensated fairly for your hard work and advanced education, let this book be your beacon to a better future, one that is driven by your passion and rewarded by your effort. Best of luck and happy hustling!

PART I: GETTING READY

This book is not about getting a second job. Some educators are already doing this to make ends meet, affording themselves a bit of financial wiggle room each month. This is about developing a side hustle.

There is a big difference between a second job and a side hustle. A second job includes a second boss and second set of someone else's expectations, rules, and lost income potential because you are only earning a percent of the generated income. Instead, a side hustle means that you get to be your own boss, set your own hours, and tap into your very own creative potential. A side hustle means that you get to expand on your counseling knowledge and skills while helping others—doing more of what you dedicated your life to doing. A side hustle also means that you earn 100 percent of any profits. Everyone should have a side hustle. A side hustle is like a hobby with one big difference: most hobbies cost money; a side hustle makes money. It's like playing entrepreneurially, getting paid to try something new and learn different skills (Guillebeau, 2017).

Even if you love your job, having multiple sources of income will give you more freedom and more options for you and your loved ones. Think about it this way; imagine, that from now on, all your meals will consist of only your main dish. You can have a hamburger,

or even steak, but that's it. Your hamburger doesn't come with fries. Your steak does not include a potato. That's right; your main dish is all you get. You can certainly live on hamburger alone. The hamburger will taste good and give you enough nutrients to make it another day. But you may already be thinking about how much nicer it would be to have some fries with your burger. The experience and satisfaction of having a tasty loaded baked potato with that steak is so much better, right? I'm (Russ) trying to imagine a BBQ sandwich right now without coleslaw or beans. It's good, but the side dishes make it so much better. This is how we view the side hustle.

Your hustle, or your main job, is wonderful and can be very satisfying, like the main course of a meal. A side hustle, like a side dish, makes the meal more enjoyable, especially because one taste can really bring out the other. Now you may be thinking, *"With all the training, experience, talent, hard work, and amazing things I do for kids and their families, shouldn't I already be getting a five-course gourmet meal including unlimited drinks?"* The answer is, *"Yes! You should."* But that is not the reality right now. Perhaps in our lifetimes we will see all educators in the United States be treated more respectfully and professionally, especially when it comes to salary, benefits, and working conditions. Other countries do this already. But until that time comes, we need to order up our sides and serve ourselves.

The good news is that you are already in the kitchen and cookin'. You have the talents that others find valuable, both inside and outside the school system. And they are willing to pay for it, even while you sleep at night. Given the time and talents you already have, how can you monetize products and services for yourself? We're doing it, and we know lots of other school counselors who are doing it. In this book, we are going to tell you how you can make it happen for yourself.

A side hustle can really change your life. When you build something for yourself, even as you continue to work your day job,

you become empowered. You gain confidence. You create security, both in the form of that extra cash and also in the fact that you are opening up future opportunities for yourself (Guillebeau, 2017). So settle in, and keep reading to learn more about starting your side hustle or getting your existing side hustle to the next level.

The Goal of this Book

Our goal in writing this book is to help school counselors turn their passions into extra revenue streams. We believe you will find useful information here on how to do this both from the comfort of your home (e.g., writing a book or creating resources to sell directly to consumers using Teachers Pay Teachers), or even by entering new work environments, such as adjunct teaching at a local university. After all, what better plan is there in life than to do more of what you love and get paid for it? So because of that November coffee meeting, you now have some answers to questions that you may have never even knew you needed to ask! Our hope with this book is to provide you with all the information you need to set up your own lucrative school counselor side hustle.

While writing the book, we contacted several school counselors who have already developed successful side hustles in various areas to learn more. Throughout the book, we spotlight what they are doing, how they did it, and what difference it has made in their lives. We found their stories inspirational, insightful, and helpful for us, and we are confident that you will too. In listening to our school counselor side hustle stars, we noticed that they experienced the very same side hustle challenges that the two of us have had throughout the years. They each learned very similar lessons; they had advice for others that was consistent with what we too wished someone told us early on. This felt very affirming. Yet, our side hustle stars were also diverse in their stories. They provide different services and products,

some directly related to school counseling and some not so much. We learned that they got started in different ways.

Julie, for instance, wanted to do more of what she enjoyed, yoga and mindfulness, and found the time when she and her husband “empty nested.” Carol’s passion is developing lesson plans, which she has now made available in a book as well as on Teachers Pay Teachers (TpT). She was also noticed at conferences for her dynamic presentations and was asked to do them for other organizations. This motivated Carol to increase her focus and expand her side hustle to a level which she originally did not imagine. Another side hustle star, Franciene, is a highly successful representative of Rodan+Fields, an upscale, anti-aging skincare brand. She started out of necessity when a medical emergency changed the course of her life. Then there’s Leticia, a school counselor by day and licensed practicing counselor nights and weekends. Leticia is also the founder of her own private practice. Similarly, Deb is a former school counselor and district supervisor. She is currently a school counseling coach, educational consultant, and owner of GuidED Consulting, LLC. On a different note, Jeff is a successful school counselor, leader, and side hustler who designs and sells school counseling related merchandise. These are just a few examples of several stories from school counselors who are already living the dream. We hope they will inspire you and serve as role models for your side hustling adventure.

Overview of the Book

As we’ve discussed, many of today’s school counselors are innovating and building some fascinating types of side hustles. In our research, we came across a few types of hustles that kept coming up over and over. For that reason, we decided to highlight the “Big Seven” as we like to call them here. Although there is a multitude of potential side hustles, we found seven main categories that seem to

fit well with the school counselor's background, expertise, and values: creating resources, authoring a book, public speaking, developing tools, selling merchandise, adjunct teaching, and private practice counseling. We believe that all educators, from teachers to administrators, could also easily see themselves following suit in one or more of the Big Seven.

We searched for and landed on 11 school counselors whose side hustles fit into one of our Big Seven categories; these individuals stood out because they showed exceptional creativity, a hard work ethic, and an ability to keep generating new and innovative products or services. Ahead, they share their nervousness, excitement, frustrations, and ultimate satisfaction with their work. Some of our spotlights have even gone as far as to seriously consider making their side hustle their full-time job. By all measures, they have done it and continue to do it well. For that reason, we were super excited when they agreed to let us share their wisdom with you.

Toward the end of this book, we'll give you viable side hustle ideas that did not make the cut for our "Big Seven," although have the potential to be a good fit for school counselors. Now, let's turn our attention to important lessons and ideas about the nature of the school counselor side hustle before we get into the nuts and bolts for getting started.

CHAPTER 1

SIDE HUSTLE 101

Are you going to be a wantrepreneur or entrepreneur?

Mark Cuban, *Shark Tank*

If you're new to the idea of side hustling, you might be wondering what all the fuss is about. The stir involves a rapidly changing economy; one that includes digital goods and services, which favors individuals, as well as industry and corporations. People everywhere are learning about the power of generating multiple revenue streams in the new "gig economy," an environment in which temporary positions are common and organizations contract with independent workers for short-term engagement (Whatis.com, 2016). Why the rise in short-term jobs? For one, in this digital age, the workforce is more mobile, and work can increasingly be done from anywhere. For many people, this means operating from their home or car instead of having to rent an office with a staff. For one, this translates into much lower operating expenses or "overhead." Increased mobility also means that freelancers can select among side hustlers from all over the world.

Developing technologies have all but replaced the need for once expensive machines and services. In fact, to bring home the point, I (Russ) know of an advertising company that bought an expensive

(\$100,000) printer that could do amazing things. Along with expensive photography equipment, photo editing software, and other tools, the owner of the company enjoyed fantastic profits for several years, doing professional work that could not be done as effectively without the equipment. To his surprise and dismay, within just four years, newer technologies emerged that made the equipment much smaller, less expensive, and easier to use. Before he knew it, a high school student with a few hundred dollars' worth of equipment could nearly match the types of jobs that his customers were paying thousands of dollars for him to do. Unfortunately, this was the beginning of the end. His high-end printer was obsolete well before he finished making the final payment on it. That company went out of business soon after that.

The gig economy is part of a shifting cultural and business environment that also includes the “sharing economy” and the “barter economy.” The sharing economy is a trending business concept that highlights the ability (and perhaps the preference) for individuals to rent or borrow goods rather than buy and own them. The greatest benefit of a sharing economy is that it allows individuals to monetize assets that are not being fully utilized (think Uber, Airbnb, or Turo; Whatis.com, 2013). A barter economy is a cashless economic system in which services and goods are traded at negotiated rates (Whatsis.com, 2014). With social networking and classified advertising sites, such as Craigslist.com, anyone can offer goods and services in exchange for another set of goods and services. Today's side hustles allow any individual to buy, sell, create on-demand, share, connect, or swap—all without barriers of space, time, or heavy up-front investments.

Things to Know Before Starting Your Side Hustle

If you already have a side hustle or if you are feeling like it's time to start one, read on for some of the beginning tips that we wish we'd

have known early in the game. Next, we'll share with you some of the challenges, dilemmas, and fascinating insights that we've encountered along our own side hustle journeys. Included are a few that we've learned from our contributors as well.

Problems & Needs

To have a successful and lucrative side hustle, you must create a product or offer a service that solves a problem and fulfills a need. Not every hustle idea is worth pursuing, and the ability to separate high-potential ideas from ones that are undesirable or merely interesting is a key skill of starting a profitable hustle quickly (Guillebeau, 2017). It doesn't do anyone any good to create an entire business around something that people don't want or need (De, 2018). Your side hustle must go beyond what you like or what you think is essential. Your product or service should make life easier and more enjoyable for a large portion of your intended market. And what you are offering should be unique (think high demand and low supply). For example, you might think pickle-flavored jelly beans are amazing. This won't matter much, however, if lots of other people don't love them as much as you. On the other hand, even if they did share your passion for them, you will have a tough time if the market is already flooded with these jellybeans. Sometimes, your side hustle may provide a tool, product, or skill that they don't know they need because it isn't widely available yet. So how do you know? The best way to explore or investigate the viability of your potential side hustle involves three steps.

First, you must identify the opportunity. You can do this in several ways. For one, be observant. What has helped you in your own work or life to be effective, efficient, or happy? How have you overcome sticky issues or problems that many others might also be having? Another way to identify opportunities is to comb the professional literature. What are the recurring challenges, issues, problems or

barriers that are being written about? What are practitioners complaining about on social networks and especially professionally oriented online groups? What proposals have been accepted at the state level and national conferences for your area of focus? During this process, you may even determine what you should probably stay away from. For example, if you go to Amazon.com and search on keywords reflecting your side hustle and lots of books or products are already available and heavily reviewed, you might determine that this area is already too saturated to get involved in.

Second, once you've identified a specific "pain point" or sticky problem that others experience in their work or lives, brainstorm and jot down all the solutions that you can provide through your side hustle to meet the above needs/problems. Start with how you have personally overcome obstacles in your work. How did you do it? What knowledge, skills, tools, or resources did you come up with that made a positive difference? If you've developed a set of skills that has really made a difference, your side hustle may focus on teaching or training others to advance their own proficiency (e.g., using data, technology, or conducting groups).

Third, let your solutions percolate until you decide on the one that most motivates and excites you. Once you've decided on that special product or service, remember that it must be easy to use or implement, and it must work as advertised. That is, your material or service should be practical and reliable. This means that before you go to market or promote a service, you must thoroughly test it out in different situations. Once identified, solutions must be developed over time before they are ready for prime time. Patience is key. My (Russ's) mantra for the last quarter century is, "*Whatever I provide or teach you has to make you more **Effective**, **Efficient**, and your job more **Enjoyable** starting tomorrow.*" I have called this the 3E's of helping others, and it has served me very well.

If you can find a unique, reliable, and practical solution to a pervasive problem that currently exists, you have just significantly increased the chances of your side hustle being successful and lucrative. Because this is so important, take a few moments to double check that your potential side hustle is on track by making sure you can clearly answer these questions:

What currently pervasive problem will my side hustle solve?

How is what I am offering going to make people more effective, efficient, and their jobs more enjoyable starting tomorrow?

How am I uniquely qualified to help?

Is this work something I am passionate about and can sustain for years to come, even in the face of many upcoming challenges?

One of my (Russ) absolute favorite television shows is *Shark Tank*; I can watch it all day long. *Shark Tank* has taught me a lot about valuations; different ways to promote, sell, and especially how to sniff out a good investment. This is important when deciding on a side hustle which will require a significant investment of time and, often, a bit of money from you. I've especially been intrigued with one *Shark*, Lori Greiner. Lori Greiner is an inventor, entrepreneur, and television personality. Greiner started with one idea and turned it into a multimillion-dollar international brand. She has created over 700 products and holds 120 US and foreign patents. Lori says she can tell instantly if a product is a "hero or a zero," and this is clearly shown through her many thriving investments and a 90 percent success rate on new items launched (Greiner, 2018).

In an interview, Greiner said that there are four questions to ask to determine better whether your idea is a hero or a zero (Lachance Shandrow, 2016). Here they are:

1. **What is my product or service?** She says, “If it takes you more than one or two sentences to describe your product or business, you probably don’t have a clear enough vision of how it’s going to work or whom it’s for.”
2. **Will people like it?** “Sometimes you have a vision, and you think something’s fantastic, but really nobody wants it. It’s just you who thinks it’s fantastic,” she says.
3. **Does it solve a problem?** “You want your product to be an answer that solves everyday issues that people struggle with,” Greiner says.
4. **Is it something people need and want?** “The idea is to create something that people can’t live without once they start using it,” she says.

Once you are clear about how your product or service helps others, you might want to figure out then who exactly those “others” really are. Chris Guillebeau, author of *Side Hustle: From Idea to Income in 27 Days*, suggests the following. First, ask yourself, “*Who is the ideal person who will be served by my side hustle?*” Instead of thinking about the answer to this question broadly, start with one. Who is that one person who must have what you’re offering? Start with that person; take him or her out for an imaginary cup of coffee. Find out as much as you can about their goals, needs, and challenges. Get details. Now, where are others just like this one person? This is your target population, your audience, or market. Your success—and maybe theirs too—depends on it (Guillebeau, 2017).

It’s Not a Side Shuffle

So it is called a side *HUSTLE* for a reason—you are hustling! Meaning, plan to work harder, at times, than a middle school counselor the week after the *Thirteen Reasons Why* premiere aired. For

those of you that have never worked outside of the public services sector, let us clarify further: your side hustle doesn't guarantee an income. For all the stressors related to working in schools, the paycheck (however paltry it may be) is generally a sure thing. A sure thing paycheck is such a wonderful blessing that many people take for granted, not knowing any different. Well, get ready to know something different. Many side hustlers spend their first few months or years hustling away at making no money. And that's okay—if you love it and you keep working super hard at it, the money is likely to come one day. Also, keep in mind that if your side hustle is your dream job, it's probably someone else's dream job too, which might mean a lot of stiff competition (ahem, Teachers Pay Teachers). So, if someone with your same hustle is working harder than you, they may be taking away business from you! To have a successful side hustle, you must be a high performer. Are you a couch potato? If so, a side hustle may not work for you. But if you are someone who loves to Go! Go! Go!, if your idea of fun is staying up into the wee hours of the night laboring away at your hobby, if you have ever been nicknamed “ardilla” (squirrel) like I (Stephanie) was by my siesta-loving family back in Bolivia, a side hustle might be just the thing for you. Remember, the harder you work, the more you increase your chances for success and, thus, for making money!

Jim Collins, a researcher and author of the widely acclaimed book *Good to Great*, shares with us the principles of great companies, those that stand up above the rest, even when facing the same challenges and adversities as anyone else. One principle which he called the “flywheel effect” illustrates the necessity of persistence toward a single focus over long periods. He writes:

Picture a huge, heavy flywheel. It's a massive, metal disk mounted horizontally on an axle. It's about 100 feet in diameter, 10 feet thick, and it weighs about 25 tons. That flywheel is your

company. Your job is to get that flywheel to move as fast as possible, because momentum—mass times velocity—is what will generate superior economic results over time.

Right now, the flywheel is at a standstill. To get it moving, you make a tremendous effort. You push with all your might, and finally, you get the flywheel to inch forward. After two or three days of sustained effort, you get the flywheel to complete one entire turn. You keep pushing, and the flywheel begins to move a bit faster. It takes a lot of work, but at last, the flywheel makes a second rotation. You keep pushing steadily. It makes three turns, four turns, five, six. With each turn, it moves faster, and then—at some point, you can't say exactly when—you break through. The momentum of the heavy wheel kicks in your favor. It spins faster and faster, with its own weight propelling it. You aren't pushing any harder, but the flywheel is accelerating, its momentum building, its speed increasing. (Collins, 2001, p. 164).

Once you achieve momentum, you have to keep going, or else the heavy flywheel begins to slow or even stop. Getting it to accelerate again takes a great deal of work. Your side hustle, like any successful venture, will require great effort to get started. At a certain point, sustained energy for maintenance and continued development may be more comfortable, at least until you are ready for a bigger flywheel.

Don't Quit Your Day Job

Hold on to that day job until you are sure you won't need it anymore. You don't have to leave your full-time job to start your hustle. In fact, it's preferable to keep your primary job to enhance your side job!

There are several reasons for this. First, your co-workers are professionals with opinions and life experiences that you can tap

into; run your ideas by them! For example, our students and colleagues give us valuable feedback on the counseling activities that we use in workshops and include in our resource materials and books. Second, your real job experiences may keep you abreast of what your side hustle customers need. For instance, the issues that I (Stephanie) face in my school every day help me keep my finger on the pulse of what school counselors need to know to do their jobs well. Third, if you get professional training opportunities in your full-time job, you are gaining a valuable education that can benefit you in all that you do, including your side work, products, or services. The trainings we attend through our professional associations help keep us current with the latest and greatest best practice strategies that we include in our side-hustle work. And finally, practice makes perfect! If your side hustle and full-time job are related, working both at the same time means you are spending pretty much all of your time at this type of work, so imagine how much all of this practice will improve your side hustle knowledge base and skill set!

And then there's the issue of money. Oftentimes, you need your full-time job funds to invest in getting your side hustle off the ground! In my case, I (Stephanie) need to attend state and national conferences to learn and to network as I build my side hustle. These conferences are invaluable to both my side hustle and myself—I get to meet the best and the brightest in my field, trade tips and experiences, and be introduced to the latest trends in school counseling—all of which directly influence my professional growth (Lerner, 2017). But the whole conference experience isn't cheap. Luckily, I can save enough through my full-time job to fund these events.

This book is not about replacing your main hustle or preparing for a career change. If this is what you are thinking, know that it usually takes many years of side hustling before you make enough money at it to live on, including having decent health insurance and benefits.

Here are some milestones that probably should occur before you can trade your full-time job for your side hustle:

- When your side hustle generates the same income as your full-time job for a few years consistently.
- When you are experienced enough in your side work that you don't need the professional development, experiences, or networking opportunities of your full-time job any longer.
- When you have enough savings stashed away in case your business doesn't take off as lucratively as you had planned. In the wise words of Suze Orman, have your emergency fund set up for eight months of no income (Orman, 2015).
- When you have a solid business plan with realistic goals for the next few years. If you don't know how to make a business plan, definitely don't quit your day job! Instead, invest in a business class that will teach you how to create an effective business plan.
- When you feel emotionally ready to leave your full-time job. Consider gradually reducing your full-time job hours—after all, it is a lot safer and less stressful if you can work with your employer to find a way to cut back on your full-time hours over time, rather than to entirely leave the job (Russell, 2017).

In conclusion, maybe you never want to leave your day job! Many successful side hustlers are perfectly happy keeping their side hustle always on the side while enjoying the benefits and security of their main hustle.

“Failure is not an option,” said No Side Hustler Ever

Ask any side hustler, and they will tell you that failure, at one point or another, is a given. You will probably experience a failure or two during the initial stages of your side hustles. At the very least,

the fruits of your labor may take much more time to witness than you first anticipated. And that's fine! Be ready for it; embrace it; learn from it! Falling short is a vital part of growing a successful side hustle! The nature of any worthwhile endeavor is that you are taking a risk in trying to make a go at something you LOVE! Passion doesn't come without sacrifice. Take two or three steps forward, and expect to take one step back. So sit back, try to relax, and trust in the wise words of NBA Superstar Michael Jordan:

I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.

Now that's what we're talking about!

My (Russ's) rejections and disappointments seriously outnumber my successes and achievements. It might help you to know that I've never had a publication accepted as is. At best, publications have been worked, re-worked, revised, and always resubmitted more than once and sometimes a few times. Sometimes it's worth it, and sometimes it's not. One article that I published that focused on cyberbullying mythology was rejected by two journals before a third journal accepted it. As it turns out, our suspicion that the article was of value was right because it has been downloaded and read many thousands of times. Other articles I've published were not even referenced very much until years after they were made available (probably because they had to do with technology and were perhaps ahead of their time; that's what I think, and that's the story I'm sticking with). I've co-authored books, some of which have paid the mortgage over the years and others which, and this is embarrassing, could barely pay for an evening out to a nice restaurant (again, that one was about

technology). At least half of all my presentation proposals are declined. Many of my ideas have fallen flat when they hit the light of day. I could go on, but you get the picture (and I'd rather stop now anyway). It's inevitable. You *will* get rejected, declined, refused, ignored, and set back. Remember though, there is no such thing as losing, just winning and learning. You will get better, and it does get easier. Besides, without experiencing failures, successes would not be so sweet!

You Have to be Good at It

Your side hustle is not just something you love to do but must be something you are great at doing! This means that you are knowledgeable; you have a lot of experience with it and are talented at it. Now, here is the unpleasant reality followed by a few tough questions: How talented you really are should not be solely a matter of self-evaluation or your own personal opinion. What do others believe about your expertise? What type of feedback are you receiving in the form of workshop evaluations, online customer reviews, or independent evaluations? Nobody has a 100 percent approval rate, although most people that you serve should be satisfied, excited, and want to tell others about what you do or provide. Indeed, whatever you are offering should make their work/lives better, easier. If not, then you are still in the development phase, meaning you're probably not ready to launch your products or services for a fee. This can be a harsh reality to face, and unfortunately, all too common.

Many people tend to underestimate the work it takes to become an expert in any given area and overestimate their own levels of expertise. Although somewhat controversial, a theory made popular by author Malcolm Gladwell in his book *Outliers: The Story of Success* (Gladwell, 2008) is that, among other things, a high level of success is related to sustained and deliberate practice, about 10,000 hours' worth. That's about 20 hours of practice per week, for ten years.

Some research has challenged the “10,000-hour rule.” These studies provide evidence that although the deliberate practice is important, more important is careful *experimentation*. The researchers would be more confident in claiming that learning from 10,000 experiments beats 10,000 hours of practice (Macnamara, Hambrick, David, & Oswald, 2014). As you go through your day, following the 10,000-experiment rule means continuously looking for opportunities to collect data rather than just doing what you need to do. It involves adding a deliberate reflection process based on reviewing data before the day ends (Simmons, 2017).

Becoming an expert takes focus, practice, and experimentation (or learning) over time. Between wanting to have a side hustle and having a paid one, you might have to further hone your craft by giving away your time and talents. Experimenting, testing, and practicing in front of a live audience is invaluable. Think about working your way up gradually. Give away your products or services locally in exchange for feedback. With appropriate feedback, improve and begin to scale to a bigger audience, perhaps in your state. At this point, you might start to collect modest fees while you are still making next-level improvements. Then, as you move ahead with a more polished product or service, you can increase what you charge.

Your areas of expertise and side hustle should be focused. What is your “thing?” Are you remarkable at motivating people? Putting together stylish outfits? Being crafty? Making lessons? Writing? Speaking? Whatever your superpower is—THIS should be a primary focus of your side hustle! I (Russ) sometimes refer to this principle as “taking the KFC approach” to what you are doing. You might remember Kentucky Fried Chicken’s (KFC’s) catchy slogans used over many decades, “*Nobody does chicken like KFC*” and “*We do chicken right.*” I have used this as an example in my own work and in developing my side hustle. To be productive and successful, to really add value to the lives of others while standing out from the crowd,

you must take the KFC approach to what you are doing. That is, keep it simple, concentrate on one main theme, and do it better than just about anyone else. If you do chicken, then be incredible at cooking chicken. If you are KFC, you want people to think of you when they think of chicken. Same goes for your side hustle. What will others think of when they think of you?

Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...And Others Don't*, (see <http://bit.ly/good2greatbook>) writes about the Hedgehog Concept (Collins, 2001). The Hedgehog Concept is based on an ancient Greek parable that states: “*The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing.*” In the parable, the fox uses a variety of strategies to try to catch the hedgehog. It sneaks, pounces, races, and plays dead. And yet, every time, it walks away defeated with a nose full of spines. The fox never learns that the hedgehog knows how to do one thing perfectly: defend itself. Philosophers Berlin and Ivask (1955) took this parable and applied it to the modern world in a 1953 essay, “*The Hedgehog and the Fox.*” The authors divided people into two groups: foxes and hedgehogs. In their essay, they argued that foxes are sleek and shrewd animals that pursue many goals and interests at the same time. Because of this wide variety of interests and strategies, their thinking is scattered and unfocused, and they are limited in what they can achieve in the long run. Hedgehogs, however, are slow and steady, and people often overlook them because they're quiet and unassuming. But unlike the fox, they can simplify the world and focus on one overarching vision. It's this principle that guides everything they do and helps them succeed against significant odds.

The Hedgehog concept is a simple idea that comes from a deep understanding about the intersection of three circles: 1) what you are deeply passionate about, 2) what you can be the best in the world at, and 3) what best drives your economic or resource engine. Collins writes,

“A Hedgehog Concept is not a goal to be the best, a strategy to be the best, an intention to be the best, a plan to be the best. It is an understanding of what you can be the best at. The distinction is absolutely crucial . . . When you get your Hedgehog Concept right, it has the quiet ping of truth, like a single, clear, perfectly struck note hanging in the air in the hushed silence of a full auditorium at the end of a quiet movement of a Mozart piano concerto. There is no need to say much of anything; the quiet truth speaks for itself.” (Collins, n.d.) p. 1.

What we can learn from Collins’ adaptation of this parable is that school counselors can find their "Hedgehog Concept" by making three separate assessments. First, you can understand what you are truly passionate about. Next, you can identify what you do better than anyone else. And last, you can determine where you might be good at generating revenue. The right way forward is where all three answers intersect, and it's this central position that is the "sweet spot" for your side hustle strategy.

Boundaries

Side hustlers need boundaries. Keeping your side work separate from your main job is vital. Establishing and sticking to boundaries early on is crucial to keeping everything related to your side hustle above board. First and foremost—you can’t directly work on your side hustle during your main job. Period. You cannot use time or materials from your main job to work on your side job. It’s not ethical, maybe even illegal, and is the fastest way to get yourself in trouble with your supervisor or fired from your job.

Another tip for maintaining a clear boundary between your two hustles involves your colleagues. Since you will never be directly working on your side hustle during your main job, there is no reason

to talk to your colleagues about the specifics of your side hustle. Besides, it would be unethical because it puts your colleagues in the dual roles of a co-worker and potential side hustle customer. Of course, if someone finds out you are keeping up an Etsy store or designing school counselor t-shirts and wants to know more, then you might briefly address it and invite them to learn more when “off the clock.” On the other hand, don’t shortchange your students, colleagues, or clients at your full-time job if your side hustle can benefit them. For example, if I (Stephanie) have written an amazing group counseling guide, I will use it with my students if it can help them, and I will share it with my colleagues if they need it; I just won’t advertise it or charge anyone for it at school. Same for me (Russ). Anything I do for my service area in Southwest Florida is free, including presentations, tools, consults, etc.

Finally, it is a good idea to do a bit of research before you start your side hustle to see what your primary job mandates about outside work—maybe nothing, maybe something—either way, it’s better to know up front that you can or can’t have a Teachers Pay Teachers store while being employed by XYZ school district. At Florida Gulf Coast University, I (Russ) am required to file an “Outside Employment Form” every year (see the form at <http://bit.ly/fgcu-outside>). As you’ll see on the form, I have to verify and promise that, “The proposed employment/activity will not interfere with my normal duties with the university and that I will not perform any duties related to this outside employment during working hours at the university and that university supplies, equipment, and technology resources will not be used.” I also have to swear that my side hustle does not conflict with the rules and policies of the state university system or FGCU.” (FGCU, 2008).

Is your head swimming yet? Solving problems, meeting needs, keeping day jobs, learning tough lessons, using your superpowers, and staying in your lane—it can be a bit overwhelming from time to

time. But you got this! With some planning, preparation, courage, and some insights from our spotlight side hustlers, there will be no stopping you! So take a deep breath, start making some crucial commitments about your side hustle if you haven't already, and JUMP!

Read on now for tips on starting your side hustle and get ready to hit the ground running.

CHAPTER 2

GETTING STARTED IN YOUR SIDE HUSTLE

"Nobody has a monopoly on good ideas."

Kevin O'Leary, *Shark Tank*

Earning a profit is not the first thing anyone does in their side hustle; that comes later. A successful side hustle takes a great deal of research, planning, inventorying, outsourcing, and more. Our side hustle superstars, together with our own experiences, indicate several things that you should start doing right away and throughout your journey to building a successful side hustle.

Be Solution-Focused and Set Goals

The first step in getting started on your side hustle is to be solution-focused and create your goals. We touched on this in the previous chapter when we talked about the importance of your side hustle solving a problem and/or meeting a need. Being solution-focused means employing goal-based, future-focused tactics that always emphasize the search for solutions (Sklare, 2014). Create your goals by asking yourself four key questions:

What solution/s will I provide with my side hustle?

What do I want to accomplish with my side hustle?

Because of what I produce/create, how will I make other's jobs/lives easier and better?

What will others who use my products/services say about this?

The first question is the most important. The solutions question will become the very reason why your side hustle is valuable. The second question helps you to figure out how to make it happen. Finally, the third and fourth questions help you to get clarity and focus on your outcomes.

Use your answers to these questions as the basis for two to three main side hustle goals. For example, I (Stephanie) started my own side hustle to fill the need for bilingual counseling materials. Keeping this solution-focused theme in mind, I developed the following goals:

- I will write an individual counseling guide in both English and Spanish by the end of summer 2012.
- I will write an anger management counseling guide in both English and Spanish by the end of summer 2012.

A quick side story to illustrate the importance of having a goal and sticking to it. Both of these books mentioned in the goals above are based on the solution-focused brief counseling (SFBC) theory; accordingly, the main counseling technique of each book involves the student picking a goal for themselves, working weekly to achieve the goal, and reporting back to the counselor or group members on how the goal achievement is going (Lerner, 2012, 2016). Needless to say, this required the inclusion of numerous goal-based activities within

each book. So, I did a lot of research for the books – reading everything I could get my hands on related to SFBC theory. At one point during all this research, I found myself getting sidetracked by some big ideas related to SFBC that I wanted to implement in my own school counseling program on my campus. After a half day of planning for this (yes, right in the middle of book writing), I realized, “Whoa, creating new SFBC activities for my school counseling program on my campus is NOT my goal right now; my goal is to get these two books written!” So, I pulled myself off this school counseling campus project and back to writing books I went!

Speaking of creating and sticking to your side hustle goals, it is a good idea to use the SMART goal characteristics in creating your own goals: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (ASCA, 2003). Creating SMART goals will keep you working as productively and effectively as possible. A good SMART goal or two will help you to “keep your eyes on the prize,” especially when your creative juices are flowing, and your brain keeps popping up new ideas. Similarly, others will want to approach you with new ideas or get in on the one you are already working on. You must stay strong. Keep asking yourself the following question:

*Does this new task or idea add value to or, conversely,
distract me from the current solution I’m trying to build?*

If you believe that an “opportunity” before you is going to take energy away from your current project, then write it down and re-evaluate it later, after your side hustle is off the ground and running. Also, keep perspective. Unless something is so pressing that ignoring it will damage your career and/or livelihood (and this is rare), you can come back to it later or simply decline. This is why it’s important to keep a detailed calendar that reflects your SMART goals (more on that in just a bit). From promoting, to creating, shipping, and

coordinating, your calendar should show specific blocks of times for various aspects of building and delivering your side hustle. It's okay to let others know that you are "booked" out for the next six months or so and that they should come back later if they still want to explore an opportunity. You should keep a list of ideas and project potentials to go back to when you are ready.

SWOT Analysis

Here's an exercise to help you develop your SMART goals, and eventually, your side hustle plans. S.W.O.T. is an acronym that stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A SWOT *analysis* is an organized list of your business's greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Berry, 2017). A personal SWOT analysis is one in which you focus on your *personal* strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths and weaknesses (SW) are internal to the business or person, things that we can control and, with some work, change. Opportunities and threats (OT) are external factors out there in the market, happening whether you like it or not. You can't change them. Examples of external factors include competitors, gas prices, shifts in consumer behavior, new laws, or a new technology that has the potential to render your side hustle extinct. Check out a sample of SWOT analysis questions to help guide you at <https://www.livecareer.com/career/advice/jobs/swot-questions>.

If you were interviewing for your own side hustle, what would your SWOT analysis look like? The answer to this question will help you reverse engineer your side hustle. In other words, the point of a SWOT analysis is to help you develop a strong side hustle strategy by making sure you've considered all your strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and threats when facing the marketplace. Don't worry; doing a SWOT analysis is a lot more fun than it sounds.

It won't take much time, and doing it forces you to think about your new business in ways that you may not have otherwise.

As an example, here is what one side hustle SWOT analysis might look like for someone who is considering getting into the English language teaching/tutoring game.

S	• Bilingual in both English and Spanish. • I have a master's degree. • Already owns the necessary equipment (laptop with touchscreen, webcam, Internet). Very low capital or overhead. • Flexible hours in the evenings, weekends, and summer. • Experience over 17 years working with middle and high school students. • Counseling skills will help me encourage students who are frustrated and feeling incompetent. This is probably unique among all tutors. • Can schedule breaks in between tutoring sessions, especially to walk the dogs.
W	• Sometimes, I'm tired after a long day at school to work in the evenings. • Will have to give up drinking wine at night during the times I will need to tutor. May also have to give up other things I like to do such as watching movies and baking.

O	• New services such as <i>VIPKid</i> (https://t.vipkid.com.cn/) make it easy by providing lesson plans, reliable platforms, and grading. • Flexibility. I can work from anywhere, even a hotel if I'm traveling. • Love to stay up late at night anyway. Can work with students who want to learn English in other countries, such as China, during a time when I would just be up watching television anyway. • Fast growth potential, especially in Asian countries. • May get invited to visit countries where I tutor and teach live instead of online. • If I get good at it, I can help others become tutors by making instructional videos. • Might include a tax break for supplies or utilities.
T	• Internet connection could cut out at any time, especially during a thunderstorm. • Competing with younger tutors. • Pay is not super high (\$15-25/hour). • Free and almost free smartphone apps that can help with language practice without a tutor.

After “brainstorming” each part of your SWOT, now it’s time to think about some solution-focused questions:

- What else do you do well (so as not to sell yourself short)? What would others see as your strengths if they were asked?
- Can any of your strengths help with improving your weaknesses or combating your threats? If so, how would you describe this?
- If you were to take advantage of your opportunities, what would you be doing? What would others notice you doing more? What difference would this make in your life? How about the lives of others?
- What are possible partnerships that you can forge based on your opportunities?
- Based on the information from your SWOT analysis, what are your next steps or goals? How would you write them as SMART goals?

The key to the next steps is that you focus mostly on strengths and opportunities, not weaknesses and threats. This is a solution-focused principle. The stronger you get, the less weak you will become. The more opportunities you focus on and take advantage of, especially from a place of strength, the less vulnerable you will be from external threats.

Now, try it! Here are a few websites that we have found to be very helpful in guiding you through your own side hustle SWOT analysis:

SWOT Analysis Template

<https://articles.bplans.com/how-to-perform-swot-analysis/>

SWOT Analysis Worksheet

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_05.htm

Examples of SWOT analyses for different businesses

<https://articles.bplans.com/swot-analysis-examples/>

How to Do a SWOT Analysis for Your Small Business

<https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2017/12/20/swot-analysis>

SWOT Analysis – Research Guides at Baruch College

<https://guides.newman.baruch.cuny.edu/swot>

By the way, it may have already occurred to you, but consider doing a SWOT analysis for your school counseling program. Together with your team members, the exercise may energize and motivate you to do more of what is working and to seize opportunities not yet taken.

Build Your Own (Project-Based) Box

Once you have your goals for your side hustle, create a project-based plan that is so structured that it forces you to stay focused on achieving these goals. When you are creative and have only yourself to answer to, it's easy to tumble down the rabbit hole of project ideas and completely lose sight of your focus. To avoid getting scattered, start by deciding what your first side hustle project will be. Being project-based really helps to achieve your side hustle goals for two reasons. First, having a finished project in mind motivates you to keep chipping away at all the tasks that will lead to your goal completion. Second, completing your plan gives you a tangible way to know when you have achieved what you set out to do.

So, once you have an idea for a project you want to do, create a structured, project-based plan that directs you in exactly what tasks you will do to complete said project and then when and where you will do these tasks. Think of these three Ws as your side hustle box that you work in . . . and then work there until it gets done. As you know, when I (Stephanie) started my side hustle, my goal was to write bilingual counseling books. That first summer, I wanted to complete two projects—to write a bilingual individual counseling guide and a bilingual anger management group counseling guide. So, I divided my summer into two three-week blocks, one for each guide. Then I planned out each day of the three-week block to get the

project done: On Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, I would sequester myself in my office to work from 8–12 on writing the book; from 1–5, I would work on marketing/selling for the books. Tuesday and Thursday I left open for household chores or family obligations (or book writing catchup, if necessary). Sunday was my day off and my family fun day.

Outsourcing

Consider that some tasks may never even need to be included in your schedule or project-based box! These are the jobs that you can outsource to another person. There are at least three instances when it's time to look for other people to help complete tasks, instead of doing it yourself. First, you should outsource a project when you just don't have the knowledge or skills to do the work yourself adequately; the emphasis is on *adequately*. Sure, you can use Microsoft® Word to design a book cover or edit a video on your phone if you want your work to look home-made or amateurish. Or you can have an expert do it and let others know that you are a professional that pays attention to quality.

A second reason to outsource is when you can do a job just fine, but you can do other, more lucrative things, better. For example, I (Russ) can spend 40 hours developing a website which would probably turn out okay. Or, I can spend those 40 hours developing my side hustle or building a new tool. The net profit (profit made from side hustle minus cost of new website development) is likely to be much better than the other way around. Eventually, with side hustle success, this will be true for many things such as creating your own brochures, editing, or even social networking. With success, you may especially find that outsourcing responsibilities in your personal life, such as cutting the grass, cleaning windows, fixing or hanging up stuff, or even going out to get groceries, will be a smart idea. Time is money, and you have to decide what the better investment is for

your project—spending the time to do it yourself or spending the money to have someone else do it while you make money. As you become more successful, you will have to evaluate more carefully not only what you do, but what you will not do on any given day.

A third reason to outsource is when you simply don't have the time to fulfill a request. This is a bittersweet problem to have. Perhaps your side hustle is getting bigger than you can handle. At this point, you might step back and take some time to figure out what you want to do about that, if anything. In the meantime, one thing you can do is refer “clients” or customers to a trusted colleague. For example, when I get a request for a workshop that must be done on a certain day when I am not available, rather than just leaving the client high and dry, I will often work with them to secure someone else that can do a good job. I don't collect a fee for this, although it would be appropriate if I did. In fact, I could collect the entire fee and pay out my colleague when he/she is finished less my referral or “finder's” fee. In some ways, this could become a part of your side hustle, one in which you hire independent subcontractors to pick up some of the slack when you cannot.

Know that there are plenty of expensive companies to which you can outsource work and they are ready to take your money. Also, know that there are individuals who are working hard to stay self-employed or, coincidentally, working after hours to monetize their time and talents too. Enter the world of freelancers. A good freelancer can be invaluable in helping you set up your own freelance or side hustle. One of my favorite places to find and hire freelancers is a website called Upwork (<https://www.upwork.com/>). Upwork allows me to post a detailed request for proposal (RFP) which is then bid on by various experts. For each bid, I can then evaluate the expert's freelance history and user ratings before hiring one. Once you know what you want, you can literally hire and have your job done within minutes or hours! And because the competition is worldwide, you can

usually do this at a great bargain. You can find a vast array of freelancers who can help with projects from the web and mobile app development to SEO (Search Engine Optimization), social media marketing, content writing, graphic design, administrative help, and many other projects.

Deadlines

The ability to meet deadlines consistently is a must for the successful side hustler. Reliably meeting deadlines is a cornerstone for the reputation of a successful small business. Failure to meet deadlines, even just once, can create a negative image of you and your business. In the end, this will cost you money. Worse, it may cause someone else to lose money because of your broken promise. People don't like to wait for things, especially beyond when they expected them to happen. Because of technology and businesses like Amazon.com and McDonalds, people have also become less patient. They expect quick responses and results. Meeting deadlines is also about professionalism, respect, and trust, as well as making life and work easier for others.

Let's dive deeper into the benefits of setting and meeting deadlines, especially quick deadlines.

First, it helps you build a positive and credible professional reputation in the world of your side hustle. This will open countless doors for future opportunities to grow your side business. People are busy and need things done like . . . yesterday. If, in addition to providing high-quality services and products, you can do it in a timely and reliable way, word will spread. Potential customers or clients will appreciate you if you can help them navigate a process (e.g., setting up and delivering a workshop) more quickly than they can do it themselves or with anyone else. People may even be willing to pay a little more for your products or services if working with you helps them save time and avoid stress. Being "under budget and

ahead of schedule” is good for business. If you really think about it, meeting deadlines is about trust. If you say what you are going to do and do what you are going to say by a particular time, I can more easily trust you for any future business. And, as you know, negative comments spread quickly via social media. This could be a deciding factor when choosing between you and someone else for a similar contract or gig. Mismanaging deadlines is terrible for business.

Second, meeting deadlines is an integral part of collaborating or teaming with others. Your partners often cannot meet their work deadlines for your side hustle if you are not meeting yours. You will learn this very quickly when working with a publisher who needs your materials to make copyright, catalog, printing, and meet other deadlines of their own. Event organizers who don’t receive your biographies, workshop descriptions, or objectives can’t go to press with their conference program or planner. If you ship products out late, customers will probably note that in your online reviews or customer feedback. This will hurt your side hustle.

Third, meeting deadlines is an important part of being productive when you are your own boss. Having a side hustle can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, you get to have the freedom to do more of what you want to do when you want to do it (and get paid to do it). On the other hand, freedom comes with responsibility. You will not necessarily have someone to whom you are accountable. Having your own side hustle means you can push off deadlines or procrastinate, and nobody will really know it (except you when you start to wonder why you are not as busy or making as much money as you thought you would). Having your own side hustle means that you have to plan, create goals, set reasonable deadlines, and meet those deadlines—all for yourself and while nobody else is watching. You have to hold yourself accountable.

As a school counselor, this is not a new challenge for you. Other than administrators and some support staff, you are among the very

few people in the school building who does not have a mostly set class schedule. Teachers must be in their classrooms with students for most of the day during designated times. To the contrary, you have flexible time, which is a major commodity in education. Flexible time, however, comes at a price. The price of such freedom is that you must be accountable for how you spend your time. Successful school counselors know that to get the job done every day, you must connect school counseling program goals to tasks and to times in your calendar. And if you miss a deadline, havoc can ensue. Worse, students may not get what they need to succeed. You have to be self-disciplined and driven to get it done right. This is true for having a successful side hustle too.

Accountability

So, in the spirit of always meeting deadlines, let's talk about accountability. Who will hold you to your deadline? If you are a Type A person who is always on top of things, the who is probably YOU! But let's face it, so many of us creative, empathetic types are not Type A people. If you are not highly organized, excellent at time management, ambitious, or impatient, you might need to find someone or something to hold you accountable. Do you have a family member who can oversee your deadlines and light a fire under you if you are straying too far from them? Should you start your side business with a friend or colleague who embodies the qualities needed to meet deadlines? Or maybe, you just need to invest in some technology or an employee that can help you stay accountable to your deadlines. You might need a virtual assistant, a person who you hire to provide support services that do not require physical proximity, remotely. Tasks might include making calls, developing and following through with contracts or orders, setting appointments, or making travel arrangements, for example. You can hire a virtual assistant by the task, by the hour, or retain them for a certain period.

More economically, you might try an app or some technology to help you with deadlines. A popular one is Evernote (<https://evernote.com/>), which enables you to capture and prioritize ideas, projects, and to-do lists so nothing falls through the cracks. Here are a few others to review, one of which should work for you:

- Anydo (<https://www.any.do/>) will also help you organize your tasks, lists, and reminders in one easy-to-do app. Any.do syncs seamlessly across all your devices, making your to-do list accessible everywhere.
- OmniFocus for MAC (<https://www.omnigroup.com/omniFocus/>) has over a decade's legacy in managing tasks. Tasks can be organized by project type, context, priority, and more.
- Taskade (<https://www.taskade.com>) is technically a team productivity tool, one that lets you ideate, organize, and manage tasks together in real time.
- Todoist (<https://en.todoist.com/>) lets you keep track of everything in one place so you can get it all done and enjoy more peace of mind along the way.
- Wunderlist (<https://www.wunderlist.com/>) allows you to set due dates and reminders and assign to-dos. No matter whether your lists are work related or just for fun, you will never miss a deadline again with Wunderlist in charge.

Whether you are setting up deadlines for the hundreds of tasks involved with a school counseling program or for your side hustle, here are a few tried and true tips for staying accountable to your deadlines:

- **Seriously though.** Get serious about meeting your deadlines. Make it a priority to meet them and a Cardinal Sin to break

them. Set up appointments with yourself and let others know that you “already have a meeting during that time” when they ask.

- **Start calendaring.** Have every day of your calendar notated with what tasks you will accomplish for your side hustle and then check them off once they are done. More on that later.
- **Love it and list it.** Keep a list of your tasks and their deadlines, preferably in your calendar or preferred task manager. Write them down in one central place and check them daily to keep up with your due dates. Conversely, decide what you are not going to do on any given day and make sure you recognize those tasks as distractors if they surface. Remember, just because the phone rings does not mean you must answer it.
- **Give yourself some wiggle room.** Cushions are not just for couches. Set a reasonable timeline to accomplish your tasks with a start and end date for each, then add a day or a week to your end date as a time cushion in case any delays come up.
- **Be realistic.** Don’t bite off more than you can chew. This is your side work so schedule only the tasks you can get done in the few hours you have outside your real job. Being too ambitious in the amount of side work you can do only makes you miss deadlines and hurts your side hustle in the long run. In addition to being focused, you must also stay balanced. Schedule fun activities, as well as time for exercise and relaxing.

Calendaring

Calendaring is a crucial aspect of meeting your deadlines and getting tasks done. If you don’t already have a calendar system in place, start setting yours up now. Calendaring begins with buying or creating a calendar—this can be a paper or electronic product; it just depends on what works best for you. Some of the best calendar

products are academic planners, Erin Condren planners, Google Calendar, Fantastical (Macintosh), and Zenday (Android). For my side hustle, I (Stephanie) use a bound paper planner that I fill in for each upcoming week on Sunday night with my set routine of how I work on my side hustle. Then I add in my events/tasks specific to just that week. Also, as long-term ideas or tasks come up, I notate them in the planner month they apply to.

Russ tells me that he has several ways to deal with time, tasks, and deadlines. First, he uses his Outlook Calendar to make appointments and schedule tasks as well. Russ puts the word “task” in the appointment which makes it turn green, part of a color-coding system. He can add different alarms or notifications for each task as a reminder as well. Another benefit of using one’s calendar to manage tasks is that you can make them recur so that if you have a task that is required, say, once per week, you only need to set it up once. Second, he uses Google Reminders (see <http://bit.ly/g-reminders>) which he can use from almost any device, including his Google Home device. A Google reminder can be set up in the same way that you do ‘any Google search. Just use your voice to say, “Hey Google, remind me to ____ at (day and time).” The reminder will pop up on all of your devices, including your phone. He uses this especially when he has an idea while driving and doesn’t want to stop to write it down. Third, Russ keeps a checklist with WorkFlowy (<https://workflowy.com/>), which is an organizational tool. Any changes made on the WorkFlowy website are also emailed to you as well.

Whatever calendaring and task management method or product you choose, make sure to interact with these tools throughout the day. Here are five more top tips to help you with effective calendaring:

- Your calendar should be big enough that you can see your week at a glance.
- Each day in your calendar should be broken up into hour, half hour, or quarter hour blocks where you can write in your tasks to accomplish.
- Establish a routine for yourself, based on your side hustle goals and tasks that you want to accomplish. Set this routine up in your calendar. For example, if you're going to create four *Teachers Pay Teachers* products a year, block out three months for each product in your calendar, and then set a schedule within those months of how/when you will work on the products each week. In my (Stephanie) case, one of the daily scheduled tasks that I notate in my planner is to work on my new counseling guides every morning from 7-8 a.m. while my husband drives us to work (we have a long commute).
- Build some time in your calendar for daily or weekly spontaneous tasks. That is, schedule flexible time to catch up on stuff. Running a side hustle can involve some unforeseen, unplanned opportunities that must be taken care of at the moment. Be sure you have some time in your calendar for this (Sabella, 2010).
- Check off tasks in your calendar when you complete them. It keeps you on top of where you are in your side work progress, and it just feels so good.

Self-Care

If you are going to balance your side hustle with your full-time job and not burn out or lose your mind in the process, you must practice self-care. Self-care is described by the American Psychological Association as providing adequate attention to one's own physical and psychological wellness (Beauchamp & Childress, 2001). Self-care is vital for staying mentally and physically healthy

while we juggle multiple jobs, family, and any other responsibilities (Scott, 2018). Since you are going to be super busy with both a full-time job and your side hustle work, consider the following list of basic mindsets and behaviors below; a mix of both fun self-care, wellness self-care, and self-care that is just good old mindless relaxation:

- **Schedule It.** What do you love to do? Is it reading in bed all day, going for a spa day, Netflix binging on the couch, brunching at your favorite restaurant, or doing nothing? Whatever it is, schedule it in your calendar daily, weekly, monthly, or however much you need it. This is an appointment with yourself. You might use the “set appointment as recurring” feature of your electronic calendar to remind you to have fun periodically. Your self-care day is the day that it's okay to call in the babysitter if you have young children. Or just encourage your kids to do what you love (or nothing) alongside you!
- **Work in Some Restful Sleep and Healthy Food.** Research shows that these are two of the most important factors for optimal health (e.g., Buysse, 2014; Michie, Abraham, Whittington, McAteer, & Gupta, 2009). Unfortunately, when combining a side hustle with a full-time job, sleep and healthy eating are typically the first to go! For that reason, make it your mission to schedule seven to nine hours of sleep for yourself most nights. Additionally, it is imperative to get in at least one healthy meal a day, so decide when you can fit that in, and then use whatever means necessary to make it happen. Some ways to squeeze in a healthy eating option once a day are utilizing a low-cost service that sends you healthy foods per your suggestions like *Hello Fresh*, *Blue Apron*, or *Plated*. Also, you might decide to pack your lunch from some healthy

dinner leftovers the night before or picking up a fresh salad or healthy greens breakfast smoothie on the way to work every day. Finally, consider joining scores of other professionals who engage in food prepping. As evidenced by their Facebook photos, some school counselors have discovered the power of food prepping on Sundays. This means that they do the legwork of preparing or “prepping for short” a week’s worth of meals before the week begins. In this way, they have access to healthy food that is also quick. Some school counselors cook all their meals for the week, freeze, and then reheat on the day they are eating. Others don’t fully prepare each meal but, instead, work on the time-consuming steps of a recipe such as cutting up fruits and vegetables, measuring portions, baking, and portioning out healthy snacks. Food prep can be anything. You don’t necessarily need to cook all your meals completely. It can mean chopping up onions, peppers, or other vegetables ahead of time for recipes. Washing fruits and vegetables, so they are ready for snacks. Portioning out nuts, crackers, or other food items for snacks. Cutting up chicken or beef to be recipe ready. Whatever is going to work (Hodges, 2017; Kresge, 2014). Check out these food prepping recipes for the week on Pinterest at <http://bit.ly/food-prepping>.

- **Social Support: Call a Friend or Family Member.** The more we work and spend time with our electronics, the less we interact with other humans. Research shows that human interaction is crucial to our mental well-being (Kraut et al., 1998; Turkle, 2017). So, think of your favorite person and go call them, hang out with them, and just have some fun!
- **Spend Time in Nature (this includes hanging out with your pet!).** Research has proven time and again, that if you spend some time with nature each week, your body and mind will thank you (Berto, 2014; Hull & Michael, 1995; Wells, 2000)! So

that being said, spend some self-care time each week outside, preferably being active—take a walk, head to the pool, or just sit in the shade with your dog. And if you have kids, model the importance of self-care, enlist their ideas on the best nature activities, and take them with you!

So now that you have a well-stocked toolbox with all that you need to start up your side hustle, we want to share with you a few fascinating tales of the best and brightest side hustlers out there. Read on for some inspiring stories from the superstars of the school counselor side hustle industry!

PART II

GETTING IT DONE

School counselors are working many innovative and fascinating types of side hustles today. As we mentioned in the introduction, we found seven common opportunities that school counselors have found to be both fitting and lucrative:

- Creating Resources
- Authoring a Book
- Public Speaking
- Developing Tools
- Selling Merchandise
- Adjunct Teaching
- Private Practice Counseling

Next, we'll share with you what they are doing as well as how it can be done. You'll learn about the triumphs as well as tribulations. You'll hear about overcoming struggles that have led to highly rewarding revenue streams, changing how the school counselor can provide for themselves and their families. And you'll read about the joy that comes with being creative, developing, and helping others—all while being independent and free to innovate.

CHAPTER 3

CREATING RESOURCES

"Make it. Master it. Matter."

Daymond John, *Shark Tank*

Many school counselors are industrious about developing lesson plans, exams, learning activities, handouts, planners, PowerPoints and much more. Developing valued resources and making them available for easy download can really help fellow school counselors/educators save a lot of time and work. Also, being able to review a single resource and purchase it for a few bucks without having to buy an entire book or subscription is economical. Some resources are even free! Another advantage of school counselors developing resources for each other is that they are more likely to be practical and targeted toward appropriate standards as compared to someone who does not have school counseling experience or expertise. What you purchase is more likely to be tried and true to work as described.

One of the most popular platforms that educators use is *Teachers Pay Teachers*, commonly referred to as *TpT*. TpT is an online marketplace for millions of educators who come together to share their work, insights, and inspiration with one another. Since its inception in 2006, it has yielded over 30 million dollars in sales,

making several of its top resource creators millionaires in the process (Dickey, 2013)! It is a simple, yet genius concept. Basically, you open a “storefront” with your store name, educator profile, and other assorted details. Then, you simply upload your creations to your store where educators all over the world can purchase and download your resources. Of course, TpT takes a percentage of the profit, but the larger portion goes into the store owner’s pocket.

School counselors who use TpT not only create resources for each other but also provide useful resources for parents to use. Teachers Pay Teachers also has a program that allows administrators to set up school accounts for individual users. With this type of account, the user can build wish lists and make purchases with their school’s budget. This helps to defray some of the costs of educational materials, which many educators, including school counselors, typically pay out of their own pockets.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Kimberlita Casper

Kimberlita Casper is the owner of the YNot Counseling Store on Teachers Pay Teachers (TpT; <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Ynot-Counseling>). She is an experienced educator and school counselor of 16 years and, in her own words, she works with students through a “combination of technology, music, and movement to teach a lesson . . . my style is eclectic.” You can also check out her work on her website at <https://ynotcounseling.blogspot.com/>. Here is what Kimberlita has to say about having a successful side hustle.

To be honest, I do not consider what I do to be side work because when I hear the words “side work,” I think of a hobby. I know that hobbies can lead to careers; however, YNot Counseling has been a job for me since I decided to get started. My vision has always, always

been for it to be successful and I keep that before me at all times. I actually consider YNot Counseling an extension of my educational career. It is a creative outlet that allows me to do what I love (reach and teach) but in a different capacity. I have always created resources to address the various needs of the students in my care but kept them for myself. After being introduced to Teachers Pay Teachers (TpT), it opened my eyes and afforded me the opportunity to share my resources with other educators so that they can incorporate them into their lessons.

I have always been self-propelled and yearned to work for myself. I had a state-licensed daycare for years before deciding to go into the school system. During that time, I created my own lessons, wrote children's stories/poems and read them to the students, as well as created a curriculum for my daycare students. It has always been in me to develop resources and share them with others. I learned about TpT while doing an observation during graduate school. It was during this time that I worked with the reading specialist, and she showed me how she created her own resources and even showed me her TpT store. She encouraged me to get started, but I was hesitant at that moment because I was not familiar with TpT and all that it entails. After some research, following several stores, and joining several TpT groups on Facebook, I became more confident, and felt I was ready to make the jump. In December 2016, I decided to take the leap and join the TpT community. I was excited to share my creations with others with the hope that it would inspire student progress on a larger scale. My motivation is reaching students and seeing them grow. I always say to my students, *"I don't expect perfection; I expect progression."* And when I see students make progress, it motivates me to keep doing what I do every day, whether at school or working on a YNot Counseling resource.

There are many transferable skills that I use in both my school counseling program and my TpT store. My research and analytical

skills are an asset to YNot Counseling. I stay abreast of new or updated research/theories, as well as news that impacts the education and counseling fields. Keeping current with relevant issues and best practices allows me to refine what I do continually and, in turn, produce materials that are helpful to an array of students. Because of my analytical skills, I can study data and recognize trends in what is and is not working for my TpT store. Analyzing my TpT statistics and feedback allows me to see what resources I need to revisit and change. I've even had to put aside resources until another time because they were not getting the exposure necessary to be successful. My ability to be an effective leader has also helped me greatly because I recognize that even leaders need assistance. Therefore, I humbly ask for help when needed from those who have more experience than I do in the TpT community. Time-management is another transferrable skill that helps in carving out a niche for myself in the TpT community. You have to be self-driven when you choose to invest in creating resources. My ability to prioritize and complete tasks while working alone with minimum supervision at work has made it easier for me to step into the lane of being a TpT seller. Last but not least, my ability to navigate technology helps me deliver classroom counseling lessons with Kahoot, Plickers, Quizlet, Boom Cards, Interactive PDFs, and more! I love it, and the students love it more!

There are so many benefits to having a TpT store! It is a boost to my confidence and ability to be an effective counselor. I get to network with scores of talented school counselors that are willing to assist and mentor. Having my TpT store pushes me to confidently step outside of my comfort zone, which has also given me the confidence to provide workshops before large groups. Most importantly, I would say that it gives me the ability to boldly, without fear of judgment, share my resources with the digital world.

Some of the challenges that I face as a TpT seller are as follows: finding enough time to work on developing TpT resources after work; finding a balance between working on resources and spending time with family; and remembering that I am in my own lane (to avoid comparing myself to others).

My advice to others is that TpT is about more than creating and uploading cute products. It is about building resources that you are passionate about. In addition, it involves creating original resources that align with American School Counselor Association (ASCA) standards (i.e., Mindsets and Behaviors) and are useful in achieving objectives necessary to the growth of our future leaders. I would also say, take your time in creating your resources. It is better to take months to create an excellent product than to rush a product and upload something mediocre. Proofread, at least twice, to minimize errors. A second set of eyes would also be beneficial. Last but not least, remember that your resources will make an impact on the educator community, so always give each product your best attention!

The TpT Seller Experience—An Inside Look

Over the years, a lot of people have asked me (Stephanie) how to start selling their educational materials on TpT. For many years now, I've sold my own counseling resources on TpT and promoted this platform among my colleagues. I've learned a lot from both my personal experience and from talking with others. Here are some simple, beginning steps for how to become a TpT seller. Eventually, through more research and experience, you may want to work your way up to becoming a super-seller, which I'll briefly describe at the end of this section. For now, let's start at the beginning:

1. Pick some of your best counselor resources that you have created outside of school hours and without any school

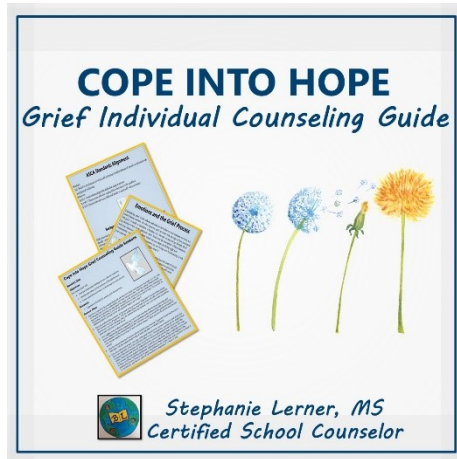
materials. Now, imagine you need to submit three of them to the United States Department of Education for review. If they like your materials, they will purchase them for every educator in America, some of whom have never taken a school counseling class in their life. With this in mind, now go back to your three best resources and make them better—more aesthetically pleasing with more detailed instructions and activities. Think of the most fastidious school counselor or administrator you know and improve your three best resources to their standards. Your resources will have to be *that good* to sell on TpT; competition is very steep.

2. Think about what you want to call your TpT store. To sell on TpT, you will need to set up a “store.” Pick a good name, and then have a few backups because most of the good ones are already taken.
3. Open your store at <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/>. To do this, click on “Join Us” on the TpT homepage and select the “Basic Seller Account.” You can also select “Premium Account,” which you must pay for and which offers a better deal in the long run to experienced sellers. But for now, it is probably more cost-effective to wait to pay their premium fee until you have 10-plus items in your store and you are making some consistent sales.
4. At this point, TpT will take you through a series of prompts to set up your storefront and populate it with the first resource that you’ve made. Know that your first resource is required by TpT to be free so that potential customers can get a sense of the quality of your work. After setting up your first free resource, you can add as many paid resources as you like. To upload your resource, you will be in your TpT “Dashboard” where you will click “Add a New Product” and then “Digital Download.” This will take you to a screen that lets you

“Upload New Product”; start following the prompts on this page—they are easy to follow. Now I’d like to address a few areas that can be tricky and are essential to know about:

- I recommend that you save and upload your resources as a PDF so it is not easily changeable by the buyer. Word Docs and PowerPoints that are changeable and easily edited (i.e., plagiarized).
- Create a resource title that is searchable. We all love catchy names, but “Classroom Lesson on Stress,” for example, is much more search engine friendly than “Worry Warriors.”
- Write a “bang-up” product description! This is how you sell your resource and encourage TpT shoppers to buy your product instead of the million other products on the website. Start your description with a hook—Enthusiasm! Excitement! Why they should buy your product instead of everyone else’s! Then list exactly what your resource includes so the buyer knows what they are getting for their money—this is important because if anyone thinks that they are getting something that your product doesn’t include, they will “ding” you in the TpT reviews, and this hurts your business.
- As a new seller, a reasonable pricing rule of thumb is 25 cents a page. This might not be a lot for all your hard work, but you are just starting out with a tiny, unknown store. Once you get your store populated with dozens of items and you have lots of followers, you can consider increasing all your prices—generally after the first year.
- Work on your thumbnail images before you make your product active. Thumbnails are reduced-size versions of pictures or videos of your product, which are meant to load onto the webpage very quickly. Thumbnails are significant. These are the images that the buyer will see when they are

shopping for resources and may influence the consumer to buy your material or not. Think of your main cover thumbnail image as a book or magazine cover, a first impression of the rest of the content. Similarly, think of your preview thumbnails as the items in your resource that you most want to highlight or point out with a picture (kind of like a movie preview poster). You can query YouTube or any search engine with the keywords “TpT thumbnail” to get help on how to create one. I think the best way to make thumbnails is to first buy some super cute clipart illustrations on TpT by searching “clip art” plus your resource topic in the TpT search engine. Then create your main cover and your preview thumbnails by imagining what you’d like the cover and preview images of your resource to look like. You can use various software to create your thumbnails, but I find that PowerPoint works well. Once you have the title, your name, and your clipart illustrations all set up in PowerPoint, save the slide as a JPEG or PNG and upload them to TpT as your main cover thumbnails. Do the same for your preview thumbnails but using a page of your resource instead of the title/name/etc. The following example is one of my favorite cover thumbnails I (Stephanie) have made, and yes, I’m a minimalist. Some other sellers make their thumbnails crazy-busy, and they seem to sell well too.



5. Once you have followed all the upload page prompts and you get to the bottom of the page, click "Create Product." Click "Submit." Your product should show right away, or at least within the hour. If you aren't happy with any part of it, you can click "Edit," which takes you back to that Upload Page to make any changes you want, and then you'd click "Submit" again (Teachers Pay Teachers, 2018).

If you are satisfied with keeping your TpT Store as a small side hustle that pays for your Starbucks coffee runs and maybe your monthly dinner date nights, then all you need to do is follow the steps above. However, if you want to take your TpT store to the next level and start generating some super-seller money, then it's time to move on to the more advanced TpT seller steps. Once you get a good number of resources posted in your store, and once you feel that you have a good understanding of the basic steps above, you are ready to move forward. The first step in becoming a super-seller is to check out the dozens of articles and how-tos that you can find on the actual Teacher's Pay Teachers website—just Google "comprehensive steps for becoming a TpT seller" and pick your

favorite articles to read and follow. Additionally, here are some specific steps to up your TpT seller game:

- Sign up as a premium seller (see step three for how to do this).
- Spend some time each week on the TpT seller forums to learn about the latest selling strategies and trends.
- Set up a Facebook page for your TpT store and consider establishing yourself across all the major social media forums: Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, etc. Managing all your social media accounts is pretty time intensive, but it is a must for the TpT super-seller.
- Consider starting a blog (website) for your TpT store where you write posts about important topics in school counseling and about how you use your own and others' resources. Managing a website where you blog regularly can be quite time consuming but definitely drives the most traffic to your store.
- Join the big TpT seller groups (such as the TpT Product Promotion and Search Page) on Facebook and Pinterest. Follow TpT on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/TeachersPayTeachers/>).

We hope you've found this information on starting your TpT adventure to be comprehensive rather than overwhelming! Sometimes when explaining TpT to others, it is hard to know where to draw the line. Becoming a TpT seller is much like going down the rabbit hole—you never know what fascinating things you will encounter, but the adventure can be never-ending. I've found that overall, sharing resources through TpT is a winner for everyone involved. Happy TpTing!

CHAPTER 4

AUTHORING A BOOK

*"A brilliant idea doesn't guarantee a successful invention.
Real magic comes from a brilliant idea combined
with willpower, tenacity, and a willingness to make mistakes."*

Lori Greiner, *Shark Tank*

An author is a person who creates a type of literary work. Of course, this is a somewhat broad definition but so is the work of an author. Legislators author bills. Novelists author books. Researchers author studies. Educators author self-studies during the accreditation process. You can write novels, children's picture books, memoirs, teaching guides, handbooks, counseling books, and so much more! Regarding getting your work out to the public, you now have many options thanks to current technologies. You can publish by partnering with a publishing company or independently publish your work using a service such as Amazon's KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing), which offers tools to help you through the process in getting your work directly to consumers. You can author your own newsletter or blog and monetize it using advertising or affiliated links. Or as just one more example, you may become a freelance author or writer-for-hire and sell your work to magazines and other outlets.

Stephen King was once quoted as saying, “*Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work.*” He also said, “*If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot. There's no way around these two things that I'm aware of, no shortcut.*” Authoring relevant, practical, and valuable materials as a side hustle is not only helpful to individuals but is necessary for the advancement of the profession. We need more experienced school counselors to share their best practices in various aspects of comprehensive school counseling programs so that the profession can evolve and positively advance.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Julie Frizzi

Julie Frizzi has been an educator for over 30 years. While searching for the perfect school counseling classroom curriculum, she discovered children learned best by listening to real stories from other children their age. These sensitive and heartfelt stories, swirling around in her brain for some time, are now shared with us in her illustrated book, Powerful You (see <https://www.powerfullyou.info/>). You can follow Julie on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/JulieFrizzi>. Here is Julie's story.

My name is Julie Frizzi from Naples, Florida. I have been married for 25 years to a physical education teacher. Most of my years of being an educator, I worked as a counselor and listened to endless stories of struggling children. I saved the stories and made up cards that I used to empower other children who were going through similar issues. Kids begged for the cards every time I went into the classrooms. I tried many guidance programs, books, and online lessons but always returned to these stories knowing the children connected and learned from them. I raised two healthy and happy children during these years. I gave every second to my family in the

evening hours by cooking, cleaning, running carpools to swimming and soccer, and endless hours of homework. I loved every second of this life. I knew when my two kids began to prepare for college that I would need to fill the hole in my life with something new. Rather than feeling sad over their departure, I decided to become a yoga instructor. I loved yoga and knew it would fit my lifestyle of counseling. Extra money during these college years would be helpful as well.

During my yoga teacher training, I learned to let go of self-doubt and fear. The 16-day program was filled with meditation, yoga, self-reflection, and goal setting. I struggled all my life with focusing, and yoga gave me the confidence, strength, and passion for helping me live in the moment. My collection of stories needed to be completed and shared. I knew the power within each story, combined with yoga, would be make for a wonderful combination. Could I make some extra money doing this? I wrote a letter to myself that day and planned to open it in one year. In the letter, I wrote that I would have my cards published. I set other goals for myself. One year later, I read my letter to myself and was happy that every goal had been completed.

I was fortunate to meet Rebecca Wells from Wells Marketing. She met me at Starbucks, and I fearfully showed her my ten stories and asked her if she could help me develop them into educator cards. She took my binder and told me that she wanted to help me. Later that week, she called, and we began working together. She encouraged me to make the cards into a resource book that I called *Powerful You* (Frizzi, 2016). The book grew into an ABC book, and the number of stories went from 10 to 26. Each night after work, I went to bed early so that I could wake up at 4:00 a.m. to work on *Powerful You*. Every morning I excitedly popped out of bed with inspiration and incredible excitement. The words so easily came. I practiced everything I wrote with my classes. I sent Rebecca everything I wrote while she

continued to give me assignments. I felt an incredible presence of GOD during this time. The inspiration came each morning, and everything fell together so easily.

I only painted suns. Rebecca tasked me with painting 24 more pictures. I said “sure” but had no idea how to paint. I watched YouTube videos and asked a friend to help. We had fun painting on the weekends and finished making each page for the book. I saved all my receipts knowing that this would all be part of my expenses.

I used to work at a bank, and this came in handy. I had to get an LLC, find a logo, understand BOWKER (a provider of bibliographic information and management solutions designed to help publishers, authors, and booksellers), learn about state taxes and postal services, get insurance, understand copyright information, start my *Powerful You* website (<https://www.powerfullyou.info/>), open a business checking account, open a business credit card, and much more. I have made many mistakes and continue to learn from them.

There are many challenges and benefits to having a side hustle. For example, although my family supports my passion, it can be hard to work full time, juggle spending time with loved ones, and creating my new business. Sometimes, I think I could hole up in my office for the entire weekend and work on growing my business. What helps me the most is being fully present to each responsibility. When I am at school, I focus entirely on my kids. Fortunately, everything that I am working on with my business can be used in my full-time job and allows me to be even more productive. *Powerful You* has fueled my counseling program into one that is proactive and reduces stress. I arrive to work each day knowing fully what I am doing for the day. Adding breathing and stretching with the kids throughout the day gives me continuous energy, which I never had before. I have learned to shut out my business when with family. I unplug from my phone and technology and try to get out into nature with them for my own

personal therapy and time with family. Staying in the moment with them has made me a better wife, mother, and friend.

Another challenge was learning the legalities of having a full and part-time job. When *Powerful You* was released, I requested to meet with our school district lawyer because I wanted to know precisely about the rules of engagement when it came to the business and my full-time school counseling job. He advised me not to advertise my book to parents or others in the school's system. He did, however, tell me that if someone asked me about my product, that I could share my website or answer questions. He also said for me to take personal time and share my skills with people outside our school district. Collier County Schools often asks me to share yoga and breathing before our district meetings, but I am careful not to advertise my product during those times. Many of our counselors and psychologists, however, inquire and purchase my products privately.

Although every day I am stepping out of my comfort zone by calling school districts, stopping at private schools, writing proposals, sending letters, giving workshops around town—it can feel scary. With every ten failures, I have one huge success, which keeps me going (I guess that is why people golf). It helps me to make a list of what I want to happen instead of what I need to do. Then, when I make that one thing happen, I celebrate big! Today, after ten calls to districts in the state, I landed one district who wants me to come and in-service counselors! That was a good day for me!! AND IT WAS SUPER SCARY!!! Thank you, Polk County, for saying YES!!

Finally, learning social media has been my biggest challenge. I enjoy connecting with others on a face-to-face basis. I am a bit of a dinosaur on social media and need to learn so much in this area. Hiring someone to help me may be on my horizon!

One of the great benefits to my side work is that I continuously sell my books, which brings in a bit of income, but I regularly advertise and speak at conferences which cost money. Fortunately, I

am able to teach some private yoga, which brings in about \$50.00 an hour. These private gigs allow me to keep adding to my business and fuel it to grow. I also feel fortunate that my business allows me to travel and meet new people. I go with the flow, yet gently push out. This is an extra, and I don't want it to become a stress for me.

And I am working on another book, so I have to get back to my painting!!

Writing a Book

Writing a book is the ultimate experience in combining creativity and organization. These two very opposite endeavors are what make writing a book so challenging. But with this challenge comes an intense feeling of accomplishment and pride. When you are finally finished, and your book hits the proverbial shelves—be that on your website, on an eBook platform such as Kindle, or even on an actual brick and mortar bookshelf—the feeling is like no other. So, let's talk about all the ins and outs of making this happen.

It is quite helpful to have a checklist of all the tasks you will need to complete to get your book from an initial idea to a published work. It can feel a bit awkward trying to create a comprehensive checklist when you've never written a book, but you can at least start by brainstorming a chronological list of all the book writing/publishing tasks you can think of, and then just add to it as you learn what other tasks you need on your list. The Nonfiction Authors Association has a helpful manuscript checklist that you can use as a starting point for your own authoring checklist, which you can view online at <http://bit.ly/check-one-two> (Chandler, 2018).

The first step in writing a book is landing on your central idea or focus. Generally, this idea should be something you are passionate about and something that fulfills a specific need that is not being met. Your potential book should also be unique and not readily available. If there are other books available like the one you are

thinking of, you should review them carefully to know if yours will be better and more valuable to your target audience. If not, you may want to move on to a different book project. Quick example: every year, I (Russ) give dozens of workshops in solution-focused counseling and conferences all over the country. I'm often asked if I have written a book on this topic, which I have not. Although I have very high levels of expertise in the area and my workshops are significant in scope, writing a solution-focused book is probably still not a good idea because the space is already crowded. One book entitled *Brief Counseling That Works: A Solution-Focused Therapy Approach for School Counselors and Other Mental Health Professionals*, in particular, written by my good friend Dr. Gerald Sklare (Sklare, 2014) is excellent. In fact, I would be hard pressed to improve on it. So, instead of spending hundreds of hours writing a solution-focused counseling book, I just recommend his book while I'm working on something else. As a side note, I have written book chapters, articles, and conducted more than a few webinars that focus on a few unique developments with the SFBC model, ideas and techniques that you would not find anywhere else. I continue to disseminate these and more during solution-focused counseling workshops for counselors, educators, parents, and others.

My (Stephanie) own idea of writing English as a Second Language (ESL) books started back in 2005 when I was teaching ESL in Bolivia, and I couldn't find one book with a straightforward set of chronological lesson plans for teaching beginning English. I knew exactly what I was looking for, but I couldn't find it. Then, I asked around, and no colleague could point me to the resource I needed either! I was passionate about this idea because I was teaching ESL lessons and I wanted the best for my own ESL students. So, this passion combined with need created the perfect storm to write this book myself!

Once you have your idea of what to write, create an outline of the major points of your book with details listed for each point. Put these points in an intuitive order, which is often chronological, but not always. Make sure you include a strong introduction and conclusion sections as well.

Your outline will change somewhat over time, although you need to make some decisions about what the book will deliver and how it will be organized. Your outline will serve as your map to navigating the writing journey. The more detailed the outline, the better. You can even include examples, resources, and doodles to remind you of what you should include in your book. The information in your outline comes from different places including your personal thoughts, experiences, and lessons learned. Also, you will need to include the results of preliminary research for the book. Rarely can you complete a whole book just from your own perspective. Before you start writing, your outline should include ideas, descriptions, examples, and other content from other resources; this content should illuminate and enhance the reader's experience. It will also expand and clarify the ideas you are delivering.

And now you are ready to write! Carve out daily or weekly time for yourself to get your thoughts out of your head and onto "paper." This may mean waking up an hour earlier than everyone else to take advantage of the quiet, uninterrupted time to write or even blasting your music in your headphones at bedtime to block out the background TV-time family noise as you click away on your keyboard. Whatever works for you, find it, make it consistent, and stick to it. Over time, you will realize that you have gotten pages and pages of your book done!

If you are writing a fictional book with illustrations, write your picture inspiration ideas right alongside your text so you don't forget them when it is time to start your illustrations. Alternately, if you are writing non-fiction, put in your references as you go, both in the

body of your book and in the reference section, so you won't have to track them all down a second time toward the end. Depending on what you use, keep your APA, MLA, or Chicago-Style Manual right next to you as you write at all times—this way you are able to put in your citations and references at the moment accurately, so you don't have to do it all later. You may want to use a bibliographic manager (a.k.a. “writing and citing” tool) which can mostly automate the process and facilitate collaboration. There are many to choose from (see <http://bit.ly/bibmanreviews>) for a comparison chart); some are free, and some are not. Here are a few of the top-rated ones:

- Endnote is a software tool for publishing and managing bibliographies, citations and references on the Windows and Macintosh desktop. Endnote also provides hundreds of Microsoft Word templates that will auto-format all the citations, bibliographies and other document elements to match the style or publication you are writing for. <https://endnote.com/>
- Mendeley is a free citation and paper management tool up with up to 2 GB of cloud storage. Mendeley has a desktop application, mobile app, and Chrome browser extension, making it easy to use across multiple devices. Mendeley has a robust web platform and user support, and it has easy guides to assist you. <https://www.mendeley.com/>
- In Microsoft Word, you can automatically generate a bibliography (or other similar document requiring citations) of the sources you used to write your paper. Each time you add a new citation to your document, Word adds that source so that it appears in the bibliography in the proper format, such as MLA, APA, and Chicago-style. See <http://bit.ly/ms-biblio> for more information.

- RefWorks is a web-based citation management program that automatically formats the bibliography in desired citation styles such as APA or MLA. RefWorks can also be used to insert cited resources into your manuscript. RefWorks is also integrated with Google Scholar and many university libraries.
- Zotero is a free, easy-to-use tool to help you collect, organize, cite, and share research. <https://www.zotero.org/>

Once you feel like you have a finished first draft, start the editing and revising process. Begin with a few red pen read-throughs on your own. I (Stephanie) like to print out my first draft and sit in bed on a Sunday morning with my coffee and just get at it with a red pen. Once you've revised and edited it a few times on your own, start passing it out to trusted colleagues, friends, and/or family members who have a good grasp of writing rules. Let them catch any typos you have missed as well as give you feedback on ideas or wording that needs to be revised. At this point, many authors end their editing phase, and that is fine. However, if you want to go the extra mile, hire a professional editor. All my ESL books are professionally edited by a high school friend who is a technical editor at the Applied Physics Lab. Her work for me is invaluable—she always adds to my manuscript in ways I didn't even think of, and she still teaches me something about writing that I didn't know before. Reedsy (<https://reedsy.com/about>), Upwork (<https://www.upwork.com/>), and BookBaby (<https://www.bookbaby.com>) are good places to shop if you are looking to hire an editor for your book.

Now you are probably ready to start diving into the publishing phase. Again, a checklist is helpful to have in guiding you through the publishing adventure. I (Stephanie) combine all my writing and publishing tasks in the one checklist that I mentioned previously, but you can separate them out too. Jane Friedman (2015) has a helpful

self-publishing checklist that you can use as a starting point: <https://www.janefriedman.com/self-publishing-checklist/>.

For the publishing phase, first, decide how you want to publish. Do you want to self-publish it through your website or through an indie publishing company like Smashwords (<https://smashwords.com/>) or LuLu (<https://lulu.com/>)? Do you want to go with a traditional publisher like Random House or Penguin Books? Whatever you decide, do your research and then start the process by following the submission steps provided by the company or medium you choose. For example, if you want to go with a traditional publisher, send your proposal to every accepting publishing house you can find by going to their website and following their submission procedures. Typically, these procedures will have you submit a sample chapter as well as your thoughts about why and how the book will sell. Know that the more popular publishers (e.g., Penguin Random House, HarperCollins, Simon & Schuster, Macmillan) can, more or less, only be contacted through a literary agent. In this case, you'll need to start there and find a reputable agent that will agree to represent you. Agents are motivated to take on clients based on the size of the advance they think they can get. If your project doesn't command a decent advance, then you may not be worth an agent's time, and you'll have to sell the project on your own (Friedman, 2017).

Alternately, if you want to self-publish through a service, follow the submission steps on the website of the self-publishing company you chose; I (Stephanie) like CreateSpace (<https://createspace.com/>) the best, which is in the process of combining with Amazon's KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing; <https://kdp.amazon.com/>) at the time of this printing. Millions of independent authors are using KDP for good reasons. First, it is quite easy to use, especially if you are not dealing with lots of complex graphics and formatting. Second, there is no overhead for you. Amazon provides everything you need including

printing, selling, and managing your sales without any financial investment on your part. Third, Amazon makes it easy for people to find and purchase your book through promotions, links, affiliate programs, millions of daily visitors, newsletters, and more. When you publish with KDP, publishing takes just a few minutes, and your book appears on Kindle stores worldwide within 24–48 hours. You keep control of your copyrights and set your own list prices, this is important. You can also make changes to your books at any time. Probably one of the best reasons to publish with KDP, you can earn up to 70 percent royalty on sales. KDP has literally flipped the script on what you earn as compared to traditional publishers.

You could decide to go *completely* independent as a self-publisher and maintain control of the entire process yourself. In this case, you would have to make the initial financial investment for doing a first run printing of your book and purchase all the supplies to get the book to customers. You would also need to be responsible for all the other aspects of publishing including promoting, setting up an e-commerce site, boxing, shipping, dealing with refunds, and more. You can start to imagine why most people don't mind giving up a bit of profit to have a company do all this. It takes a lot of time and labor, not to mention the risks of losing your inventory if something goes wrong.

In terms of the difference between choosing a traditional publisher versus self-publishing—if you are a new author and a traditional publisher picks you up, I (Stephanie) say, “Go for it!” It can be quite competitive for new authors who want to get signed with a traditional publisher. While the traditional publisher takes a huge cut of your profits (usually about 80 percent to 90 percent, yes, you read that correctly—80 percent to 90 percent), it is an excellent opportunity for a new author to build their name and credibility as an accomplished writer. Anyone with a computer can self-publish, and unfortunately, the self-publishing market is flooded with

terrible writers as a result. But a legitimate traditional publisher will only sign high-quality authors who have a meaningful or interesting story to share, and that credibility bestowed on a new author means a lot! Now, once you get yourself established over the years as a credible author with a large following, it might be time to switch yourself over to self-publishing all your work off of your own website, where you can pocket 100 percent of your profits. In my experience, the most successful and driven authors start off self-publishing until a traditional publisher picks them up, then once they develop the credibility and following that comes with being published traditionally, they switch back over to self-publishing all their own work.

Finally, here are just a few more suggestions to consider if you want to seriously be in the publication game as proposed by Sabella & Tillman (2017):

- Consider partnering with someone who has experience and has already published. Being a second or co-author with a veteran author could be an invaluable learning experience.
- To be a good writer, you must be a habitual reader. While reading other people's work, pay attention to their style, format, vocabulary, and overall tone.
- No matter what genre of book you are writing, you are almost always telling a story. Remember to make your story compelling. The story should include a solid beginning, middle, and end. The beginning establishes the problem to be solved, the middle outlines the potential solutions, and the end describes a positive ending.
- As an author, you must know your audience. Use words and phrases they understand and avoid jargon that they probably won't. A story may resonate much better with other counselors as compared to, say, school board members who

may be dealing with your topic from a different perspective. Know what your audience members need and how their lives are better or easier because of what you are offering.

- Stick to the “rule of three.” The rule of three is traditionally a writing principle that suggests that things that come in threes are more humorous, satisfying, or more persuasive than other numbers of things. The reader or listener is thereby more likely to remember the information. In your story. Ask yourself, “What are my three main characters, three talking points, or three take-aways for my audience?”

Side Hustle Spotlight: Carol Lawson Miller

Carol Miller is a middle school counselor in New York who has truly mastered the art of the side hustle! She has so many side hustles going on that it is hard to know just where to begin in describing them all. So, we will let her do that! In the meantime, check out her immensely popular school counselor Facebook Groups (e.g., <https://www.facebook.com/groups/590701787640166/>) for a fantastic professional learning community experience! Read on for her amazing story!

About five years ago, I was asked by my district to move from the high school to the middle school. That change meant that I wouldn't be working solely with junior and senior students on the college search and application process, or with students who cut or ran away from home. It meant that I was going to be working with students in fifth through eighth grade, addressing their social-emotional needs. I was charged with running counseling groups, teaching classroom lessons, providing social skills groups, and assisting with crisis response services. Needless to say, I wasn't quite sure what to do. I am a counselor, but having spent the last 15 years doing the same

thing, I knew I was in for a challenge. I went straight to the Internet and started researching materials and ideas that I could use in building a program. I didn't find much, so I began my own blog, *The Middle School Counselor* (<http://bit.ly/themiddlesc>). I wanted to share the ideas that I was using in my own program with others and document my weekly goals, struggles, and lessons with other counselors. It quickly grew, and I found myself not being able to keep up with the requests for lessons.

If I had to describe my side hustle, I would categorize it as a curriculum author. I like to think of myself as a cheerleader for other school counselors. I “own” my part-time business on Teachers Pay Teachers (TpT) called Carol Miller, the Middle School Counselor (<http://bit.ly/miller-tpt>); it is an online e-commerce store for educators. I offer a variety of resources from counselor planners, résumé templates, documentation forms, lesson plans, card games, and small group curricula to name a few. I also have a curriculum and a Smartboard Game published through YouthLight Publishers (<https://youthlight.com/product.php?id=3071>) and another small group curriculum published through Research Press Publishers (<https://www.researchpress.com/authors/1296/carol-miller>). These sell very well, but the majority of my sales come through TpT.

I love being able to help other counselors provide quality resources to their students. What I love most about what I do is responding to the needs that other counselors and their students have. The other component of my side business brings in no money. I run several large Facebook Groups:

- Elementary School Counselor Exchange (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/590701787640166/>)
- Caught in the Middle School Counselors (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/176582632507419/>)

- High School Counselor Connection
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1737770729838088/>)
- On The Road To Ramp
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/795852863864067/>)
- The School Counselor Store
(<https://facebook.com/groups/theschoolcounselorstore/>)

My goal for these groups is to have a community of counselors who can learn, grow, and share with one another. Counselors from across the globe have joined and are doing just that, whether it's an idea for a bulletin board, a lesson for an observation, or comfort after a hard day. This is my "Why" for what I do. In my building, I am the only school counselor. I also live in a rural community, and the local counselor association focuses almost entirely on high school counselors. There is little to no professional development opportunities for those of us at the middle (or elementary level). You shouldn't have to feel like you are alone in a situation or that there is no comradery to discuss case scenarios. If I was feeling frustrated by the isolation, I knew others probably felt the same. Collaboration is a core component of building a top-notch school counseling program. Collaboration also helps us build systems and make work more efficient. I am in this business to inspire others. It doesn't matter if they are children or adults. I want to walk behind them when they need a push to get motivated. I want to walk beside them when they need a friend, and I want to walk in front of them when they need someone to guide them along the way.

What I have learned in building this business is that sometimes you need to listen, sometimes you need to speak, and sometimes you need to get a little loud. As a business owner, you need to listen to your customers. You also need to provide them a safe place to share what is on their mind, validate their concerns, and provide guidance as they make their decisions. It's not enough to just create a resource

and then try to sell it. You need to be able to tell people what it is, how it's used, and why they need it. You need to show them how it can be helpful in their program. Blogging helps to do this. This is my platform for speaking to my audience and letting them know what I just created for my counseling program, how I used it, why it helped, and where they can get their own copy. Sometimes, this isn't enough, and I have to go "up to bat" for why they have to buy it right now. This is where I get a little loud, just like if I were advocating for a student where everyone seemed not to care. In these cases, you need an action plan. In sales, my action plan would be to snap action shots of my resource, post to Pinterest and Instagram, and share on Facebook.

I have also learned that growing a business is much like putting together an ASCA Model Program. You need to develop some SMART goals for what you are trying to accomplish, collect data to prove your effectiveness or to look at components you need to improve, and create a monthly and weekly calendar of To Do items. All my lesson plans follow the ASCA format, and I want to make sure they address the standards and competencies counselors need to use with their students. It is also important that my school counselor customers can collect process and perception data. My own lessons are so much better because I have implemented each of these steps. So you see, I use the ASCA framework for school counseling programs as a guide for both producing my materials and for operating my side hustle.

Owning a business has also helped me to get better about creating systems. Systems help us become more organized and efficient. Think of it as preparing for a marathon. You can go out running occasionally, or you can set yourself up with a training program where every day you train for something specific and for a given set of miles and time. In either event, you can complete the marathon, but if you trained with a system, you are going to feel a lot better at the end of the race. Every school counseling program needs systems

to promote efficiency and to help guarantee that you are providing a developmental program and not “random acts of guidance.” This same systems philosophy holds true for the counselor side hustle. Systems for your business help you grow your business.

The most significant benefits of being The Middle School Counselor (<https://www.facebook.com/themiddleschoolcounselor/>) have been seeing the impact of where my resources are being used. My blog has 3 million visitors at the time of writing this. These visitors have come from over 200 different countries, many of which I had to look up to see where they were. I have also enjoyed speaking at different conferences across the United States, working with school counselors, and teaching creative strategies to use in small group counseling sessions. My experiences with Skyping into various graduate school classes to talk with current students about group counseling have been rewarding as well. For my next adventure, I will be applying to PhD programs in Counselor Education, and I am excited to continue helping other counselors become great school counselors.

The biggest challenge in owning a business is finding time to get it all done. There weren't many counselors on TpT when I started four years ago, but that number has exponentially increased as time has passed. Because of this, you need to be more than just an author. You sometimes need to be a photographer, a graphic artist, a researcher, an editor, a publicist, a public relations director, and an accountant, as well as about 100 other different positions not mentioned. Because we are also Internet dependent, social media sites can make us feel inadequate in the resources we provide, the amount we have for sale, or the publicity tactics we use to promote resources. There is always someone out there making prettier resources, filling up their online stores faster, or marketing stronger. It's hard to keep the perspective that everyone needs to work at their own pace, and you shouldn't compare yourself to others. I do have a

top-selling online store, but I often feel that I can't keep up. There is always something else to learn, and I also struggle with finding balance with my full-time job, my part-time business, my family, and self-care.

My advice to anyone who wants to start an online store is to make sure you are finding something unique that only you can offer. You need to solve a problem that someone is having and create something someone can't create for themselves. Your job is to be the expert, so don't follow what others before you have done. Success in this business doesn't happen overnight, and patience is necessary.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Laurie Mendoza

*Laurie P. Mendoza is the author of the lovely and educational children's picture book, *Super George and the Invisible Shield*. This book has such a wonderful message for kids and the most adorable illustrations—check it out at her website (<https://www.lauriepmendoza.com/>). She also has a successful Teachers Pay Teachers store and is a school counselor in Massachusetts. How does she do it, and where does she find the time and inspiration? Well, read on to find out!*

Having four kids meant money was always tight for us, but then we got divorced, and things got much, much worse. After I sold my jewelry and canceled our cable but still couldn't afford my kids' school lunches or gas to get to my school counseling job, I became officially desperate for cash.

A livery service hired me as a part-time driver. Weekdays, I'd get up at 3 a.m. to drive businesspeople or vacationing families to Logan Airport, then come home to wake the kids so we could all get to school before the second bell. Sometimes on weekends, I drove in and out of Boston as many as six times a day between 4 a.m. and

midnight. Cash tips paid for our groceries and the paychecks helped with our bills. I also needed the opportunity to practice adult social skills, as it had become an effort not to call people “dude” or remind them to use the bathroom before we got into the car. There were, however, big drawbacks: I was exhausted all the time, I didn’t get to spend much quality time with my kids, and—shamefully—I was often resentful of my passengers’ ability to get away.

I stuck with it because I thought I had no choice. Then when I’d been driving for about three years, the owner sold the livery business. It happened the same week my divorce became final, and my decrepit minivan spontaneously burst into flames in my driveway. I figured the universe was trying to tell me something.

Life at my school of 14 years had become difficult. I applied for and miraculously was offered another position. My new school was 40 minutes closer to home, the pay was slightly higher, and I loved the administrators.

With the move came a resurgence of my energy and passion for school counseling. I was thrilled; I hadn’t realized what a rut I’d gotten into professionally. I started my new job in April, and during my prep time (I had prep time!), I began browsing the web for new activities to do with these students. I discovered Pinterest and some excellent school counseling blogs. My head swam with all the great ideas out there.

That summer, for fun, I decided to create my own website. I’ve always enjoyed writing but didn’t relish the idea of a blog with its constant demand for new content. I wanted a place where I could store all the resources I was finding so I’d be able to locate them on the fly—like a virtual file cabinet for the organizationally-challenged—and maybe share a little of my experience with the two or three people who might inadvertently stumble across it. That was the start of The School Counseling Files (<http://bit.ly/scfiles2>).

In September, I dove into my new job in earnest. With daily preps and a much smaller caseload than I was used to, I had time to prepare for my sessions fully. I was able to plan entire 10-week groups and track down resources. If I couldn't find the exact thing I needed, I made it. I couldn't believe how much more effective I felt knowing weeks in advance what I was going to teach and how.

One of my new groups was for four highly anxious second graders. Since I love trying to find fun ways to connect kids to the material, I decided to use a ninja theme. I made "Worry Ninja" power cards so the kids would leave each week with a concrete reminder of the strategy or concept we'd discussed. They loved the cards, and so did their teachers and parents.

At Christmas, a friend from my old school district told me about how he was earning extra money with a virtual store on a website called Teachers Pay Teachers. I had never heard of it. When I got home, I looked it up and saw that it's a place where teachers can sell their self-created lesson plans and digital resources to other teachers. Out of curiosity, I searched the term "school counseling" and found that there were a handful of stores operated by school counselors. I thought, *"I bet I could do that,"* and signed up. Viola, my School Counseling Files TpT store (<http://bit.ly/tpt-scfiles>) was born!

Before new store owners can put their first product for sale on the site, they have to post a free product. I uploaded some very basic monster feeling cards I'd made for a Kindergarten class lesson. Then it was time for me to upload a product for sale. I thought my Worry Ninja power cards would be perfect, but I wanted them to look more professional. I bought some appealing ninja clip art and spent about eight hours jazzing up the power cards. I added a page with credits and terms of use, followed TpT's instructions for uploading a product, and hit "submit."

The best thing about TpT is that, as that television infomercial says, you “set it and forget it.” All you do is upload your digital resources to the site. TpT handles the purchases and buyer downloads for a small percentage of your earnings, then sends you a monthly check.

Twenty minutes after my Worry Ninja cards went live, I got an email from TpT saying I had made a sale!

That first month, February of 2014, I made \$14 from those power cards. As of this writing, four years later, I’ve sold almost 1,000 sets at \$3 each without doing anything more than updating the cover page once. Many of my resources have earned thousands of dollars. I’ve turned off the email notifications, but my phone makes a “cha-ching” sound whenever I make a sale. Sometimes it wakes me up in the middle of the night because I’m earning money while I’m sleeping. Amazing.

I have more than 50 products now, which sounds like a lot but isn’t. I only sell things that I’ve tried multiple times with my students and tweaked until they’re as good as I can make them. I’ve been working on an entire Worry Ninja curriculum for almost four years now and have yet to post it. I’d rather be proud of it than make quick sales.

At this point, there are dozens of school counselor stores on TpT, so there’s lots of competition. Even a few of the newest stores have more products than me. Some stores are genuinely excellent, deservedly earning many more followers than I have. But I can’t concern myself with other sellers or their number of products or followers. Practicing what I preach to my students, I try to only focus on the things I can control.

Once my TpT store was established, and I was able to feed my kids, I decided it was time to “feed” myself. I picked one thing I’d always wanted to do—creative writing—and took concrete steps to make it happen. I joined a local writer’s networking group. As an introvert, I

was petrified to walk into that first meeting not knowing anyone. But I forced myself. The people were very welcoming, and after I had gone for a few months in a row, I really began to look forward to every meeting.

Next, I committed to sharing my monthly writing goal with the group. Saying it out loud pushed me out of that “someday” mindset. Soon, a new member of the group told me she was forming a critique group and asked if I’d like to join. This was the next step in accountability, because for the critique group, I’d have to actually produce a polished piece every month for other people to read. One of the early pieces I submitted was the story that eventually became my first book, *Super George and the Invisible Shield* (<http://bit.ly/shield-book>). It’s about a boy who has a meltdown every time someone says something he doesn’t like. Like my TpT products, it was something I wrote to help my students.

I made many edits to polish the manuscript. Once I was satisfied with it, I talked to a friend who had self-published a picture book. She helped me create a general outline of steps I’d have to take to self-publish *Super George and the Invisible Shield*. I’d determined that self-publishing was the route I wanted to go for two primary reasons: 1) traditionally-published picture books are almost always under 1,000 words and are aimed at readers age 3-6, and *Super George* didn’t meet either of those criteria; and 2) even if it were accepted by a traditional publisher, *Super George* wouldn’t be released into the world for a couple of years, and I’m not that patient. A third reason I don’t normally acknowledge publicly is that I’m a total control freak and wanted to have full oversight over every aspect of the process.

So, I went online and Googled like a maniac to figure out everything I’d need to do and in what order. It was a lot like putting a hundred-tentacled octopus to bed, because each time I added a task to my list, it would turn out that there were three other things I’d

have to do before I could tackle it. I don't have the space here to give you all the details, but here are a few of the biggest: find an illustrator, locate a book designer, write contracts, launch a Kickstarter campaign, ask "influencers" for blurbs, establish a publishing entity, buy ISBN numbers, set up new bank and PayPal accounts, and create an author website. It was a lot, but it was also stimulating and fun. And the second book will be a whole lot easier now that I have "people" and sort of know what I'm doing.

You can see how one creative endeavor has led to the next and then the next. I continue to write regularly. A story I wrote for my *Worry Ninjas* group has been accepted by *Spider Magazine*. That will probably be my next picture book, though I have another manuscript ready to go too. I'm also two-thirds of the way through a draft of a middle-grade novel. I'm not making much money yet as an author, but my goal is to be established and regularly earning from my writing by the time I retire.

Time is always in short supply, but I feel energized by the creative process. I've learned about publishing, graphic design, and bookkeeping. I've met amazing people in the school counseling and children's literature worlds, all of whom are unfailingly generous. I've done author appearances where students tell me that, like Super George, they're trying not to let others steal their power. I'm able to send my stories and resources out into the world to see if they might help other kids—perhaps thousands of other kids—I'll never meet.

I'm sometimes stumped now when someone asks me, "*What do you do?*" I'm a school counselor, yes, but I'm also a website owner, a counselor-entrepreneur, an author, and a publisher. The connective tissue is that everything I do is in the service of helping kids. On my business card, I call myself a "Kid Whisperer," figuring that about covers it.

My livery service job benefitted me financially, but the second and third jobs I've carved out for myself do that and so much more. If any

of it ever gets to be something I dread or even just another thing I don't feel like doing, then I'll stop. In the meantime, I'm making extra money doing something I love that makes children's lives a little better. I may never be free of my money worries, but it's a hell of an upgrade from driving to the airport at 3 a.m.

Thoughts about Being an Author

School Counselors are a small market, approximately 100,000 in the entire United States. Even if you were to reach 5 percent of the whole market, you are not going to become wealthy with your book royalties. People who write books to help school counselors typically don't expect to become rich or retire early. However, you can do well enough to put a nice down payment on that new car you've been eyeballing or cover a big family vacation for the year. Also, writing a book can help your credibility when doing speaking engagements, workshops, and/or keynote addresses. Being "author of . . ." can help you get an edge when approaching school districts, state school counseling associations, or other groups having professional events. Having a book can also help your chances of getting on that morning television show interview or writing a column in a national magazine. So, don't underestimate the power of being "author of . . ."

Another point we want to make is that if you work on writing a book, there is also a good chance that you will generate extra content while doing the research or writing certain sections. This material can sometimes help with the development of a new project, perhaps even another book. This is why you will often see authors "get on a roll" with writing after their first successful publication. With experience, writing articles, books, columns, and related activities tends to get more comfortable. In addition to extra content, you might also be inspired by new ideas and projects generated by your current project. You've probably had this experience before. Have you ever landed on a small home improvement idea and, before you know

it, you are renovating the entire room? It's kind of like that. Expect that new ideas and new knowledge will come along the way. Try not to allow these to distract you from your current project. Instead, be ready to write down your new ideas to go back to later. If you find articles or other content that you might use in the future, put those in a folder on your computer to revisit then.

Writing a book is challenging; it's far easier to quit than to finish. You will have to find your own writing process; one that works for you and keeps you going over the long haul. There exists some conventional wisdom among successful authors for being effective and efficient. Read on for a few of their thoughtful suggestions.

Get in Your Space

There are two parts to this one. First, you should probably establish a physical space that is conducive to researching and writing. This space might be set up to reduce the risks of distractions, have good lighting, and be extra comfortable. When others see you in that space, they know not to disturb you. This could be a space at your home, the corner table at Starbucks, or the local library. Being in this space should allow you to get into the "writing zone."

This leads us to the second part of this tip, getting into your writing "head space." Picture yourself deep into your thoughts, typing away, words pouring onto your screen. You are living in the moment, utterly absorbed in the present activity. Time seems to fall away. You are tired, but you barely notice. According to positive psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997), what you are experiencing at that moment is known as *flow*, a state of complete immersion in an activity. He describes the mental state of flow as "*being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is*

involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost" (Chafe, 1994; Geirland, 1996).

One way that you can achieve flow or "get in the zone" is to save editing until later. That is, write without judgment first then go back and edit for grammar, style, usage, content, etc. later. Contrary to what we suggested earlier, you may not want to worry about perfectly including your references at first. If you choose not to use a bibliographic manager, you could leave a placeholder for a reference and then go back and insert all the full references all at once. You'll have to figure out what works best for you.

Know Your Tools

Before you dive in, decide what tools will work best for you. For example, will you use Microsoft Word, Google Docs, or Scrivener? Some authors use software that is designed to help with distraction-free writing sessions. These include:

- WriteRoom (<http://www.hogbaysoftware.com/products/writeroom>)
- Writer.app (<http://supertart.com/qisoftware/Writer.html>)
- FocusWriter (<https://gottcode.org/focuswriter/>)
- Writer for iPad (<https://ia.net/writer/blog/writer-for-ipad>)
- Dark Room (<http://jjafuller.com/dark-room>).

Will you use a bibliographic manager? If so, which one? How will you store, organize, and easily access the research that you do? Will you use an information organizer such as Google Keep, Microsoft OneNote, or Evernote? Or will you just create folders on your computer and drag stuff in, just like a filing cabinet system?

Small Bites

You may have heard of the proverb, "*How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.*" This is perfect for how to move forward with a

large writing project. Instead of thinking about having to write 250–300 pages, look at the project as a puzzle. Every day or two, you find and put more pieces together. Each piece makes the puzzle picture clearer (and more exciting). Often, the puzzle is not exactly what you intended or expected, but better. If you did one to two paragraphs a day, your book could be finished within ten months. This is the same as tackling one chapter a month. The key is keeping a consistent and sustained pace, a disciplined writing schedule. Writing must be an appointment in your calendar that you make with yourself and your developing book. This is also where you may have to give up or delay that new Netflix series that everyone’s talking about and that you’ve been wanting to watch. Nobody cares about the book that you almost wrote.

Write for the Reader

Writing a book is like doing a classroom lesson or giving a workshop. The lesson will resonate when it is relevant, clear, fun to engage in, and practical. You can’t make that happen if you truly don’t understand the needs and context of who you are working for. Your readers should connect with your book because it helps them fulfill a need, solve a problem, or live a more enjoyable life. Novelists and fiction writers do the same thing. In this case, the need may not be to do something better but to have fun while enjoying a fantastic story and to connect with others who are doing the same. Having others objectively and critically read your book and provide honest feedback is an important step before finally publishing your work.

Finally, while writing for publication, we hope you enjoy every moment of this adventure—even the challenging ones. We all have them, and they do make the end product so much sweeter!

CHAPTER 5

PUBLIC SPEAKING

"What I've learned is that if you really want to be successful at something, you'll find that you put the time in. You won't just ask somebody if it's a good idea, you'll go figure out if it's a good idea."

Mark Cuban, *Shark Tank*

The job of a professional speaker requires one to present information to large groups of professionals. Working as a speaker means creating powerful presentations that take time and practice to prepare. Fortunately, school counselors, as members of the educational community, have a steep advantage here because good teaching is good presenting! The best public speakers use teaching strategies such as cooperative learning, reflection, and participant engagement with their audiences. Effective speakers deliver workshops that help their participants to do something better or different—not after hundreds of hours of practice but right away. Incidentally, the bulk of the work in being an effective speaker is not in the presentation performance but rather in the many hours of preparation work leading up to the presentation (Crowley, 2015).

Side Hustle Spotlight: Ernest Cox

Ernest Cox is a former high school counselor turned university counselor educator. He also spent some time as a director of counseling for a large school district in Central Texas where he led the charge for a great deal of school counseling advocacy and leadership. From these experiences, Ernest eventually became a sought-after speaker and now school counseling consultant side hustler! Find him through his LinkedIn profile (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ernest-cox-jr-ph-d-ncc-csc-97541474/>) if you need some tips on advocacy or a dynamic speaker at your next event! I (Stephanie) had the opportunity to interview Ernest; here is what he had to say . . .

Ernest is currently a professor in Counselor Education at Texas A&M University-San Antonio and was formerly a high school counselor and director of counseling with Judson Independent School District in San Antonio, Texas. His passion is helping others develop a comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP), as well as leadership and advocacy in school counseling. This passion led him to start presenting on these topics which, in turn, gained the attention of state professional organizations who recruited him to speak on behalf of school counselors at conferences and legislative events. Dr. Cox eventually turned these opportunities into a lucrative public speaking side hustle that included speaking events at the Austin Capitol, on talk shows, at professional development events, and on radio programs. Two years ago, he started writing journal articles on school counselor leadership, advocacy, and comprehensive school counseling programs. All his public speaking side work, as well as his writing, then led him into consulting. His current consultation side hustle mainly involves helping school

systems set up CSCPs; he begins with evaluating a district's current counseling program and then works with the counselor coordinator and district leadership team to create a strategic plan for developing a CSCP. As a consultant, he guides the school district throughout the year as they implement their strategic plan.

Ernest's motivation for his side hustle began many years ago with his parents who are also educators. They were continually exposing him to teaching and professional development in his formative years. About nine years ago, his "Aha" moment came during a conference presentation he was giving on advocacy through data! So many of the conference participants wanted his information and knowledge that he realized public speaking was a platform to share his experiences and help others improve the school counseling profession.

The core beliefs on which Ernest builds his public speaking/consulting side work are the same that he has in school counseling. Authenticity and ethical choices are the values that inform his side work, as well as his main job of being a university counselor educator and former school counselor. He believes wholeheartedly in staying true to his word as well as helping others—both of which are the cornerstones of his counselor educator and consulting practices. Concerning specific counseling skills that he transferred from his school counseling days to his side work now as a consultant—he lists caring, listening, and honesty as the most crucial skills of both his side and main jobs.

Ernest let us know that there are many benefits and challenges to share about doing a speaking and consultation side hustle. He talks about the powerful impact of spreading the word and sharing expertise for developing an effective and comprehensive school counseling program. He fondly reminisces about various stories of school counselors who told him that he touched their lives by helping them create a better professional environment for themselves. Cox highlights one story where an assistant principal sent his entire

counseling staff to one of his speaking engagements about five years ago. The lead school counselor later told him that he'd re-energized her to be a school counselor, rather than a guidance counselor. Two years later, the school had gone from a school counseling program with 40 percent of their time spent on direct counseling activities with students to 85 percent! Flash forward a few years, and this same school is now presenting on their CSCP and leading the way for all of their neighboring schools to develop their own CSCPs.

Alternately, the challenges of blazing trails in your side hustle might not make everyone happy. Cox shares a story of being called into his principal's office one week into the school year during his first year of being a high school counselor! His principal was concerned that the school counseling team of nine was complaining about how Ernest was not doing enough schedule changing. He gently and professionally showed his principal the school counseling model that the Texas Education Agency had mandated for public schools and explained that he was trying to follow it rather than doing exactly what his team of nine was doing, many of which were non-counseling duties. All's well that ends well since Ernest ended up becoming the counselor coordinator for that school district just a few years later! However, he chuckles a little as he mentions that being ethical and moving the school counseling profession forward doesn't always make the advocate hustler popular.

Of course, with all the experience and knowledge that Ernest has gained over the years, he has some side hustle advice to share! He notes that the logistics of working in a school and balancing side work can be tough and that there is never quite enough time. However, he says jump in and don't wait to start your side work if you are passionate about it! Don't listen to your self-doubt and carve out your own little niche of time to do your side work any way you can. Finally, he encourages us to "get out there and share what works

for you; don't keep your expertise to yourself, because we all need it!"

The Public Speaking Side Hustle

Being a successful public speaker requires a specific set of skills and abilities including an expert-level understanding about your topic, attention to details, and an ability to engage your audience (including the use of learning activities and a bit of appropriate humor). Plus, a bit of passion and charisma doesn't hurt—it always helps if people are drawn to you and want to hear what you have to say! Now we'll detail some aspects of public speaking that distinguish the amateurs from the side hustle pros, elements such as practicing, knowing your audience, appropriately using multimedia tools, and "staying under your umbrella."

First, let's get our terminology aligned. There are various types of public speaking that require a bit of different preparation and delivery. For example, some people use the terms presentation and workshop interchangeably, although they are different:

- A **presentation** is typically a demonstration or display of a product or idea. In this case, the presenter is probably doing most of the "work" while the audience is doing the active listening. Presentations work best when the goal is to understand and explain concepts rather than helping audience members *do* something better (i.e., skills, behaviors).
- **Workshops** tend to be more "hands-on," focused on skill building. So, it makes sense that workshops are usually more interactive, intense, and include lots of learning activities as well as information. Workshops are generally longer, a full day or more, because skill building requires practice and demonstration.

- **Seminars** usually involve small numbers of people who informally sit around a table, discuss, take notes, and learn from each other (recall your graduate school seminars).
- A **webinar** is essentially a seminar conducted online, over the Web. Given the latest technology and interactive tools, webinars can also be viewed as a hybrid of presentation and workshop. Although not physically in the room, webinar participants can discuss, take polls, comment, and even be “handed the microphone” if a presenter allows it.
- **Round-table discussions** are meetings of peers to exchange thoughts and opinions on a particular topic, usually regarding policy, practice, or procedures. There are a limited number of participants who sit at a round table so that each one can face all the others.

Also, we need to make sure we understand the different formats for where you may speak:

- **Conferences** are meetings where people formally “confer.” Conferences have a specific theme or focus. You can go to a professional conference, a trade conference, or business conference. You can have a phone conference or attend the American School Counselor Association annual conference with over 3,200 school counselors connecting face to face and online.
- A **convention** is where a formal body (professional association, fraternity, sorority, or political party) goes to “convene” to conduct business or deal with issues. Usually, members, representatives, or delegates attend conventions as representatives of a larger whole.
- An **assembly** is a group of people gathered together in one place for a common purpose. Different than a meeting,

assemblies are usually much larger and more restricted, requiring certain membership (e.g., student assembly).

- **Pre-Conference** meetings are workshops given right before a conference begins. They are typically longer (i.e., three hours or multiple days), more specialized, intense, and cost extra. For example, a school counselor association may offer a half day or full day pre-conference workshop in play counseling, crisis response, or technology use, for example.
- A **Keynote address** or speech is commonly given at a conference. The keynote speaker is usually chosen because of his or her eminent reputation in the related field, and their presence is meant to attract more people to attend the conference.
- A conference will have many different **content sessions**, sometimes organized by focus or “tracks,” limited in time (usually 60 minutes), with clear learning outcomes. Content sessions are typically peer-reviewed and selected. This means that, as a speaker, you will need to propose a content session, hope that it is deemed fitting, and chosen for the conference program.
- A **Panel presentation** is one in which a small group of people interact and present differing viewpoints on a topic. The purpose of a panel presentation is to be able to hear a wide range of perspectives on a given issue and hear support and reasons for those positions from a group of experts. Panel members are typically invited. Or you might propose a panel presentation as part of a conference program proposal. In this case, you would identify and ask the panel presenters as part of the proposal process and serve as the panel moderator. Often, panel presentation members know each other, or at least know each other’s work well as they are part of a small “club,” so to speak.

If speaking is your side hustle, you may seek out conferences and offer to provide a keynote address, content sessions, and/or a pre-conference workshop. In fact, many speakers offer discounted packages when you include several of these offerings. After you are doing this for a while and start to get recognized as a desirable prospect, you might be invited via a “Request for Proposal” or RFP. Sometimes, organizations will select a handful of speakers, review what they have to offer, and then decide. Your RFP may be more attractive if you provide a package at a competitive rate.

Alright, now let’s return to what makes for a desirable speaker or consultant.

Knowing Your Audience

Don't assume the audience is like you. With any group, you should do some homework to see how your topic is (or is not) being addressed. Are there any cultural or geographic considerations? For example, when I (Russ) conduct cyberbullying presentations, I always spend some time researching the district I’m going to by checking the news to see if there have been any recent incidents that have prompted me going there. I also check to see what the district and school’s policies are, especially with reporting cyberbullying so I can reinforce that (or make suggestions to leadership about improving it). The same is true for any new laws that have been passed for dealing with cyberbullying in that state. I also encourage the leadership to review my PowerPoint (available online) to make sure that all my examples are appropriate. I have had one or two schools ask me not to include an example that they believed would cause “a stir,” and I’ve also had a few ask me to do more in certain areas (e.g., sexting) when I was being too conservative.

Quick story that happened to me (Russ) early in my career, over 20 years ago. I can look back and laugh at the experience today, but it was horrifying at the time. I was invited to be a featured speaker

at a conference which was headed by a well-known figure in the counseling profession. My presentation focused on “*Using Technology to Enhance Guidance Programs*.” I gave examples of the different ways that school counselors were using technology to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively, especially using the newest, most powerful, and emerging technology at the time—the World Wide Web. Toward the end, I started looking at future potentials and addressed the idea of doing “cybercounseling,” or counseling at a distance. This was a shiny new term during that time, a term that was getting a lot of traction. In fact, cybercounseling was being used as if it really existed, when in fact, it did *not* yet exist. I explained that the current counseling theories and approaches had not been tested in an online environment and the assumption that doing counseling online would be the same as doing it face to face was a premature assumption. I went so far as sharing the grave ethical and legal concerns I had surrounding the attempt to do counseling at a distance.

To my surprise, the audience clapped and cheered more than I could have ever anticipated. I got accolades and positive feedback from them even after my presentation was finished. I thought to myself, “*I hit it out of the park*” and left satisfied and encouraged. I believed I was on the right track and still do to this day. However, two weeks after that conference, I got a formal letter from the organization’s leadership, the very people who invited (and paid) me to give the presentation, which was much less flattering. They wrote things like, “How dare you?” and proceeded to let me know how disappointed and astonished they were about that part of the presentation. I was confused and very concerned. I retraced my steps and looked over all my materials again to figure out the rationale behind the lashing I received in that letter. And then, there it was. Turns out, the entire theme of the conference was about

cybercounseling. They viewed my presentation as a public “dressing down” of what they were trying to promote. Big lesson learned.

Another aspect of knowing your audience includes your language and assumptions about understanding. Make sure to use words and phrases your audience understands and especially avoid jargon. A story may resonate much better with other school counselors as compared to, say, school board members or parents who may be dealing with your topic from a different perspective. There is nothing more insulting than to present basic information to a highly knowledgeable audience. Conversely, a novice audience may get very frustrated with a speaker who speaks “over their heads.” *Toastmasters International*, a nonprofit educational organization that teaches public speaking and leadership skills, suggests that, if possible, the speaker greet people at the door and ask questions to ascertain their level of knowledge and expectations of the audience. You'll also make a few friends in the beginning, and it's always nice to have friends in the room (Ricci, 2012).

Practice

Have you ever watched someone give a talk with great precision, timing, and elegance and you said to yourself, “*I wish I could do that!*” Understand that the person you are watching was at one time probably saying the same thing to themselves before they put in hours upon hours of practice to make it look polished, casual, and effortless. Like playing a musical instrument or playing professional sports, ongoing practice, with feedback, is essential for becoming a professional speaker. As we mentioned earlier, most people tend to underestimate the work it takes to become an expert in any given area and overestimate their own levels of expertise. In the case of public speaking, you must have expertise in both the content and the delivery. It's kind of like being an excellent teacher. You need to know

your subject matter, and you need to connect with students in a way that motivates them to learn and also become competent.

One of the best places to start is your local school or district. Get some practice giving professional development workshops to your staff or district-wide colleagues as they will be more forgiving of your rookie mistakes since they already like and respect you as the hard-working school counselor that they know and love. Obviously, since you are an employee of this organization, you will probably not be paid extra for doing these workshops. Your payment will come in the form of experience and advancement toward your speaking side hustle.

To start off at this local level, go to your principal, school counselor coordinator, director of curriculum and instruction, or whoever oversees campus or district professional development and ask them to put you on the presentation list. Have them give you a topic they want you to present on (that you are experienced in and knowledgeable about) or decide on your own workshop topic if you can. If you can pick your own topic, think of the questions that colleagues come to you about repeatedly and plan your presentation around this need. Alternately, you can choose a timely trending topic that is the educational or counseling buzzword at the time and fashion your presentation on this topic.

You might also contact your local school counselor education program to become a guest speaker in one of the graduate courses. Professors are usually very open and welcoming to this idea because having you come in brings a sense of reality and practicality to the current focus. I (Russ) love to have local school counselors come into my class to informally discuss the “whats, hows, and so whats” of various aspects of the school counselor’s duties as a part of an overall school counseling program. I also love to bring in representatives of RAMP-recognized school counseling programs to talk about the process and benefits from their own personal perspectives. These

presentations are inspirational as well as helpful. You can also do this from a distance via Microsoft Skype, Zoom, Adobe Connect, or other online conferencing platforms. A third opportunity is to offer a webinar for your state school counseling association or even ASCA. A nice feature of doing webinars is that they can be recorded and replayed in the future, offering you even greater exposure of your work. All of this is excellent practice and can help you polish both your content and delivery over time.

Practically speaking, if you are new at this, it is best to start with short, lecture-style workshops that include just one learning activity. Focus on the parts, and it won't be so overwhelming:

- **Introduction.** Very briefly let them know who you are and “how you got here.” Convey how you, like others, have been dealing with a challenge in your work or life. You might also begin by surveying your audience with a show of hands, perhaps by areas like “Who works at the _____ level?”, “Who has in the last month worked directly with a student who has experienced _____?”, or “How many of you have experienced _____?” By the end of your introduction, your members should start to understand what you will be covering and how they will get returns on their time investment in being with you. In fact, I (Russ) always like to begin by asking, “As a result of us working together today, what will you be able to understand and do better starting tomorrow?” (10 minutes)
- **Content.** Deliver knowledge, examples, resources, and different solutions to becoming more effective and efficient with overcoming a challenge. It always helps to convey support for your approach both from experience and the research. That is, if your approach is evidence-based, all the better. (35 minutes)

- **Experiential Learning.** Lead them through a brief exercise that helps them get started in practicing a new skill or more deeply understanding a concept. (10 minutes)
- **Closing.** Summarize what you have done and check for final thoughts or questions. Then, provide a challenge for the future, including reviewing any handouts, resources, or tools that you recommend. (5 minutes).

Another way you can practice is by taking yourself through a guided imagery. Visit the location of the talk before the meeting, if possible, to see how the room will be laid out and to make any requests for positioning the visual aid equipment. Then, visualize yourself giving the presentation in the room. Where will you stand? How will you advance your slides, from a podium, a stage, or from the floor? How will the sound and lighting be conducive to what you are doing? The nature of the venue will give you some ideas about how your activities will physically work.

If you feel like you need it, you might consider some next-level practice by using virtual reality (VR), a technology that immerses you in a simulated environment. The falling cost of VR equipment has made it accessible to the average consumer. For example, the Oculus Go, owned by Facebook, is now available for \$199 (see <https://amzn.to/2Q3w19e>). Together with the VirtualSpeech app (<http://bit.ly/vr-speech>), you can practice your presentation as if you really were on a stage and in front of an audience. With VirtualSpeech, you can upload your own presentation slides to appear in the virtual room with you. You'll see realistic virtual environments and avatars (audience members), experience real sounds and visual distractions, as well as receive speech analysis with real-time feedback on the pace of your voice, use of hesitation words, and more.

Once you feel comfortable with public speaking at districtwide or campus-wide workshops, it is time to start speaking at your state conferences. These will also be presentations that you provide free of charge as you gain valuable experience and exposure in the presentation world. Go to the website of your state conference to look for their presenter proposal submission form and fill it out to submit your proposal to present (see Appendix A for a sample proposal). If you don't see the submission form on their website, be sure to get on their email list so you are notified when they do a call for presenters. After a year or two of getting good feedback on your state presentations, you will be ready to submit a program proposal at the national level: the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

Speaking at the ASCA conference (or other similar national conferences) can be a very competitive but valuable step to making the jump into being a paid presenter. It is an annual conference where the leaders in the school counseling world come together to share their expertise. The feedback and exposure you will get from speaking at this conference will be invaluable.

After you have presented at the ASCA conference and earned favorable feedback (a 3.5 or better out of 4.0), it is time to consider taking your show on the road and charging a fee for your workshops. Speaking at conferences is a way for you to do your professional duty, to help train other counselors and students with relevant knowledge and skills, not for promoting yourself as a speaker. This is important. Hocking yourself or your materials is a big turnoff for participants and is a sure way of getting yourself blacklisted. However, what you can do is send people to your website to access handouts and other goodies, where they can also learn about hiring you for other events. Your website should make clear what you have to offer and how to contact you if someone wants to book you for their school district or organization.

The Power of Storytelling

Dr. Seuss, Barbara Jordan, J.K. Rowling, Winston Churchill, Martin Luther King, Stephen King, John F. Kennedy, Abraham Lincoln, and Maya Angelou: What do these people have in common? Each has told compelling stories that impacted people to act, to summon courage, to do the right thing, to lead, or to make a difference. Their stories resonated with listeners at the time and continue, even now, to shape our future. Storytelling is a familiar form of communication and has served humanity in different ways for a long time. Throughout history, people have connected, learned, shared, and lived through stories (Sabella & Tilman, 2017). Learning to tell stories to capture, direct, and sustain the attention of others is a crucial leadership skill. Storytelling is also a powerful framework for structuring and delivering a public talk. At a minimum, your talk should include a couple of stories or anecdotes to illustrate your important points. Here are a few tips that might help when developing and delivering your story:

- **Avoid reading from notes.** This is good advice in general when it comes to public speaking, although particularly important when telling a story. Your story should be one that is told from the heart, not read from a script. If you must, have a set of bullet points or trigger phrases off to the side that reminds you of which story to go with next.
- **Be brief and get to the point.** Telling a story is like telling a joke, you must quickly set up and get right to the punchline before it goes stale. Although we may not be going for the laugh, we want our stories to be memorable, shareable, and inspirational.
- **Have fun.** Throw in a couple of personal tidbits, an activity, or a graphic that will help you have fun with your audience

members, even if it only loosely connects to your topic or story.

- **Keep a story log.** It's much easier to find the right stories if you have a list to go to. If you have a personal or professional experience related to a talk that you give, and you believe it would make for a good story, write it down. Review your list before giving a talk and decide if there are one or more stories that would fit.
- **Don't make yourself the hero.** You can be a central figure, but the ultimate focus should be on people you know, lessons you've learned, or events you've witnessed. Whenever possible, you should endeavor to make a colleague, friend, or stakeholder the hero. To the contrary, the more you celebrate your own decisions or actions, the less likely your audience will connect with you and your message (Morgan, 2014).

When former First Lady Michelle Obama hosted the ASCA School Counselor of the Year recognition at the White House, she made sure to tell some very touching stories about how the recipients went above and beyond to help students overcome serious barriers to achievement and go on to achieve their dreams. Obama then made sure that we understood how these efforts contributed to more prominent initiatives to help kids with college and career readiness (Obama, 2016, 2017). Human brains are hardwired to understand the world through stories. Our stories help our audience better connect to how ordinary people are doing extraordinary things. Who is the unsung hero in your story? Is it the teacher who is helping her students better engage through solution-focused techniques? Is it the student who was empowered to stand up instead of standby when witnessing bullying? Or could it be the school counselor who helps kids who dream about going to college make it a reality? What's your story?

Don't Kill 'em with PowerPoint

Through his comic stand-up routine, Don McMillan exposed and made famous our prolific and pervasive misuse of PowerPoint. His routine was aptly named “*Death by PowerPoint*,” which you can still watch online at <https://vimeo.com/21601578> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpvgfmEU2Ck>. Don showed us how we bore people “to death” by using confusing graphics, slides with too much text, and by presenters whose idea of a good presentation is to read 40 slides out loud. *Death by PowerPoint* also involves incorporating every feature and display option that PowerPoint provides such as animation, transitions, different fonts, charts, shapes, colors/textures, images, and more. Although he did his routine over a decade ago, *Death by PowerPoint* is still a severe problem. The punchline to his act was that *Death by PowerPoint* can be avoided if the speaker uses the technology as a visual aid to enhance what is being said instead of relying on the technology to serve as the focus of the presentation (Whatis.com, 2013a).

Instead, build simple, visual slides. That is, make your slides more graphical and less wordy. For example, the average PowerPoint slide has 40 words. In the first three minutes of a presentation by Steve Jobs debuting the iPhone in 2007, he uses a grand total of 19 words (21 if you include dates). Those words were distributed across all his slides, about 12 of them (Gallo, 2012)! On the other hand, your presentation will be no good to participants that try to use the downloadable version later in their own work site if you have slides that have so little text or explanation that they can't remember what it was about. Slides that have a question mark or just list main topics like “causes” or “symptoms” are a pet peeve of many workshop participants because they don't do anyone any good once they get back to their campus and reference the presentation download. If you think it is helpful to the participant, use the notes section of

PowerPoint to provide extra information covered in your presentation that is not readily apparent on your slides.

During your presentation, use appropriate humor and engaging visuals like memes, photos, and comics in your slides. However, be careful to only show photos of people who have given permission and be careful to avoid copyright violations. Basically, any comic or visual that is created by another person/company needs to be cited in your presentation and sometimes requires express permission given to you by the creator (more on that later). I (Stephanie) try to avoid all this by generating my own memes, comics, and images with photos and drawings that I create myself. Two websites that are helpful in creating your own work are <https://makeameme.org/> and <https://www.makebeliefscomix.com/Comix>.

Another important rule of using PowerPoint is to avoid the use of gaudy transitions such as text fly-ins. These features may seem impressive at first but are distracting and get old quickly. If you must, use more subtle animations or transitions such as fade or morph (see <http://bit.ly/ppt-morph>).

Finally, use a consistent and straightforward design template. It is okay to vary the content presentation (i.e., bulleted list, graph, text and image) but be consistent with other elements such as font, colors, and background. You may even want to download a template from the Microsoft Office PowerPoint Templates site at <http://bit.ly/mstnow2> or a third party site such as <https://www.slidescarnival.com/category/free-templates>.

Delivery and Engagement

How you deliver information, interact with your audience, and have them interact with each other is where a school counselor can shine. Your group counseling skills will be invaluable here. Remember the basics:

- Connect with your audience on multiple levels including physical, mental, and emotional.
- In addition to working with one large group, when possible, mix it up. Move people into pairs, triads, small groups, and more creative formats such as the inner-outer circle, fishbowl, panel, and role-plays to name a few.
- Pay attention to the energy level and shift it up or down as needed by changing the focus, the activity, or both. So for example, to increase the energy level in the room, move from lecturing to an activity such as role-playing a scenario, participating in an interactive poll, or a quick game of “Go to Your Corner” as part of a values clarification exercise (see <http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/four-corners>).

Make sure you intersperse your lecture material with pair work or application activities every 10–15 minutes. People can only sit and listen to you talk for so long. At the end of every objective, you might have participants share with each other and then with the large group, “. . . *one thing you’d like to do related to _____ when you get back to your campus.*” It can be challenging to find time to fit in a group application activity in a one-hour presentation, but if you can, it’s a nice way to break up the lecture. Keep in mind, however, that balance is vital. The participants are coming to learn from you, not their peers sitting next to them. You are the expert, and they want to hear from you. I’ve (Stephanie) seen lots of participants gather up their stuff and leave in frustration because of too much audience participation rather than best practice, useful information shared by the presenter.

You might also include short video clips every 15 minutes or so, as an excellent way to give your audience a break from having to listen to your voice non-stop. Because you may or may not have Wi-Fi

access, consider downloading any videos you need. 4K Video Downloader (<https://www.4kdownload.com/>) allows you to download videos, playlists, channels, and subtitles from YouTube, Facebook, Vimeo, and other video sites in high quality. When downloading anything, remember to have good malware and antivirus software running. Also, even though you are showing the video from your computer, you should still reference it and let people know where they can see it and show it when they return.

Make the presentation available to participants electronically, such as with a downloadable PDF, Google Docs link, or via email. Additionally, provide a one-page paper handout with links to all your resources and contact information if they need it later. Unless you are presenting on computer-based technology, there are always workshop participants who still want paper and refuse to go green. Also, having a handout gives you a great backup presentation option if something goes wrong and all your technology fails in your presentation so you can't show and present from your PowerPoint or other devices. Consider using a URL shortener to reduce the risk of broken links. Bitly (<https://bitly.com/>) is a free service (with premium options) that works nicely because you can customize your links (e.g., <http://bit.ly/help2relax>), and it provides you with analytics. You can see how many people clicked on your link after your presentation is over and for longer periods just by putting a plus sign (+) after the link address. This will give you a good sense of which of your handouts is helpful or not and which are worthy of continued development.

If your workshop or presentation content is updated often (e.g., focusing on technology or other quickly changing areas), you might want to save your PDFs in the cloud. One of the best cloud storage services for this purpose is Dropbox (<https://www.dropbox.com>). Open your document, make updates, then save as a PDF overwriting the old PDF in a folder that automatically uploads to Dropbox. Your

Bitly URL will always point to the same file, which means that the next person that downloads your handout will get the most recent version.

After you think you are ready to deliver your presentation, do a practice run of it. As you practice, you will notice areas that don't flow or mistakes that need to be corrected. Make those revisions, and then do another practice run to time it—make sure it fits into the time slot that you have. Always have more than you need in case you need it. For example, have a few activities ready to go if your time is running long or if the electricity goes out. It is also a good idea to have a colleague or friend watch you present, help you proof your slides, check for typos and give you feedback. Once you feel your presentation is ready to go, prep all the presentation materials that you will need. For example, I (Stephanie) like to pass out actual hard copies of some of the materials I discuss during the workshop, such as picture books I use or an organizational binder example. My participants always mention these as a plus in their evaluations of my presentations. To be super fresh and ready for your presentation, do a practice run-through one more time the night before or the morning of your performance so you are completely comfortable and familiar with all aspects of it.

On the day of your presentation, dress up—think business formal, wear a watch to keep yourself on time, and ask someone to take some pictures of you presenting. You will be able to use these pictures to promote and market your presentations on your website one day when you are ready to launch your public speaking side hustle. Do a sound check before you begin; make sure that someone in the back can easily hear you while speaking naturally. During your presentation, move around occasionally, without pacing, so you are not standing in the same spot for 60 minutes and perceived as “stiff.”

After your presentation, find a way to collect some participant evaluations to get feedback on how you can revise your presentation and style for future improvements. Consider using Google Forms or Kahoot to collect data that participants can provide from their phones or other devices (e.g., <http://bit.ly/feedback4you>). Most venues will have an evaluation for participants to complete, so be sure to ask for a copy of these so you can reflect on them. Also, immediately after your presentation, while it is still fresh in your mind, jot some notes about what you would like to do differently in your next presentation.

Other Thoughts about a Public Speaking Side Hustle

As you can see, as with any side hustle, there is a great deal of work that goes on behind the scenes. An effective public speaker makes it look easy, leaving participants with the illusion that it's just natural talent; it's not. Here are a few other considerations for becoming an effective public speaker:

Staying Under Your Umbrella

I (Russ) first learned of this idea when I attended training to learn how to give media interviews better many years ago. When a reporter tries to get you to say something controversial or asks a question that takes you into territory that you are not familiar with, it's easy to take the bait and go out into stormy weather. Staying under your umbrella means staying focused on your talking points. Workshop participants might attempt to get you, the presenter, out from under your umbrella. During these times, it's important to acknowledge the importance of their question, admit that you don't know, and that what they are asking about is something you can investigate further. You can also say, *"I'm not sure about that, but here is what I do know, . . ."* While speaking, it's too easy to get on your own tangents and end up saying things you'll later regret. As much as possible, your content should be planned, and you should stick with the plan.

Speaking Anxiety

You will never achieve a 100 percent approval rate, no matter how good you are. Inevitably, there will always be one or more participants who will be nodding off or show signs of being uninterested. Don't focus too much on them. Instead, focus on the participants that are smiling and nodding in the affirmative. Otherwise, you can quickly open the floodgates of negative thoughts; thoughts like *"Oh my, I'm bombing!"* or *"This is not going well!"* which will likely lead to elevated fear and anxiety.

When this happens, your fears are more likely to come true. The audience will notice that you are nervous and hesitant. They will become nervous, and the vicious cycle begins. Stay positive, focused, and upbeat. Should you find yourself caught in an anxious moment and begin to lose your train of thought, or worse, find yourself paralyzed in your own fear, do something different. This can happen to anyone at any level.

A prolific and well-known speaker that I (Russ) admire told me a story one time about how this unexpectedly happened to her. She paused, gave the participants a quick activity to do for a few minutes while she stepped outside to recover with deep breaths and change of mindset. When she returned, she was able to continue. The audience would never know what just transpired. If anything, they probably thought she had to go to the bathroom. As the saying goes, *"If you are going through hell, keep going, don't stop; it's not a place you want to be."*

Be Ready for Murphy's Law

Murphy's law is an adage that is typically stated as: *"Anything that can go wrong will go wrong"* (Whatis.com, 2018). In public speaking, you need to outfit your "road warrior" bag with all your backup devices. No matter how much you request equipment from the

organization, you still never know what you are going to get when you get there. Here are a few items to have ready:

- **Adapters.** Make sure your laptop will be able to connect to any projector using cables including both VGA and HDMI.
- **Backup USB.** Have your presentation ready and working on a USB drive in case you can't use your own laptop for any reason.
- **Extra AC Adapter.** Consider keeping an extra laptop charger in your suitcase as well as your laptop bag so you won't miss a beat if your primary charger goes missing.
- **First Aid.** Paper cuts and other unforeseen issues do come up. Have a small first aid kit for yourself. You might also include aspirin and an anti-diarrheal product (e.g., IMODIUM®) in case you ate something you shouldn't have while on the road.
- **Overnight items.** If you should get stuck at an airport and need to spend the night, be ready with extra items such as toothpaste, toothbrush, hairbrush, and underwear. Know that, if you ask nicely, the airline can provide an overnight bag for you with these items.
- **Portable Speakers.** Sometimes, the room in which you are speaking does not have a way to connect sound coming from your laptop. If you have audio or video clips, you can always move your microphone to your laptop speaker when needed although this can become cumbersome. Instead, have a portable speaker charged up and ready to go. These little speakers have become quite small and yet powerful and only run about \$20 (e.g., <https://amzn.to/2Sq4TCW>).
- **Remote Clicker.** Don't rely on the venue to provide a presentation "clicker" or remote. Have one ready that comfortably fits in your palm, has a laser pointer, and works at a reasonable range (50 or more feet) so you can move

around the room if necessary. For a few more dollars, you can purchase one that has a timer on it which starts to vibrate in your hand when you are five or so minutes from your ending time. This is the one I (Russ) use: <https://amzn.to/2DbpFCo>.

- **Tissues.** Sometimes you may get the sniffles in the middle of a presentation. Have some travel tissues ready and take care of it while showing a video clip or doing an activity.
- **Wi-Fi Hotspot.** If you must have Internet, make sure to be ready to connect to your smartphone as a Wi-Fi hotspot in case the venue's Internet is not available or working well.

In conclusion, having a public speaking side hustle usually involves a few years of unpaid hard work to master your craft. However, once you prove yourself and start getting hired as a speaker, the presentation business can be lucrative. And more importantly, your reach and influence will be incredibly exponential as you share your expertise with participants. Think of it: you will be inspiring them to go forth and change hundreds of lives with your best practice strategies!

CHAPTER 6

DEVELOPING TOOLS

“Every problem can be solved as long as they use common sense and apply the right research and techniques.”

Daymond John, *Shark Tank*

You have probably heard the adage, “*You need the right tool for the right job.*” It’s true. All professionals need special tools to get their jobs done and get it done right. If you fix or build things for a living, you know this well. For instance, a carpenter may use a variety of tools throughout the day, given a particular project, which includes tools like power jointer, thickness planer, hand saws, router, different router bits, jigsaw, square, laser leveler, rasps, orbit sander, clamps, puttering bench, and many more. Having the right tools and knowing how to use them helps the professional do an expert job with brilliant outcomes.

Outside of electronic devices (e.g., laptop computers), productivity software, and learning materials, school counselors don’t have very many specialized tools that we use. In fact, you may remember your graduate school professor saying, “*In school counseling, you are the tool. Your knowledge, skills, and personality (i.e., who you are) are the tools that will help you to help kids succeed and even change lives. You are the agent of change.*” This is true. If you provide services more than a

product, your expertise is your best and most special tool. However, as we shall see later in the book, some school counseling professionals are developing special tools that help school counselors do their jobs more effectively and efficiently. In many cases, these tools are adaptations of already existing tools (AutoCTG or T.E.A.R.S.), repurposed for helping the school counselor better complete unique tasks. In other cases, the tool was built from the ground up and can perform a whole suite of functions just for the school counselor (School Counselor Central).

A few “*counselorpreneurs*” recognized that school counselors can be more effective and efficient if they had better, more custom tools. In addition to adapting existing tools, some counselors have created tools that were not previously available. Continue on to read about such tools including an online application for managing your school counseling program, an online workshop, a Microsoft Excel add-in for calculating school counselor time on task, and a download that helps you to create a “Closing the Gap” report automatically.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Deborah Hardy

Dr. Deborah Hardy is a former school counselor and district supervisor. She is the founder of two powerhouse counseling companies: School Counselor Central and GuidED. You can connect with Deb on LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborah-hardy-edd-61002b9/>), her Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/SchoolCounselorCentral>), or her website at <https://www.guidedconsult.com/>. Read on for her fantastic story of how she turned her side hustle into a successful full-time business.

I don’t consider my additional work through School Counselor Central or at GuidED as an extra job. I describe it as a passionate

journey through different experiences that keep enhancing my creativity.

I grew up being a problem solver and an innovator. With each situation or learned idea, I would pause and think of how everyone could benefit from the information I obtained. I began with the state school counseling model. As the former NYSSCA (New York State School Counselor Association) President, I co-authored the state's comprehensive model as well as the accompanying activity books. I recall sitting with a team of school counselor leaders aligning every detail to the New York State Department of Education's standards and regulations. I had already attended several workshops and trainings, so now it was time to put it into action for NY State.

As we finalized the document, I asked, *"Now what? What would be the barrier that school counselors would encounter?"* I tried following the model for myself and realized that I was on information overload with too many files and papers. If I was struggling, then my colleagues would probably struggle too. If only there was a tool available that could make it easier to develop, manage, deliver, and be accountable for a comprehensive school counseling program. There wasn't, so I invested in creating School Counselor Central, a web-based program that maintains a school's comprehensive model components in one location. It was innovative and working well. I built it for my own use, but it soon grew to be essential for many school counselors with whom I worked. From there, I knew I should expand to all school counselors and their schools.

Setting up this side business was a learning experience. First, the marketing strategies . . . I created the Facebook page which went from 70 members to currently over 36,000. I saw that school counselors were "hungry" for knowledge and professional development. Some school counselors were finding it more challenging to attend association conferences as school budgets were

declining in supporting the professionals. The Facebook page was a source of providing news, crafts, and other school counselor lessons.

All this was done behind the scenes. Once I was able to travel, then I went to many state and national school counseling associations exhibiting the product. It turned out that while attendees learned about School Counselor Central, I learned more and more about the needs of professional colleagues.

With this new information, I began providing free webinars on topics related to the comprehensive model or new concepts. I also reached out to connections I had and delivered online presentations on different careers. If school counselors could not make it to professional development, then using technology to deliver information, record it, and share was the new way to learn! I used Eventbrite.com to register participants and collect fees and gotowebinar.com to deliver the webinars.

I had 24 years of experience as a school counselor and wanted to share what I had done. The best way was through webinars and on-site conference presentations. I liked to challenge the thought process for many and leave new or experienced school counselors wondering how they could enhance their own programs.

Through my travels to AZ, SC, NC, NY, CT, NJ, VT, MO, MT, MS, FL, and so many other states, I learned the disconnect between school leaders and school counselors. I also heard the emotions of school counselors with the difficulties of the task at hand. I used these problems and presented workshops on how to understand emotional intelligence, understand how a learning organization works, and support each member of the educational system.

From conferences to classrooms, the doors opened for me to become an adjunct professor. If a change was going to be made with the comprehensive school counseling, educational systems, and the support for students, then the new generation of school counselors needed to be better trained. I currently teach at New York University

(NYU) and Long Island University (LIU) in the master's program. The chance to mentor and discuss challenges and events they encounter is incredible. Most important, to know that students will be supported by professionals who understand the concept of a school and the components of school counseling programs is incredible!

I recall looking at the established classes for the masters and being unique in adding electives. In the 1990s, I taught a course on School Counseling and the Internet. With the course, I wrote the book that would give graduate students websites in academic, college, and career topics. At the end of the course, students would do an exercise to get their "Internet driver's license."

Now, I am better able to think in terms of the "big picture" of school counseling and education. I added courses that address curriculum mapping, evaluation and data, apps in technology, and how a school counselor effectively works as a team member. Classes should not only be in the basic concepts required for graduation but challenge students to think critically about how they will become integral to a learning organization.

Today, I am an educational consultant for a company I created, GuidED Consulting, LLC. For school counselors, I provide professional development geared toward enhancing their experience with the changes in education. I also have the pleasure of working with school districts assisting their school counseling departments with the alignment of their programs to the new NYS school counseling regulations. Writing a comprehensive school counseling plan with a team of school counselors empowers them to see the effectiveness of their work.

Throughout this journey I have had, which began with my role as a school counselor and was enhanced once my position was questioned due to budget constraints, I kept the same skills I have always had: listening, compassion, understanding, organization, and empathy. I was not an achiever but a creative thinker. I knew that

everyone I met had a story that needed to be heard, but redirecting them to see their achievements was essential.

I gave up a steady salary to pursue a new path. It took me six months of reflection to decide what I would invest my energy in. Money was a concern. However, I realized that if I really put effort into what I was passionate about, it would work, and the paycheck would happen. Slowly but surely it has, but do not think it replaces a salary and the benefits.

My challenges were knowing my own strengths, understanding what the needs were, and where I could assist in creating resources that would help others. I also was challenged by the concept of charging for services, believe it or not. If I could do what I do for free, I would as I so much enjoy helping others. That is not possible!

I also had to learn how to start and develop a sustainable business. I turned to my network and asked lots of questions. It is important to know your strengths but also what you need to learn in starting a business. From taxes to fees and balancing time, it was all new.

What I also learned was the importance of my own self-awareness in not getting up every morning to go to a 7 to 3 job at a school. As the buses went by my neighborhood, I had to cope with a change and think positively. It was going to be different. Change is good and positive!

I have also kept a journal of ideas and would highly recommend that to anyone who is thinking of doing a side hustle. Always go back to the journal and find baby steps in getting the ideas to fruition. It may not require leaving the current job you have, but it may mean finding time to write a book, create a lesson to sell on TpT, or using technology as an innovative way to advance the profession. Something will click! What I do say is, *“Never give up!”* I always believed that *“every failure is a lesson, and every door that closes shows me another one that will open.”*

My advice is not to start a project for the money but let the passion drive the purpose. What is your vision in having this side job or activity? Why do you think it will help others or yourself be able to do better? Will you commit to it? How will you make time? Is it going to be a serious activity or just a hobby? Reflect as you answer a few of these questions. Having several projects can be overwhelming. You must stay focused.

In the end, every job or activity I have done has made a difference. For others, possibly, but for me, it has not left me asking, “*What if?*” It has given me a sense of purpose, new knowledge, and lots of creativity. I don’t wonder what my next project or job will be. When it happens, I will embrace it. For now, I know this is my journey, and I am thankful for all the support!

More Tool Development

Let’s turn now to three other examples of tools which I (Russ) have developed in recent years. We hope that these will both inspire you to tackle your own tool creations as well as give you a bit of insight into the mechanics for how it’s done. Next, we focus on an online workshop, a piece of software to help someone do a time and task analysis and a tool for automating an accountability report.

Data Boot Camp 2.0

The Data Boot Camp (DBC; <https://www.mydatabootcamp.com/>) is an online, self-guided workshop that provides users with step-by-step instructions for learning tips, tricks, and shortcuts when dealing with data in your work as a school counselor, administrator, or other educators. Particular attention is given to using a popular spreadsheet program, Microsoft Excel, which is designed to analyze, share, and manage information so that you can make more informed decisions in your work. As a result of learning more about data, school counselors will also be better able to monitor student progress and communicate to other stakeholders about how your school

counseling program is making a positive difference in the lives of students.

It was not my idea to create an online workshop intended to teach school counselors how to access and analyze data, report results, and advocate for their work and for the profession. After the release of the ASCA National Model in 2003, the role of data, especially outcomes, was quickly becoming increasingly prominent, more than ever before. Using data is linked to almost every aspect of a school counseling program. At the same time, many school counselors were finding themselves at a loss as to where to start and especially how to use technology such as Microsoft Excel to make it happen. The growing need for this professional development was undoubtedly reflected in the rising number of requests I was receiving for my live workshop entitled “*Data Bootcamp for School Counselors*.” In fact, I was getting way more requests for doing this training than I could handle while also keeping my full-time professor job. I began thinking about possible solutions to fill the need. I thought about “training the trainers”—working with small cadres of counselors who were data and technology savvy to help. I failed to find enough interested people to move ahead. I did not know what else to do, and so I visited my university’s small business development center for any suggestions.

The consultant with whom I met listened to the challenge I presented and boiled the solution down to, “*You are looking to replicate yourself.*” My thought was, “*Well, yeah, but that’s why I’m stuck; I can’t replicate myself.*” Turns out, I was thinking too myopically, only considering face-to-face options. We proceeded to discuss the idea of making videos and providing them on CD-ROMs for people to engage in the workshop, asynchronously and at their own pace. Brilliant! That’s what I did. I created a series of video tutorials with sample data files. I researched platforms and delivery systems and landed on creating the CD-ROM in the language of HTML, just like

the emerging website technology we were witnessing the same year. I basically created an offline website that could simply be accessed using a web browser, which happened to be Internet Explorer at the time because Google's Chrome debuted later, in 2008. WordPress or blogging had not really developed yet, and so I used Microsoft's FrontPage as my HTML editor. When complete, I had the CDs stamped and copied by a commercial vendor (<https://discmakers.com/>) and used PayPal as my online storefront and merchant account. With the first profits, I bought my own automatic robotic CD duplicator, which I still use today to burn copies of my handouts sometimes (although discs are getting increasingly more difficult to purchase because of the advent of USB drives and cloud storage).

When it was time to do a major upgrade of the Data Boot Camp, I made the decision to move entirely online, no more discs. I contacted several programmers and web developers because the project was too time consuming, and I wasn't sure how to set up a pay-for-access website. I was ready to invest a few thousand dollars, although I could not find anyone to do it for less than several tens of thousands of dollars. I thought the project was dead, and so I put it on the backburner for a while and kept burning discs. After a few years, I started again to query web designers and programmers, hoping that the cost of development went way down. I was thrilled to learn that membership access websites were, indeed, much cheaper and easier to develop. In 2014, the online Data Boot Camp for School Counselors and Administrators 2.0 was born (see <https://mydatabootcamp.com/>). I was able to hire a web design company (<https://ionicnet.com/>) that transferred the offline website from DVD-ROM (I moved from CD to DVD because the program eventually became too big to hold on a CD) over to an online web host. And they introduced me to the wonderful world of WordPress (WP) and WP plugins. The plugin I use is WishList Member

(<https://wishlistproducts.com/>), a robust and easy to use a software program that works seamlessly with both WP and PayPal.

The online Data Boot Camp has received a great deal of positive feedback from users. For example, school counselors have left me messages such as, *"The videos were easy to follow! I also liked the practice file to use. That was helpful,"* *"Very user-friendly,"* and *"It was broken up in a way that let me skip through what I already knew well and focus on what I needed. Also, it provided ways to do everything without add-ons, which makes it more applicable to me."* I have also made available to professors a couple of course assignments and mock data sets to help them integrate the DBC in their classrooms. They let me know how their students appreciated the clear instruction and practical approach to working with data. For example, one professor let me know, *"I enjoyed the step-by-step method of instruction. These videos were perfect for novices to Microsoft Excel because of the way that the information was presented in a way that exposed viewers to new information in a way that was not intimidating. I also appreciated how there were multiple strategies provided for each Excel skill that was presented. Providing participants with multiple strategies gave viewers an opportunity to find a method of using the skills presented that was the best fit for them. Lastly, the site is organized very well. The way in which the program is organized allows participants to be able to easily and quickly locate material that they may want a refresher on."* This is important to know—that building the tool alone is often not sufficient. You have to provide an incentive for others to use the tool in their work. For counselor educators, supplying the assignments, test questions, and supporting materials (which I was already using in my own courses) was just the thing to tip the scale toward integrating the tool into their curriculum.

The online DBC has been a terrific experience. The overhead is minimal, and it's easy to maintain. Because it is now web-based, I can quickly and easily give away free copies to school counselors at

no extra cost to me. So when I'm doing the DBC workshop live, the online DBC becomes my handout. I give each of my participants a free copy so they can return and refresh their training if needed. I also provide very deep discounts to organizations who want to purchase copies for their members or conference participants to further increase value and provide an incentive to register.

Time Elapsed Analysis and Reporting System (TEARS)

The Time Elapsed Analysis & Reporting System (TEARS; <http://schoolcounselor.com/tears/>) is a Microsoft Excel add-in that automatically calculates the total amount of time that you have spent in different aspects of your work. After exporting your calendar data from Microsoft Outlook to Excel, this add-in calculates elapsed time, sums up the number of hours in each category, and then produces both a table and a chart.

The ASCA Model recommends that all school counselors conduct a "use of time assessment" as part of managing a comprehensive school counseling program. A use of time assessment helps the school counselor determine the amount of time spent toward the recommended 80 percent or more of the school counselor's time to direct and indirect services with students. Some school district supervisors have coordinated this analysis across all school counselors in the district. This information clarifies the focus and balance among the many parts of a school counseling program. The analysis is also incredibly useful for advocating for more counselors or updating agreed upon responsibilities (American School Counselor Association, 2013).

Early on, school counselors did this by hand, using paper calendars, counting up meetings/events, and then using a calculator to do the time-and-task analysis. As you can imagine, this was tedious and for most, a very unpleasant task. Eventually, school counselors attempted new, more efficient ways to conduct this

important calculation. Some started developing spreadsheets. In fact, ASCA has made available a slick Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for this purpose, which can be downloaded from <http://bit.ly/counselor-time-XLS>. Other school counselors were similarly using Google Sheets; although, they had the advantage of collaborating in real time on a spreadsheet without barriers of space and time. Either way, if they wanted to, school counselors could also enter data on the fly using tablets or iPads. More sophisticated tools also evolved such as Dr. Tim Poynton's EZAnalyze Time Tracker (see <http://www.ezanalyze.com>), a macro-enabled Excel workbook designed to perform note-keeping and time-tracking functions and generate reports for accountability and improved service to students.

The challenge, however, is that these tools still require additional time to use. For instance, many school counselors found themselves still moving data from their calendars to the spreadsheets to perform the calculations necessary for the assessment. This was a "pain point" that discouraged people from doing this part of the comprehensive school counseling model. As a result, they lacked vital information for making decisions, being accountable, and advocating for themselves and the profession.

So the question before me was, "How can school counselors perform this assessment with tools that they are already using without involving much more time or effort than they are already spending on 'calendaring?'" I first used social media to confirm that many school counselors were (a) using Microsoft Outlook to set up appointments and schedule events (i.e., managing their time) and (b) interested in an easy way to do the use of time assessment. Once I received the answers I was looking for, the next step was to figure out a way to use Microsoft Outlook to do the procedure. Could Outlook analyze appointments and come up with a table and/or graph of how the school counselor was spending their time? After searching high and low, the answer to this was simply, "No." This was not the

answer I was hoping for. Was there another alternative calendar that could do this which school counselors could switch to and replace Outlook? “Again, no.” I wasn’t ready to give up, so I kept researching and eventually figured out what I believe to be an elegant solution. It turns out that your Microsoft Outlook data can be exported to a spreadsheet! Once I discovered this, I knew that I could use Microsoft Excel to do the analysis. This was an exciting discovery. School counselors could go about their normal practice of keeping their calendar and with just a few extra steps, whenever they wanted to, could analyze their time and create a chart.

Once I tried it and had a sample of school counselors in different locales try it to confirm that it worked as planned, I started including a demonstration of the procedure in my “datability” or technology workshops. From this, a new challenge emerged. I overestimated how easy the procedure was. Now, with hundreds of school counselors attempting this on their laptops in front of me, I found that they were having trouble with creating new columns, creating a formula to calculate “time emerged” for each appointment, and then disaggregating the data to come up with a simple table and pie chart. There was still a pain point involved that was getting in the way. I knew I had to automate this process somehow. I envisioned school counselors doing the easy part—exporting their calendar data from Outlook and opening it into Excel—and then clicking on a button to do the rest. To accomplish this, I would have to develop a Microsoft Excel add-in.

Creating an Excel add-in requires knowledge of VBA or Visual Basic for Applications, the programming language of Excel and other Office programs. I knew very little about VBA and did not have time to learn, so I needed a professional to do it for me. I had no idea how much this would cost, although I was bracing myself for the likely bad news. I Googled “hire a coder” and found a website that matches people with different technology jobs with people who can do them.

I'm guessing most of the people on the site are doing these jobs as a side hustle. The original site was Elance.com which was bought by Upwork.com, which I still use today. Now for the good news. I entered a description of the job for creating a Microsoft Excel add-in that automates the "use of time analysis" and established a budget of \$500, which I thought was probably a long shot. I expected that I might not get a very good response to this and would probably have to come up with a bigger budget. The opposite happened. Microsoft Excel experts from all over the world competitively "bid" on my job. The winning bid was only 10 percent of my budget, or \$50! I couldn't believe it. It turns out that the job was simple from an expert point of view. The person who accepted the task completed it and sent me the add-in file within two hours. I learned later that he already did a similar add-in for a different company and only had to tweak the code to fit my needs. I quickly installed the add-in and, after opening my sample calendar data, pressed the new button in Excel and within one second had my results. It was perfect! I was astounded. By the way, after the add-in started failing because of some updates within Microsoft, the same person updated it for me for \$25. I suspect it took him about 15 minutes to do it.

Now it was time for a decision; should I give this away or sell it? If I were to sell it, for how much and how exactly would I do that? I decided to do both. I would give the app away to all participants who attended my technology workshops and still make it available for purchase to anyone else who wanted to try it. I've been calling this the TEARS add-in, which stands for *Time Elapsed Analysis and Reporting System*. The inside joke was that "*Once you see the results, you will probably have tears of joy or tears of sorrow.*" After a bit of research, I did find a platform that helps people sell digital property online called Payloadz.com. Payloadz connects nicely with PayPal and has worked very well for me over the years. The company has been around for as long as I can remember, although other similar

platforms have expectedly emerged. For example, <https://www.tradebit.com/>, <https://selffy.com/>, <https://payhip.com/>, and <https://getdpd.com/> to name a few.

Finally, it was time to educate my target audience and promote the product. So I created a quick video and web page on my site (<http://schoolcounselor.com/tears/>) to describe, support, educate, and make available for purchase. My initial investment of \$50 and a few dozen hours has certainly paid off. My profits on the TEARS app alone have probably paid for a couple of our family vacations.

You might think the story ends here, although like any effective side hustle, it never really ends. There is always continued promotion, maintenance, updating, and customer service to contend with. With any product or service that you provide, whether it's an app or a book, you'll need to commit to keeping it alive for the long haul. Today, I continue to answer emails from some counselors who still need a bit of hand-holding when trying to use the TEARS add-in. And I suspect that very soon, I will have to update it as Microsoft comes out with updates to their software. Another challenge that I'm learning about as I work with school counselors throughout the country is that many of them have migrated from using Microsoft Outlook to Google Calendar as their calendaring tool. Google calendar does not allow the user to categorize appointments, which is a requirement to make this whole thing work. So currently, I'm working on workarounds for those counselors. What I have come up with so far are a couple of possibilities:

- You can export your Google Calendar to Excel by using Gcal2Excel, a tool that automates this (see <https://www.gcal2excel.com/>). However, you will still need to go back and categorize your appointments before performing the analysis.

- Keep using Microsoft Outlook as usual. To satisfy your school, just sync your Outlook calendar with your Google calendar. You can certainly do this periodically by hand or manually. Better yet, you can use a free app called Outlook Google Calendar Sync found online at <https://github.com/phw198/OutlookGoogleCalendarSync>.

As more sophisticated tools emerge for school counselors, there is also the possibility that I can retire the TEARS app because it will no longer be needed. In fact, we may be getting close to that reality already with the development of overall comprehensive school counseling program management platforms that perform “use of time” analyses as part of a much bigger system. These platforms include SCUTA (<http://counselorapp.com/>), School Counselor Central (<http://schoolcounselorcentral.com/>), and Hallways (<http://www.ihatepaperwork.com/hallways/>).

Auto Closing the Gap Tool

My most recent tool creation has a very similar history as the TEARS add-in. This one involves a more automated way to create charts as part of an overall Closing the Gap (CTG) report. Like the problem of disaggregating data and creating charts as part of a time-and-task analysis, school counselors needed a bit of help with doing similar procedures for creating a CTG report. At the very least, even if you did have the skill set, what if there was a way to automate this to save time? After many hours of experimenting and development, you can now see the results (for free) at <http://schoolcounselor.com/autoctg/>.

AutoCTG directly connects two files—a Microsoft Excel data file and PowerPoint file, which will become your report. Once you update the data into the Excel file, you only need to open the accompanying PowerPoint file, and all your charts will automatically be updated to

reflect your data. From there, you can customize your PowerPoint with other information, narrate it, and then use it to advocate for your program. The files and system work on a Windows device (computer or laptop) and require Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint. If you are using a Macintosh computer, you can still use the Excel file to automatically create your charts, although your PowerPoint will not automatically update.

Nonetheless, even if you are using a Macintosh computer, you are going to save lots of time. The charts within the Excel file will automatically refresh when you update the data. You will then only have to copy your updated charts within Excel and paste them into the PowerPoint from scratch (after deleting the existing charts that are already there).

To learn more about creating a multimedia closing the gap report, check out these resources:

- Record a slide show with narration and slide timings tutorial from Microsoft (<http://bit.ly/pptx-show>).
- *Kick It Up A Notch*, an ASCA Magazine column by Russ (<http://bit.ly/kick-it-up>).
- Unit 5, of the online data boot camp entitled *Multimedia Reports* is open and accessible (<https://www.mydatabootcamp.com/unit-5-multimedia-results-report/>).
- Data Boot Camp page on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/DataBootCamp/>).
- SCALE – The School Counseling Analysis, Leadership and Evaluation Research Center has some wonderful CTG reports from all over the country (<https://scale-research.org/>).
- ASCA has a Closing the Achievement Gap Specialist certificate course available if you want to really dive into this skill set (<http://bit.ly/asca-ctg-specialist>).

What's in Your Toolbox?

Confucius was once quoted as saying, *"The expectations of life depend upon diligence; the mechanic that would perfect his work must first sharpen his tools."*

School counselors everywhere are learning how to adapt existing tools to help them do their work more effectively, efficiently, and in a way that is more fun. Others are creating unique and customized tools that previously did not exist. When you get a chance, you might find the following examples inspirational:

- A presentation from Jeannie Maddox, Volusia County, Florida (see <http://exploringschoolcounseling.blogspot.com/>) that demonstrates several different ways to use Google Forms in school counseling. <http://bit.ly/sc-gform>
- Also by Jeannie Maddox, a great example of using an online binder, see <https://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=1358678>.
- Katie Oman shows us how she uses Google Forms at <https://sites.google.com/site/schoolcounselingtechnology/forms>.
- Jeff Ream helps school counselors set appointments using technology, see <http://www.thecounselinggeek.com/2018/03/appointments.html>. Also, check out the rest of his website for lots of other technology time-savers.
- Angela Cleveland and her colleagues show us free, fun and straightforward online tools to connect with other school counselors and grow your toolbox of skills at https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/PDFs/WebinarPowerPoints/WEB031418_Handout.pdf.

- Allison Weaver helps us with using technology to connect with other counselors, stay current, and gather resources. See <https://onlinecounselingprograms.com/blog/using-technology-to-boost-your-counseling-program/>.
- A few very cool tech tools presented by Matthew Berry, http://onewildcounselor.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/7/0/12709910/weebly_cool_tools_msca_pdf.pdf.
- Technology Smackdown Handout includes web applications that help people to communicate, collaborate, share, network, socialize, and deliver resources. See <http://bit.ly/asca-smackdown>.

CHAPTER 7

SELLING MERCHANDISE

“Entrepreneurs create the tangible from the intangible.”

Robert Herjavec, *Shark Tank*

Ever wondered who’s behind that teacher or counselor swag you see at professional conferences? Well, wonder no longer. We are about to enter the world of merchandising. A merchandise or sales entrepreneur is someone who creates a business around designing and/or selling a product. Entrepreneurs generally begin by identifying a need or demand and then filling that need or supplying that demand. Some school counselors design and sell school counseling related merchandise, such as phone cases, t-shirts, coffee mugs, mousepads, PopSockets, stickers, journals, ornaments, and lunch bags. Take a break and check out a few examples right now at <https://www.cafepress.com/+school-counselor+gifts>. Other school counselors are selling existing products that are not directly related to school counseling, but school counselors love them!

Merchandise entrepreneurs that we talked with told us that it’s important to be passionate about your design, your product, and your brand. They said that to be successful, one must embody the characteristics of an optimist, a risk-taker, and a change agent—

always looking to grow and expand one's business, influence, and brand recognition. Interestingly, in this age of exploding technological innovations, there is almost no barrier to designing and selling your products. Some companies (e.g., CafePress, Zazzle, Spreadshirt, Etsy, and Redbubble) can help you from start to finish by suggesting artwork, doing the printing, shipping to customers, maintaining sales analytics, assisting in promoting your product, and finally, sending you a periodic royalty. These companies have indeed leveled the playing field, removing many costly and time-consuming obstacles. However, one challenge they cannot remove is the requirement of having the talent to produce and promote unique products that people will love, need, and want to buy. That's up to you.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Jeff Ream

Jeff Ream, a.k.a. the Counseling Geek, is a school counselor in Lake Tahoe, CA/NV and the 2018 California School Counselor of the Year. He has a fabulous brand and story! Late on a warm, May afternoon, I (Stephanie) had the pleasure of interviewing Jeff about his side hustle, or hustles, I should say. His primary side job is The School Counselor Shop (<https://shop.thecounselinggeek.com/>) where he sells hats, shirts, and various other items. Take a browse through if you need some counselor swag! Let's dive into his story now.

Jeff has had his online shop for over a year, but his real passion is in creating the designs that decorate his merchandise. For several years, Jeff sold his product through the e-commerce site Tictail (<https://tictail.com>). At first, he started out with TeeSpring (<https://teespring.com/>) which did all his merchandise production and marketing although took a cut of his profits. Now he uses Printful (<https://www.printful.com/>) for production, which is a Print

on Demand (POD) company. Much of his merchandise is sold and promoted on his own website (<http://www.thecounselinggeek.com/>).

Jeff started his side business for a few key reasons. First, he noticed after shopping around himself that there was a market that needed to be filled with school counselor designs for the modern, hip school counselor. Moreover, he noticed a real absence of masculine-themed school counselor swag, and he set out to fill that void! The second reason for his business is that The School Counselor Shop supports the cost of running his blog, *The Counseling Geek*. He fondly calls the income from his shop a “school counseling slush fund” in that it also helps support his professional development needs and wants.

On a side note, Jeff started his blog back in May of 2012 to be a competitive candidate for his school counseling job search! He noted that he never planned for the blog to go on after he landed a job. The success of the blog in the last few years has been a pleasant surprise. Jeff’s blog mainly focuses on technology resources and job-hunting tips for school counselors.

The third and most important reason for Jeff’s side hustle is to fund his scholarship program, The School Counselor Community Scholarship (SCCS; <http://www.thecounselinggeek.com/sccs-scholarship>). He started it a few years ago after he had the experience of receiving a partial scholarship himself to attend the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) conference. Jeff felt that the conference was so meaningful to his own professional development, that he didn’t want cost to get in the way of other school counselors experiencing it. So he set about returning the favor that his graduate internship supervisor had given him and started the SCCS to send other school counselors to the yearly ASCA conferences. He works closely with another one of our Side Hustle contributors, Carol Miller, and many other philanthropic professionals to grow this scholarship fund every year!

Regarding school counseling knowledge skills and experiences that are transferable to his side work, Jeff feels that the transfer actually works in the other direction! He said he has learned so much about technology and marketing through running his own small business. He applies this tech and marketing knowledge to making his counseling program run more efficiently and to share his program with school stakeholders. However, Jeff did mention that he often uses his counseling skills when dealing with customer relations and support issues in his side business.

Jeff had a lot to say about both the benefits and challenges of running his side hustle. In terms of benefits, he felt that the opportunities to network and connect with leaders in the school counseling field (and even in other industries) are highly rewarding. Alternately, he noted that the main challenge in running a side hustle is time—the set-up of the business, as well as the continual design and website work is very time-consuming. He feels like he is lucky to have the convenience of no inventory and no prepayments to manage since he uses POD, but it is still tough to find the time to be creative and crank out his designs with the responsibilities of family life and his full-time school counseling career. Speaking of creativity, Jeff talked about the same challenges that all of us in the creative world struggle with: When is an idea or design worth pursuing? When should a design or creative idea be scrapped?

Overall, Jeff enjoys the exciting opportunities that his side hustle provides, and he even has fun trying to learn from the challenges. He recommends that aspiring side hustlers have a plan and research their topic thoroughly before jumping into it. He noted that careful attention to the research phase saves time, energy, and effort in the long run. Jeff also mentioned the importance of knowing the benefits and liabilities of one's side business up front, such as legal and tax liabilities. Finally, he said that it is essential to understand what you

are working toward and to set aside something for philanthropic causes.

After discussing Jeff's side work, I was lucky enough to keep him on the phone for a bit longer to pick his brain about side hustle branding. Branding involves the images and words that reflect your business—what it stands for and its level of quality. A company's or individual's brand presents the ideas, themes, and values of their business. Nationally, Jeff is usually better known for his brand *The Counseling Geek* than for his given name! This is the mark of an excellent branding game, so here's the wisdom he had to share on the topic.

After mentioning that branding is so near and dear to his heart that he has presented this topic at ASCA conference in Los Angeles (see <http://www.thecounselinggeek.com/2018/07/pop.html>), he jumped into some tips and explanations. He said he got into branding in graduate school while trying to get a school counselor job. After a lot of research and trying out different techniques, he learned that a consistent logo that represents your value, color, and imagery is key. Jeff said he created his Counseling Geek brand in 2012 and has modified it slightly but has kept the same logo and color scheme since the beginning. Jeff's most important takeaway in creating your brand and logo is that they should define your business; it is essential to think about this carefully before starting out, then use your branding consistently.

Some school counselors are earning extra money by selling already existing products made by other companies. They don't have to worry about creating or designing. These school counselors are entrepreneurial individuals—independent consultants, if you will—who share their love of a product with others while earning discounts and a sales commission while they're at it.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Franciene Sabens

Franciene Sabens is a school counselor and skincare consultant with a message! She battled unimaginable stress related to medical issues and came out on the other side, better than ever! Take a look at her School Counselor Space blog (<http://schoolcounselorspace.blogspot.com/>) to soak up some of her school counseling wisdom or contact her at FrancieneSabens@gmail.com if you are interested in her skincare expertise. You can see Franciene's Rodan + Fields product page at <http://bit.ly/sabens-randf>. Here is her remarkable side hustle story . . .

Everywhere I go, I know I have a tribe of women and men behind me, encouraging me to reach my own personal goals, to grow in my faith, and to test my own personal limits, all in the spirit of helping people; this is the best way to describe my side hustle. In simple terms, I am a skincare consultant. My side hustle can be done entirely online; I work a lot from my car and the pool and beach in the summer, which allows so much flexibility in my life and makes the business feasible for my busy lifestyle. As a skincare consultant, I use the products and share them with people in my network via social media and in person. My store is completely online, and the products ship directly to my customers, so I'm not handling any shipping or billing concerns.

In 2012, I was diagnosed with cancer, and for a moment, my world stopped. I had to accept my new reality and what I would need to go through to come out on the other end. Through that whole process, I realized how important living my life really was, and I began to truly cherish every experience more than ever.

Fast forward a few years, and I was still swimming in medical bills on top of student loans. Then, when a financial shortfall hit the state,

my job as a school counselor was on shaky ground—it was becoming tougher to do the fun things in life because of financial restrictions. I began to pray for an answer, a sign. A few days after I felt like I had hit rock bottom, my friend came over and shared a business opportunity with me. Initially, I didn't think I could ever be a skincare girl, so she encouraged me just to do something, so I got involved with another direct sales company.

After eight months and zero success with the other company, I was watching my friend soar with her company. So I decided to really look at the skincare life for myself. Today, less than three years after I started my side hustle, my medical debt is paid off, my car is paid off, and I am paying my student loans with my side hustle payday. Moreover, I am living and giving more than I ever dreamed possible! Cancer helped me realize I wasn't truly living, and my side hustle now helps me experience living in a way that I used to only dream about.

In terms of transferable knowledge, skills, and experiences from school counseling that have been helpful with my side hustle, I would have to say there are many. As school counselors, we learn to master the art of working with people and create a warm, positive regard. After all, we are helpers by nature. As a skincare consultant, my job is to share the products with people and help them find the right fit, which means addressing their needs and staying within their budget. Then I follow up with them periodically to make sure everything is working out the way they expected it to. I also have the opportunity to lead a team of business partners as a skincare consultant, and that requires an additional skill set where I help others set business goals, get organized, and learn the business . . . all while setting boundaries around my own personal time. This all sounds a lot like school counseling, right?! We collaborate, help others, share tips, set goals, and of course, set boundaries on our time as a method of self-care.

While the income is incredible (but also based on the time and energy I invest), the other benefits are much more meaningful from my chosen side-hustle. I became a skincare consultant knowing literally next to nothing about skincare, but now I am much more versed in why it's important to take care of my skin, the largest human organ. I have also had the opportunity to grow as a person. I was once very introverted, and now I find myself pushing my own boundaries with interpersonal interaction in a healthy way. I have learned how to have organic conversations with strangers, and how to be more engaging and comfortable in my own skin. I have learned more about goal setting and how to master the art of working toward those goals. I have built relationships with a network of incredibly supportive people (outside of my school counseling circle) that help me escape on some of those tough days that we all have. I have also learned to use my time more wisely. Imagine the hours that people spend on social media doing nothing but admiring other people's lives—I now spend that time sharing products I love and getting paid a salary! Yes, my side hustle of being a skincare consultant is THAT fruitful if you consciously invest time and energy to grow it. It is also mentally rewarding.

As with any side hustle, the challenges are there. People tend to judge entrepreneurs that they know much more harshly than they judge celebrity entrepreneurs. Overcoming the judgment from others is a serious challenge but also an opportunity for personal growth. Managing where a side hustle fits into an already busy schedule is also a challenge. Until you find that manageable balance, life can feel a little chaotic, especially if you are also a parent. Thankfully, I can work my side hustle from my phone, so I can run a hot bath and sneak away for some private [work] time. Yes, I've placed orders for customers from the bathtub many times.

My best advice to others considering a side hustle is to do their homework. Research the company until you can't research it any

longer. How long has it been around? What are the founders doing now? Are they still working and leading by example, always pushing the company forward? What kind of awards or industry accolades have the products won; what are the founders renowned for? Take a look at the income disclosure statement—can you make money just by having customers, or do you have to build a big team to make money? Last, but definitely not least, what is the community like? Will you be supported to grow and learn personally and in the business? Support and encouragement are priceless when you set out to launch a side hustle; without them both, you will become apathetic and possibly walk away before you see the real fruits of your labor.

Once you've done your homework and you feel like your heart has found the side hustle that fits for you, do it scared; take the leap and don't look back. Be faithful to your vision and work like your life depends on it. The personal growth that comes from helping others, building something of your own, and overcoming fear and failure is immeasurable and only stands to make you a better school counselor.

We've just highlighted two terrific examples of how school counselors can sell their own products and/or already existing products. We also learned that some school counselors are earning income by merchandising in other ways such as becoming affiliates, influencers, or ambassadors to different companies. More on that next . . .

Other Merchandising Options

Some school counselors are making extra money by engaging in affiliate sales. This is a way for a company to sell its products by signing up individuals or companies ("affiliates") who market the company's products for a commission. Once again, think about your customers' needs: What other products or services would interest your site visitors? Join those affiliate programs. Affiliate programs can increase your sales with no upfront cost to you. It just takes a

little time to plan your strategy and select the partners that will have the most significant impact on your business (Entrepreneur Small Business Encyclopedia, 2018).

For merchants, affiliate network services provided often include reporting, tracking, payment and refund processing, affiliate management, and most importantly—access to a broad base of publishers (affiliate marketers). For a list of recommended affiliate merchant networks, check out <http://bit.ly/affnetworks2>. As you can imagine, one merchant, in particular, allows individuals to make a profit by promoting any item in their store. Amazon is the largest Internet-based retailer in the United States. Its affiliate network, called Amazon Associates, allows you to tap into over a million products to advertise to your customers.

Amazon.com makes it very simple to link to products using your affiliate identification number. When customers use your link to purchase the product, you earn a commission! For example, here is a table of links to relatively low-cost gifts for school counselors which I (Russ) curated a while back: <http://bit.ly/gift-ideas-counselor>. The idea came to me when I started watching my graduate interns seeking to purchase their internship site supervisors a gift on a limited budget. At the same time, I observed lots of gift recommendations on various school counseling related social networks. Students and school counselors all over the country now use this list, especially around the holidays. All the proceeds from the gift sales cover our end-of-the-year graduation celebration. Learn more about how to become an Amazon.com affiliate member at <https://affiliate-program.amazon.com/home>.

You may have already figured out that one of the attractions of becoming an affiliate, especially with Amazon.com, is that the income is a form of “passive revenue.” Although there is significant work for setting up and doing some promoting, the heavy lifting is really done by the company itself. One of the nice things with

Amazon is that you can send a customer to one product, and even if they buy something completely different, you still make money off it.

Let's look at a few other examples that we gleaned from online discussions for how school counselors are adding to their income by selling products from other companies, products that they typically already love:

- “I sell LULAROE.” <https://www.lularoe.com/become-a-retailer-1/> Here are a few examples
 - <http://bit.ly/lularoerobin>
 - <http://bit.ly/kindness-boutique>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/lularoejenlambert/>
- Real estate agent. One school counselor wrote, “I assume it's pretty similar from state to state, but I took a 30-hour class and then took a test to get my license. I also found a friend who is in the business, and I can get referral fees . . . Plus, when I retire, it can be my retirement job!”
- Some school counselors create and sell handmade or vintage items and supplies on Etsy. For example:
 - https://www.etsy.com/market/school_counselor
 - https://www.etsy.com/market/school_counseling
 - <https://www.etsy.com/market/counselor>
 - https://www.etsy.com/market/counselor_gifts
 - <https://www.etsy.com/shop/marciekochdesigns>
- “As a Thirty-One Gifts Consultant, you can earn extra income and amazing rewards—even a Disney® dream vacation—when you share the fun of Thirty-One with friends, family, co-workers and anyone looking for fun and functional solutions to make their lives easier.” Check out Cyndi's page at <https://www.mythirtyone.com/us/en/101785>.

- Another counselor says she sells jewelry from Premier Designs: <https://www.premierdesigns.com/opportunity/>
- Cheryl writes, “I sell professional makeup and skin care products.” LimeLife by Alcone
<https://www.limelifebyalcone.com/corporphan/enrollment>
- Scentsy. Once you sign up, we offer the training and support you need to get all the way to the beach (and beyond). Make the opportunity yours by running your business your way!
<https://scentsy.com/join>.
- StitchFix calls their affiliate program an Influencer Program and includes lots of perks.
<https://www.stitchfix.com/influencer-program>
- Paparazzi Accessories. “The power of Paparazzi is in its simplicity. Choose your Starter Kit, pick a location for your Launch Party, and invite your friends to come and shop. Then do it again and again!”
<https://paparazziaccessories.com/join/#/>
- Belinda, a school counselor, says that she sells Plexus, weight management and nutrition products.
<https://plexusworldwide.com/Belinda79/home>
- Shaklee. “The beauty of a Shaklee business is that it can be designed around your life in a way that works for you.”
https://www.shaklee.com/us/en/extra_income.s.html

One of the great things about school counselors is that they have knowledge, skills, and attitudes that can really help, even when they are not necessarily focusing directly on school counseling. In other words, your skills are highly transferrable. And the same goes for other educators (e.g., teachers, principals, and support staff). As you can see from all the examples above, this is especially true for school counselors who become successful merchants. We wish you happy selling!

CHAPTER 8

ADJUNCT TEACHING

“Everyone has an idea, but it’s taking those first steps toward turning that idea into a reality that are always the toughest.”

Daymond John, *Shark Tank*

This section of *School Counselor Side Hustle* is about helping prepare the next generation of school counselors. When it comes to teaching graduate-level school counseling courses as an adjunct faculty member, your contribution can be priceless. We need more school counselors with experience who can impart to future school counselors the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will help them be effective. Too many graduate programs are being taught by professors who have either never been a school counselor, have not kept up to date, or perhaps both. Not only is teaching graduate courses in school counseling a nice side hustle but it’s also a critical contribution to the profession.

Adjunct Professor

There has been a relatively slow but steady stream of progress in the school counseling profession. This progress is due largely to the leadership of many school counselors throughout the country and by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). Bold and

visionary leaders in school counseling have made remarkable advances in the last 20 years, more than in the profession's entire history (a little over 100 years). Undoubtedly, ASCA has led the way with providing unifying guides and documents which have helped us all work toward similar goals and speak the same language. ASCA has provided various documents including role statements, ethical standards, position statements, and arguably the most important, a national framework for comprehensive school counseling programs, also known as the ASCA National Model™. This is the good news.

The bad news is that we do not nearly have as many school counselor educators as we need to fulfill the demand for this growing profession. There is currently a critical shortage of school counseling professors. The news actually gets a bit worse. Some universities are filling school counseling faculty positions with people who have not kept up to date. They are teaching our future school counselors in ways that are inconsistent with modern-day school counseling. In this case, they may be setting the profession back a few steps. I (Russ) have encountered too many of them in my travels around the country—professors who are still teaching school counseling the way it was taught 20 and 30 years ago or more! They have not kept up because they don't have to due to a lack of oversight, including inadequate accreditation standards. And then there are the faculty members who disagree with where the school counseling profession is headed. They oppose our national organization (ASCA) and have decided that they are right, others are wrong, and they are going to teach concepts and skills that they believe should be taught despite how they are inconsistent with reality. Unfortunately, as a faculty member, it's not that hard to get away with this.

We need more school counselors to become full-time professors, although the challenges are significant. These challenges include the time and finances required for earning a doctorate degree, and even finding an adequate degree program in one's locale. Second, the pay

for professors may not be much higher than what school counselors are already earning. In fact, some might even notice that they would have to take a cut in pay. Third, for some school counselors, the prospect of having to do research is not very enticing.

However, school counselors *can* still participate by supervising interns and teaching as adjuncts. Let's meet Kat Pastor, a school counselor who now teaches a graduate class in school counseling in her community.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Katherine Pastor

Katherine Pastor, or Kat as she is sometimes known, is a school counselor at Flagstaff High School in Flagstaff, Arizona. She is also the 2016 American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) School Counselor of the Year (SCOY), and she serves on the ASCA Board of Directors. Kat keeps busy with a side hustle teaching school counseling classes at Northern Arizona University (NAU) in Flagstaff, AZ. At NAU, she is an affiliate professor, which means that she teaches one to two masters-level classes per semester. You can contact Kat on her Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/katherine.pastor.10> or on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/katpastor1>. Russ had the pleasure of interviewing her about her side hustle in September of 2018. Here is what she had to say.

Katherine says that she happened upon her adjunct professor side hustle quite by chance. Her own master's program professor, Diane, began collaborating with her after Kat landed her school counselor (SC) job. The two worked together to bring ASCA's comprehensive school counseling model into public schools. After several years of collaborating, Diane left her position with NAU and Katherine stepped into the role. However, after teaching just one NAU class in

2013, there were no more university teacher opportunities for the time being. Then at a School Counselor of the Year (SCOY) reception thrown by Katherine's family, she started talking with an administrator of the university who wondered why she was no longer teaching NAU classes. The NAU administrator decided then and there to rehire Katherine as an affiliate professor, and the rest was history. Katherine notes that university part-time jobs can show up through networking and that it is who you know that can often help you land a position.

In the interview, Kat discussed many of the transferable skills and experiences that can be applied from school counseling to just about any side hustle. These include practical school counseling experience, networking in your community, and collaborating with others in the field. She believes that teaching at the university level has made her a better school counselor because, in teaching the ASCA National Model, she has become more knowledgeable about it, thus embedding it even further into her Flagstaff High School counseling program. Kat also says that she uses her school counselor advocacy and leadership skills while teaching her classes—both in instructing her graduate students and in serving as an advocacy/leadership role model for them.

In addition to the extra income, Katherine detailed some of the other benefits of working as a part-time university instructor. She says that her side hustle has allowed her to bring graduate students into her school system through practicum experiences. In her part of the country, oftentimes school counselors only focus on responsive services because of having such high ratios (upwards of 800 students to one counselor). She told us about how her graduate students are planning and running school counseling curriculum support groups in place of the employed school counselors who can't fit this into their day. Kat says that her professional goal is for every student in the nation to have access to a school counselor. She believes that

bringing her own graduate students into her school system, through her university teaching experiences, is a way of furthering this goal.

Regarding the challenges of her side hustle, Katherine notes that time is always an issue. She is only able to teach one graduate class per semester due to the time-consuming nature of planning and preparing and teaching a university class. She has to balance these classes with her full-time school counselor job, as well as family obligations.

In conclusion, Katherine has some helpful advice for others who are interested in pursuing a side hustle teaching university-level classes. She says that it is crucial to network with other university professors in any way possible. She also advises attending a grad class before jumping into teaching one since many SCs haven't been in a college classroom in years! Finally, she notes that reaching out to seasoned university professionals for planning/teaching tips is very smart; after all, why reinvent the wheel if someone experienced can help you navigate through your side hustle! On a final note, Katherine says that the part-time university teaching gig brings a lot of opportunities for the school counselor, and it is really not as hard as you might think it is.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Stephanie Lerner

One of my (Stephanie) most favorite and most unexpected side hustles is that of part-time university adjunct professor at Angelo State University in San Angelo, TX. Right now, I teach two to three school counseling classes per semester in an online format. I work with a team of professors headed by a doctorate professional in school counseling. These "lead" professors oversee and provide the content for the course, while I, along with several other adjuncts, manage the day-to-day instruction of about 150 graduate-level students enrolled in the class. Each adjunct has a section of about 15 students that they teach; our graduate students are pursuing a

master's degree in either school counseling, curriculum and instruction, or educational leadership.

My specific job duties for this side hustle are sending my students weekly instructional emails, answering any questions they have about their coursework, and grading their assignments. I got into this work quite by accident. I was in a planning meeting with the Texas School Counseling Association in early 2018. During this meeting, I had a conversation with an Assistant Professor of Curriculum & Instruction who asked me if I was interested in teaching school counselor university courses. She told me to apply online, and the rest was history. So far, I've taught Career Counseling, Group Counseling, and Individual Counseling, and I'm loving every minute of it!

My primary job as a school counselor gives me all the knowledge and experiences necessary to do my university side hustle. In every class I teach, I use my own practices in school counseling curriculum, individual planning, system support, and responsive services to instruct my graduate students. I share many of the projects and protocols that I am doing in my own comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) with my students, who are then able to tweak and fine-tune my ideas for their individual assignments and career.

If I had to name the main benefits of teaching university school counseling classes, I'd have to say that I love having the chance to influence grad students to create their own CSCP once they get their future school counseling job. There are too few school counselors running CSCPs, so I want to do everything I can to change that. It is also incredibly rewarding to get to share with students my own knowledge and experience in being a school counselor. Additionally, I love the best practice knowledge I get as I am always immersed in the school counseling literature and research. I learn something new and important every week about the school counseling profession!

I also think that the biggest challenge is time. My full-time job as a school counselor definitely demands a 50-60 hour work week, so adding up to 20 more hours a week to teach my university class is challenging at times. But it is so worth missing out on a bit of sleep!

Like Katherine Pastor, I agree that the best way to land a part-time university teaching position is to network, network, network! If you are doing great things in school counseling, believe me, the universities want you! They just need to know that you are available and willing. So become an active member in both your local and national professional organizations, apply for every school counseling award for which you are eligible, and present with others at school counseling conferences. Eventually, you will meet the right person who can put you in touch with a university looking for just the special set of skills you have!

Other Tips for the Adjunct Professor Side Hustle

Our two adjunct professor side hustle spotlights, Kat and Stephanie, were both recruited by current faculty to help out with training the next generation of school counselors. They both gave us sage advice about how networking and taking on leadership positions in the profession will provide you with an edge in getting noticed and hired. If you believe you are ready, capable, and willing, you might not want to wait until you are recruited. You might consider going after the position. There are a few ways to do this:

- **Do it directly.** Send a cover letter and resume to programs in which you would like to supervise interns and/or teach a class, online, offline, or both.
- **Get your foot in the door.** Work with one faculty member, perhaps the person who teaches Introduction to School Counseling, and offer to volunteer your time. You can help with teaching, planning, facilitating classroom learning activities, coordinating panels, and more. This will give you

the experience and edge that you need for being considered as a hired faculty member.

- **Be a site supervisor.** Being a site supervisor for school counseling graduate student interns, within itself, is a valuable experience and contribution to the profession. Being a supervisor will also give you the exposure and experience as a step toward being a hired university internship supervisor. Some institutions compensate the intern supervisor with both a stipend and fee waiver. You can use the fee waiver to take classes toward a new certification or license, which could be another new side hustle. As a university intern supervisor, you don't have to have a doctorate degree. In my (Russ) department, we have a school counselor that went from site supervisor to university internship supervisor, to adjunct, then visiting professor (after getting her doctorate degree), and is now a full-time assistant professor in our department!

Once you land the position, remember, you already know a great deal about classroom management. Also remember, however, that you are teaching adults, which is a bit different than teaching younger K-12 students. Adults bring a great deal of experience to the table. Part of your job will be to help them apply what they already know to become a school counselor. What life lessons and skills do they already have, no matter what their background, that will come in handy for getting through graduate school as well as becoming a school counselor? You may want to read up on the theory and practice of adult learning, also known as andragogy. For example, as an adult learner, Pappas (2013) suggests that:

- Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.

- Adults' experiences (including mistakes) provide the basis for the learning activities.
- Adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance and impact on their job or personal life.
- Adult learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented.

Also, you may need to adjust how you apply andragogic principles in your work as a university instructor by considering the following (Knowles, 1984):

- With adult learners, there is a need to explain the *reasons* that specific things are being taught. This, however, is probably an excellent principle for learners of all ages.
- Instruction should be task oriented instead of promoting memorization.
- Instruction should account for the full range of different backgrounds of learners.
- Since adults are self-directed, instruction should allow learners to discover and build knowledge for themselves without depending on people.

If you get the chance, we highly encourage you to teach a class or supervise a group of interns, not only for the benefit of future school counselors but also because teaching can be wonderful professional development for you. The best way to learn something is to teach it. With some experience, you will probably understand school counseling principles, process, and programs much better than you did before you taught it. You are more likely to pay greater attention to your own approach and practice, getting even better at what you do.

CHAPTER 9

PRIVATE PRACTICE COUNSELING

“Failure, to me, is just an opportunity to begin again more wisely.”

Daymond John, *Shark Tank*

A mental health therapist gives psychological support to people dealing with various mental health issues that interfere with their personal or professional functioning. Therapists usually meet with their clients repeatedly based on a weekly or monthly schedule. In addition to the time spent with a client, the therapist must plan for client sessions, keep case notes on each session, and consult with colleagues in the profession. Since mental health issues are complicated and complex, therapists often must collaborate with other professionals, such as doctors and teachers, to help their clients. Therapists base their counseling support on a theory or theories such as solution-focused brief therapy, family systems, cognitive behavioral, or many others. Their work environment is equally diverse with some therapists working out of hospitals, offices, schools, homes, or other environments (MyPlan.com, 2018).

To become a practicing therapist, individuals must earn a master's degree in counseling or a related field. The individual must

then pursue clinical experience under the supervision of a licensed mental health supervisor. When this internship is complete, and the individual has passed a licensure exam, they may apply for their own license—more on that later in this chapter.

We've met several school counselors who are both certified as school counselors and licensed as clinical mental health counselors (also referred to as Licensed Practicing Counselors or LPC). Two of our side hustle spotlights in this area, Leticia and Kate, are school counselors with private therapy practices on the side. They give us great advice and a few useful tips while explaining how it's done!

Side Hustle Spotlight: Leticia Powell

Leticia Powell, therapist, school counselor, and founder of Restorative Counseling Services (<https://www.therestorativecounselingservices.com/>) is a true force of nature! She is a full-time high school counselor, a doctoral candidate in counselor education, and a successful part-time therapist averaging ten clients a week. How does she do it all? Does she sleep? Does she have a house elf? Read on for her fascinating story of how she fits it all in, as well as some very down-to-earth tips on how to make the transition from school counselor into private practice.

The counseling field has been very rewarding for me. It excites me because I know it is a profession that will never become stagnant because of ever-changing trends and societal changes. Years ago, when I finished my master's degree, I decided I wanted to retire in this field, which led me to continue with my schooling and obtain my license as a professional counselor. Two years later, I also became a licensed professional counselor supervisor (LPC-S). I enjoy attending workshops, conferences, and speaking at conferences/workshops

while expanding my knowledge in the field. I enjoy imparting that knowledge to my students and clients even more.

I have been in the counseling field for over 20 years. I have worked as an adjunct professor, field supervisor, school counselor, private practitioner, and as a community-based counselor. Most of my work experience has been as a school counselor. I worked as a middle school counselor for two years (sixth and eighth grades), but I realized my passion was for high-school-age students. I have worked as a high school counselor for 13 years. Although I enjoyed school counseling, I realized in my first year as a school counselor that I was limited in the provision of counseling services to students and parents. Because of the barriers to providing counseling in a school setting, I became interested in learning more about private practice.

In 2003, I searched and found an LPC-S to begin working on hours to obtain my LPC. In 2005, I became an LPC. Although I had my license, I was not ready to dive into private practice. I continued to enjoy being a school counselor and learning more about the field, my students, and available resources. Although I was not ready to start a private practice, I did enjoy other counseling related jobs such as working at Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority (MHMRA) Crisis Unit, which assisted me in expanding my knowledge beyond school counseling.

In 2007, I continued to think about my future in the counseling field. I thought about life after retirement from school counseling, additional counseling related opportunities while school counseling, and my desire to learn more about counseling. I thought it was time for me to add supervision to my title. I wanted the credentials to supervise (and to eventually supervise once I was experienced in private practice). After taking the required classes for supervision, I became an LPC-Supervisor in 2007.

Although school counseling had proven to be rewarding in many aspects, I desired more. Working at MHMRA increased my appetite to provide therapeutic care. In 2009, I became an independent LPC contractor working for a local agency to provide therapeutic services to families and children who were involved with Children's Protective Services. The job was part time, but my caseload remained steady. I was offered an opportunity to join the agency full time; however, I was not willing to leave my job as a school counselor.

Working part time with this company afforded me the opportunity to see firsthand what it would be like to have my private practice. I was excited about the opportunity to learn more about the business. I continued to work part time for almost two years. When I resigned from the company, I decided to research how to start a private practice. I began detailing the steps required. Initially, I was overwhelmed with all that I learned—start-up costs, insurance panel versus self-pay clients, etc. So many decisions to make . . . I decided I was not ready.

There was a lot to learn. But in the summer of 2017, I took a leap of faith and decided to open my private counseling practice. It has been the best decision I have made, and although it is part time, it is quite rewarding. I was open for several weeks before receiving a call from my first client. I received several calls prior to me scheduling my first client, but I was neither a provider for their insurance or unable to assist them with their presenting issue. However, after I scheduled my first client, I have had a consistent flow of clients. There are times when I am unable to take on any new clients because of having a full schedule, especially with the demands and responsibilities of my school counseling job.

Being in private practice can be challenging yet rewarding. You never know who will walk through your door and what needs the client may have. Even though you speak with the client over the phone, and they provide some information about why they want to

start counseling, you never know what you will unpack during therapy. Having the opportunity to work closely with individuals while helping them explore and discover their path to healing makes the job rewarding. I am always humbled and grateful when clients entrust me to join them on their journey to empowerment, and I never take that trust for granted. I believe a professional partnership between a therapist and a client should be treated with respect, honesty, empathy, and integrity, and I strive to be a good steward of that partnership.

My clientele consists of adolescents/teens, women, families, and couples. The presenting issues range from anxiety, depression, parenting, coping, family conflict, and relationship challenges. I work five days a week to include Saturdays and evening hours. Generally, I have an average of ten clients per week, which is enough for me (currently) because I am also in school working on my doctorate in counselor education and supervision. Once I have completed school, I plan to do more advertising to increase my clientele.

My experience as a school counselor motivated me to become a private practitioner. I desired to do more but was unable to due to the constraints and barriers that are sometimes present in school counseling. The basic counseling skills and techniques from solution-focused therapy are used in a school setting, and they are also skills that were transferable to private practice. Although I am not using solution-focused therapy in my private practice, it was through school counseling that I understood the importance of using an appropriate theoretical orientation such as solution-focused therapy.

Other transferable skills include the importance of proper documentation, record keeping, confidentiality, and time management. For example, as a high-school counselor, I am responsible for auditing my students' records and maintaining

proper documentation of our visits. In my private practice, I am responsible for maintaining proper documentation such as note taking and billing. Additionally, in school counseling, time management is essential to meeting students' needs and deadlines. In my private practice, it is imperative that I manage my time so that I can be respectful of my clients' time and other obligations.

There are many benefits to having my practice. One of the main benefits is the opportunity to provide therapeutic services to my clients. I am able to go more in-depth with my clients, which is not always an option in school counseling. Other benefits include a sense of independence, the ability to create your own schedule, and the ability to focus on your niche. Additionally, being in private practice allows me an opportunity to see a variety of people with different presenting issues. Private practice can also afford me an opportunity to have a flexible schedule to spend quality time with my family, support my children in their extracurricular involvement, and spend time with my grandchildren.

Although there are many benefits to having a private practice, there are also some challenges which include learning to juggle the various roles such as business management, billing and coding, and administrative assistant. There are some days that I have worked 14 hours with approximately a 2.5-hour break for the day. Because I am a high-school counselor, my day starts early at 6:45 a.m. Moreover, because I can only make evening appointments during the week, my last client may leave the office at 7:30 p.m., which means I leave around 8 p.m. after taking notes, cleaning, and straightening the office in preparation for the next day. Since I accept insurance, becoming familiar with the expectations and requirements of insurance panels can also be demanding.

Overall, I have enjoyed the process of starting, building, and working in my private practice. With my experience, I am able to provide information and support to those who have expressed an

interest in starting a private practice. One of the tidbits I have shared is to plan, plan, and plan. Many decisions need to be made such as fees, documentation, self-pay versus insurance, location, and home-based therapy versus office visits, just to name a few. Some of the decisions will be made based on the counselor's vision of their private practice, which may not be realized until after proper planning has begun. Below are some other planning pieces to consider.

- How to advertise and market the private practice;
- Establish both short-term and long-term goals;
- Determine a specialization; and
- Decide on introducing oneself to psychiatrists, school counselors, and school social workers in the area to be added to their referral list.

Overall, the counselor considering private practice should remember why they first got into counseling and keep that idea in the forefront of their mind—this will guide one through difficulties that may arise during the transition of adding a private practice side job. Most importantly, having a support system is imperative throughout this process because support and encouragement will assist you when challenges arise. I wish you the best!

What Do I Need to Get Licensed?

The answer to this question depends on which state you reside in and/or practice. The American Counseling Association compiled, through a survey of state counselor licensure boards conducted in the fall of 2015, a state-by-state analysis of laws and administrative rules. The document is available online; you can find it by searching for it by using the term "Licensure Requirements for Professional Counselors filetype:pdf" (without quotes). This survey is a good

start, although you must still work directly with a state's licensing board to determine what remains for you to satisfy the licensure requirements.

You may be interested to know that, depending on the state, you may not need an additional master's degree in clinical mental health counseling. In some states, a master's degree in school counseling is considered a "related" degree, which will count toward your license in mental health counseling. For example, in Florida, if you have a master's degree in school counseling, you will need the following estimated 23 credits of coursework, including internship, toward an LMHC (accurate as of this writing, although subject to change):

- Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling (3)
- Mental Disorders or DSM5 (3)
- Issues in Addictions and Abuse (3)
- Human Sexual Issues in Counseling (3)
- Organization, Administration, and Supervision
- Clinical Internship (600 or more supervised clinical hours)

At the end of your coursework, in Florida, you'll still need two more things before you can be fully licensed. First, you will need to register with the state to work with a licensed and approved supervisor for two years. At this point, you are recognized as a "registered intern" with the state. Often, agencies that hire a registered intern will provide the required supervision as part of your benefits while working there. They consider this an investment in you, and they hope that, in exchange, you will stay on after you become fully licensed. Other registered interns may have to pay for supervision. Finally, the third and last step is to pass the clinical mental health counseling exam.

Linda Hart is a Texas school counselor who specializes in college counseling and educational consulting. She has been working in the field of education and counseling for over 20 years combined. She wrote us to explain how she added a license in mental health counseling so she could have a private counseling practice:

When in graduate school, it is advantageous to keep options open while taking courses. For example, there are usually two tracks in the graduate counseling program: clinical counseling and/or school counseling. Students select which track to take, but there is nothing refraining students from obtaining both! Both tracks have the same core courses but branch out along the way. By taking a couple of additional courses (or using them as electives), I could pursue both at the same time.

Additionally, by taking equivalent courses within the psychology department toward the degree, I was setting myself up to have the qualifications for teaching at a community college should I decide to (community colleges require a master's degree, plus 18 hours of graduate credit within the discipline teaching). Since counseling is not taught in community colleges, psychology courses are an option for this avenue. Along the same line, I also took play therapy courses as electives as well. Doing so allowed me to count the courses toward my play therapy credential. To top it off, I took two semesters of supervision so that when eligible, I could apply as an LPC supervisor.

Internship is an essential piece to the puzzle. During the master's program in counseling, internship hours must be accrued. If interning at a school, for a school counselor, these internship hours will only count toward school counseling. However, after obtaining the master's degree and passing the NCE, I was able to double dip some hours for my LPC, as well as my play therapy credentials. For example, while working as a

professional school counselor, I offered play counseling with my students. The play counseling hours counted toward my Registered Play Therapist (RPT) credential, as well as my LPC licensure. I was able to count the hours concurrently. I found a supervisor that was able to supervise me for my LPC and RPT credentials at the same time. At the time, I could not find an RPT supervisor, so I used an LPC supervisor for both. As mentioned before, I was able to count my play therapy hours toward my LPC direct hours. I did not have to add additional hours to my 3,000 required hours. Because I took two semesters of supervision, I was able to apply as an LPC supervisor and RPT supervisor.

By following the method above, I set myself up to be eligible for the following: Professional school counselor, Licensed Professional Counselor and Supervisor, Registered Play Therapist and Supervisor, Counselor Educator (instructor at a university), paid speaker/presenter, and counselor consultant. As of this time, I am the lead trauma/grief licensed professional counselor for a high school that is recovering from a school shooting. In the evenings, I serve as a private counselor, where I offer personal counseling and private college counseling. Additionally, I teach counselor education classes for a university and provide private tutoring online. I also offer supervision for LPC and RPT interns. I teach them this approach to help them get the most out of their time. Finally, I hold professional development workshops in counseling and play therapy, where I am able to offer continuing education credits to students, interns, school counselors, licensed professional counselors, and registered play therapists (Personal communication, 11/27/2018).

Ethical Issues with Dual Licensure

When you are working both as a school counselor and clinical mental health counselor, the ethical and legal landscape can become

a bit more complex. Thus, it is imperative that you are aware and cautious of following ethical and legal standards and laws. The issue of dual relationships, for example, is one of the most common ethical violations, even without a dual role of school counselor and mental health counselor (Ahia & Boccone, 2017). If you are a school counselor with a mental health practice side hustle, you know that the ethical obligation to not conflate your two roles is critical.

The ASCA ethical standards include a section called A.5. Dual Relationships and Managing Boundaries (American School Counselor Association, 2016). In essence, the standard charges us to avoid dual relationships that might impair a counselor's objectivity and increase the risk to students (or clients), establish and maintain appropriate professional relationships at all times, avoid dual relationships, and adhere to professional boundaries. These ethical standards are the reason why a dually licensed/certified counselor would be wise to avoid working with a student in both capacities—part of a school counseling program and as a mental health counseling client. In some rural locales, this conflict may not be easily avoided. In this case, it will be necessary to clearly and appropriately communicate boundaries, procedures, and expectations at all times. If a conflict of interest should arise, the counselor is required to make an appropriate referral and accommodations for a smooth transition. This is true even when your student is not the client but perhaps when your client is a student's parent or guardian, for example. The risks of conflicts of interest and blurred boundaries may increase due to the dual relationships.

Another ethical issue that may arise with dual licensure/certification is how a school counselor who is also licensed as a clinical mental health counselor (CMHC) finds themselves conducting therapy sessions with a student at school. This is one of those cases of, "Just because you can, doesn't mean you should." Similarly, you can't get paid twice for doing the same work, known

as “double dipping.” So if you are getting paid to work with students at your school as a school counselor, you certainly shouldn’t bill their insurance company for a fee, even though you technically can.

Lastly, remember to keep your notes and records separate. This also goes for access to records. If, as a CMHC, you would find it helpful to look up a client’s academic data, it would not be ethical for you to do so just because you have access to those records in your role as a school counselor. You would still need to get permission to access those records and, as we suggest, have another school counselor access and provide the data for you to best keep things “above board.”

Side Hustle Spotlight: Kate Bailin

If you are a super ambitious side hustler and have an interest in starting more than one side hustle, you will love Kate Bailin’s spotlight story. Kate is a counseling dynamo who juggles a full-time school counseling career with two part-time side hustles, one in private practice and the other in resource writing! You can check out her fabulous counseling resources on her website (<https://edukateandinspire.blogspot.com/>) or take a look at her private practice website (<https://willow-center.com/>). In her story, she details all the steps she took to start both of her lucrative side jobs.

I am currently working two part-time jobs to supplement my full-time career as an elementary school counselor. My first part-time position is working as a curriculum and resource designer for Teachers Pay Teachers (TpT). I design resources to help keep school counselors organized and efficient. I also create engaging, hands-on lessons that are easy for counselors to implement at their schools. All of these resources can be found at my EduKate and Inspire TpT

store (<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Edukate-And-Inspire>).

Along with creating resources, I also manage a blog and social media accounts to share ideas and resources with other counselors. Both the blog and social media help to supplement my income because they drive traffic to my TpT Store. On my blog, I share how I use the counseling resources that I have created. I also write posts with organization tips and ideas for counselors. On social media, I enjoy connecting with other counselors around the world. School counseling can feel like working on an island, so I love how blogging and social media have helped me connect with other counselors worldwide. Feel free to connect with me on my Instagram page (<https://www.instagram.com/edukateinspire/>).

I first discovered TpT when I was working as a second-grade teacher and looking for resources to supplement my curriculum. As I began purchasing resources from other teacher-authors, I soon realized that other teachers could benefit from the resources I had created for my own classroom. I have always been interested in graphic design and curriculum design, so TpT was a natural fit for me.

When I transitioned from being a classroom teacher to a school counselor, I took a break from TpT to focus my time and energy on my new career. After a year of working as a school counselor, I began to utilize social media to share what was working for me as a new counselor. I quickly realized that my ideas and resources could be helpful to other counselors and dove back into my blog, social media, and TpT. I spend a significant amount of time developing resources that work for me, and it is very rewarding knowing that my ideas can benefit other counselors and therefore impact more children.

Growing up, my mom worked in education, and my dad worked in the mental health field. I have always been interested in both careers, so it is not surprising that my career path led me in both directions.

After getting a bachelor's degree in education, I began a dual master's degree program. I earned a master's degree in Mental Health Counseling from Spring Arbor University and a School Counseling endorsement from The University of Toledo. As a dually licensed counselor, I understand the importance of working with schools and families to develop a supportive, team approach.

I worked as a school counselor for three years before beginning my work as a therapist at a private practice. I wanted to make sure that I had a firm foundation in school counseling before adding another career to my plate. As a school counselor, one of my favorite parts of the job is individual counseling; however, within the school setting, counselors are very limited in their ability to dive into issues with students because it is out of their scope. In my area, there are not very many therapists who specialize in working with children. I decided to pursue working at a private practice to begin to fulfill the need in my community.

Near the end of my third year as a school counselor, I was offered the opportunity to begin working part-time at a private practice. The practice seemed like it would be a great fit for me, so I cautiously added one more career onto my plate! The practice offers me a lot of flexibility in scheduling my hours, and I work with a great, supportive staff. I work with children who are experiencing anxiety, depression, anger, low self-esteem, grief, and behavioral issues. I use a strengths-based approach to help children develop social skills, conflict resolution skills, emotional regulation, and coping skills to deal with life's challenges. My motivation comes from being able to impact children and their families positively.

Currently, I work one evening a week and every other Saturday. I work with children ages 5-12 and help them explore their problems in a non-threatening manner using play therapy techniques. In addition to seeing clients individually, I am also running three small groups this summer that focus on emotional regulation, social skills,

and coping skills. Being a therapist allows me to use my counseling skills in a different setting, which is both mentally challenging and rewarding.

Nearly all of the knowledge, skills, and experiences from school counseling are transferrable to my careers in curriculum design and private practice. In addition, my former career as a classroom teacher has also had an excellent impact on my current work. I have a strong foundation in child development, which has helped me create developmentally appropriate lessons. I have also developed many interpersonal skills working in the field of education, which is beneficial to customer service for TpT, interacting with others on social media, and working with families in private practice. Working with children as an educator, school counselor, and a therapist has helped me understand the social-emotional needs of children in various settings.

My true motivation for selling resources on TpT comes from the ability to impact children all over the world. When I look at the data from my TpT sales, I am able to see that my resources have been purchased in 39 different countries. I could never have imagined that my resources could impact children in New Zealand, Iceland, Guam, South Africa, The Cayman Islands, and beyond!

As a counselor/author on TpT, I have also been able to connect and network with other counselors who sell resources on TpT. It is very fulfilling to be able to connect with other like-minded people who are working to bring quality resources and positive attention to our field. Collaborating with other counselor authors helps inspire creativity and motivates me to create high-quality resources. I have been fortunate to develop friendships with counselor authors through social media without meeting in real life!

To me, the main benefit of working as a children's therapist is that I get to expand my counseling skills. I enjoy getting to work closely with parents to create interventions that will work for the

family. As a school counselor, I am often not able to impact the home environment; however, as a therapist, I am afforded the opportunity to work much more closely with a family.

There are so many components that make up the school counselor career. Although I am fortunate to be able to spend a good part of my day working directly with children, it often seems like counseling ends up being a small part of the job. As a therapist, I get a solid 50 minutes to work directly with the child and family. While doing therapy, I feel like I am able to use my counseling skills to make a greater impact, which is very rewarding.

The biggest challenge of being a TpT author is finding the extra time to work on resources. As a full-time school counselor, I am drained when I get home from work. It is very challenging to continue working in the evenings, and I often find that my weekends are best spent on self-care and family time. Although I have a large number of resources that I have created for myself, it is a challenge to find the extra time to make them marketable to sell on TpT.

Another challenge of resource creation is marketing. I am an introvert by nature, so it is challenging for me to put myself out there on social media to market my resources. Being a salesperson does not come naturally to me! It also takes a lot of extra time to figure out the best methods to use social media, which then takes away from the time I have to create resources.

The biggest challenge to working as a therapist is the skillset required for the career. As a new therapist, it often feels like I am back in my internship, learning what works and what does not. Although I enjoy being able to dive deep into issues, it usually requires extra time spent out of session to research intervention ideas. Further, I am required to diagnose clients for insurance purposes, which is very different than my scope as a school counselor. It can be challenging to pinpoint a specific diagnosis for a client, and I would prefer to treat symptoms rather than diagnose.

An additional challenge of working as a therapist is maintaining my licensure. I currently have three licenses that I keep active—my teaching license, my school counseling license, and my professional counseling license. It can be overwhelming to keep up with the licensing requirements and the costs of license renewals. Further, because I am not yet an independently licensed counselor, I also meet regularly for supervision, which is an extra out-of-pocket cost.

If you are interested in designing resources to sell on TpT, I recommend doing a lot of background research first to see if it will be a good fit for you. Get involved in TpT seller Facebook groups or the TpT Forum. Talk to other sellers and ask them about some of the benefits and challenges of selling on TpT. There is a large amount of background knowledge that is beneficial before selling resources on TpT. Take the time to learn about graphic design, copyrights, terms of use, social media, and business practices.

Most importantly, before you begin selling on TpT, take the time to think about your passions in the counseling field and start to work on discovering your niche. There are many talented TpT authors in the counseling field, and it often feels as if everything has already been created. Take the time to figure out where you excel and what makes your resources different. For example, I have found my niche in organization and documentation. I create many resources that specialize in helping other counselors stay organized and efficient. It may take time to find your niche, but there is definitely still space left in the market for unique counseling resources.

My advice to school counselors who would like to work as a therapist is to get to a place in your career where you have the time and mental capacity to challenge yourself. I completed both my school counseling internship and clinical counseling internship while working full time as a classroom teacher. Looking back to those two internship years, I realize that they were very challenging and required a great deal of endurance and grace for myself.

Once licensed as a therapist, I waited three years before accepting a clinical counseling position. I recommend waiting until you find the practice or agency that will be a good fit for you. I looked for a practice with an owner who would allow me to work flexible hours and utilize my passions to create small groups for children. It was also important for me to find a practice that had a staff of therapists with a variety of clinical backgrounds and specialties. I recommend exploring the practices and agencies in your area to help you get a feel for what may work best for you.

Looking Ahead

Toward the end of this book, we'll give you other viable side hustle ideas that, although did not make the cut for our "Big Seven," deserve to be included because of their potential to be a good fit for school counselors. In the meantime, let's turn our attention to the "nuts and bolts" for starting or improving your school counselor side hustle.

PART III

GETTING IT RIGHT: “NUTS AND BOLTS”

In the final part of *School Counselor Side Hustle*, we get down to details, fundamentals, and the practicalities of your side hustle. Here, you'll learn more about a range of topics including setting up your company, using an agreement document, establishing fees, building a website, networking, and so much more.

CHAPTER 10

GETTING IT RIGHT, THE “NUTS AND BOLTS”

“Ideas are cheap. Execution is everything.”

Chris Sacca, *Shark Tank*

To this point, we’ve let you know about some fantastic side hustles that school counselors have developed. Our side hustle spotlights shared with us what they did and how they did it. From our own experiences, and from what we learned from our side hustle stars, we next focus on more of the “*nuts and bolts*” of making it happen. From inspiration to perspiration, it’s time to get practical. Know that, at no time, are we giving advice, only sharing what has worked for us. Remember, we don’t have MBA degrees or a great deal of formal business training. We learned by trial and error, from the school of “hard knocks,” paid for by sweat equity. You will have to ultimately decide what is right for you and what is appropriate in your state. There is a high probability that you too will learn some unpleasant, yet valuable lessons along the way.

There is no way to predict without a doubt how things will pan out. You will have to decide what level of risk you are willing to take and for what types of anticipated rewards. Sometimes, you won't know how things will go until the rubber meets the road. With careful researching, planning, and lots of due diligence, however, you can mitigate your risks and stack the deck.

Setting Up Your Company

Although I (Russ) already had a side hustle going, mostly doing live workshops and presentations, the need to start an official company or business came to light for me in 2004. It was around that time that I developed the *World Wide Web Boot Camp CD*, a CD-ROM that school counselors could purchase, pop into their computer, and take themselves through a self-led workshop that helps them understand how to use the (then more infant) Internet. I was having some recurring nightmares (literally) that thousands of school counselors who might eventually purchase the CD would suddenly have their computers wiped out or corrupted because of some accidental bug or virus that ended up on the final CD for distribution. At the same time, I was a few years out of debt, finally making ends meet, and actually had some personal assets that I thought I should probably start protecting. Eventually, because of the Internet, I was becoming wary of giving out my social security number to schools and organizations that needed it for the required IRS paperwork. With a company, I could then give them a federal identification employee number instead. So on January 10, 2005, Sabella & Associates, LLC was born. As a side note, the *World Wide Web Boot Camp CD* worked just fine among thousands of users, and everyone's computer stayed intact.

What I did not anticipate about having a company were the other benefits that I would eventually learn more about. For example, owning your own company may:

- Give you access to business discounts, special deals, and bulk supplies in retail and online (e.g., Amazon Business; <http://www.amazonbusiness.com/>).
- Give you access to credit cards designed for businesses that can help you with your accounting and analytics. I use both PayPal and American Express. At the end of every year, these companies make it very simple for me to download all transactions, both income and expenses, and send it over to my accountant for her to do her work with tax preparation.
- Allow for tax deductions that you might not usually be able to take. For example, if you use your home office for your side hustle business, you might be able to deduct related household expenses such as furniture, computers, paper, Internet service, cable television, and maybe even your expensive cell phone plan. Check with your accountant for how this works in your state.
- Allow you to set up a self-employment pension or SEP IRA. As of this writing, the IRS says you can, “Contribute as much as 25 percent of your net earnings from self-employment (not including contributions for yourself), up to \$55,000 for 2018 (\$54,000 for 2017; \$53,000 for 2015 and 2016).” This will, hopefully, supplement your main hustle retirement so that you can maintain the lifestyle to which you will become accustomed when your side hustle goes wild!
- Allow you to use a special drive-through window for doing business at the bank.

Although you can set up your company by yourself, you may want to work with a professional to do it right. Once you know what you want, it can be started in a few hours and finished in a few days. In general, here’s how it works:

1. **Choose a company name.** Don't get too hung up on this because you can always change this later if you like. Also, know that your business name can operate under a different name than your company name. A "doing business as" or DBA form takes minutes to complete.
2. **Get your Employer Identification Number (EIN).** Some types of companies such as "limited liability company or LLC" and partnerships require that you have an EIN, others do not. In any case, you should get an EIN so that you won't have to give out your social security number. Having an EIN will probably reduce the chances that you become the target of identity theft. You should be able to apply for and get an EIN for free using the IRS website at <http://bit.ly/ein-online2>. Be on the lookout and beware of Internet sites that charge for this free service.
3. **Fictitious Name.** If you operate your business under a name other than your own, you will probably need to set up what is known as a fictitious name. Procedures for filing for a fictitious name vary among states. In many states, all you have to do is go to the county offices (or their website) and pay a registration fee to the county clerk; they'll then provide you with a fictitious name certificate. In other states, you also have to place a fictitious name advertisement, usually in the classifieds section of your local newspaper for a certain amount of time. The cost of filing a fictitious name notice ranges from \$10 to \$100. Your local bank may require a fictitious name certificate to open a business account for you. You'll need a business account to deposit checks written to your company.
4. **Register locally.** Especially if you are working from home, you may need to register your company with your local municipality (county and/or city), which usually requires a

business license. Remember, use your EIN instead of your Social Security number to identify your business.

5. **Articles of Incorporation.** For an LLC, you will eventually need to file the Articles of Organization, sometimes called the "Certificate of Formation" for your company. To learn more, here is an informative website that can lead you in the right direction: <http://bit.ly/llc-form>.

“Work for Hire” Agreement

At a certain point, once you’ve determined what you are being hired to do, you will need an official agreement signed by you and the hiring agent. Often, school districts must use their own process for hiring you which includes a review of your credentials, approval by a supervisor or the school board, and finally, a contract. If, however, the other party does not require you to use their contract, you will need one to give them. Appendix B provides a sample agreement template which I (Russ) have used for quite some time, feel free to use it as is or adapt it as you see fit (also available as a Word document at <http://bit.ly/sh-agreement>). The University of California Berkley School of Law also has a more extensive sample agreement for independent contractors available online at <http://bit.ly/agreement-sample>. We are of the belief that the agreement should be detailed enough to be clear about expectations for both parties but not so complicated that it requires assistance from an attorney before signing.

As part of the agreement, it is very likely that the hiring agent will require you to submit a W-9 form. The W-9 form (officially, the "Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification") is used in the United States income tax system by a third party who must file an information return with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Companies use your W-9 for accounting purposes but do not send the form to the IRS. The information is used to prepare 1099-

MISC forms at the end of the year. What I (Russ) usually do is to keep a PDF of a W-9 form handy, already completed with my business information (e.g., federal ID number, address, etc.), and already signed. After I email the form to them, all the company has to do is write in the date, and this part is complete.

Fees and Prices

One of the most frequently asked questions we get is, “*How much should I charge?*” This question is easiest to answer if you are selling merchandise such as t-shirts, coffee cups, or stress balls. Most companies simply tack on a percentage of their own costs of doing business as their target profit margin. This could be anywhere from 30 percent to 100 percent (or more), depending on volume and value. Some electronic storefront services determine that for you. So for example, CafePress has an extensive pricing policy (see <http://bit.ly/cp-pricing>) whereby, “*You simply set your retail price above the Base Price. When you sell an item, we keep the Base Price and we send you the markup.*” If you are selling a book through Amazon.com, you will also be able to set your base price, and Amazon will figure out what their fees are and what royalties you will get after a sale.

However, you still need to determine a base price for merchandise. How much should you charge for your new book or that funny and inspirational t-shirt you designed? If your decision is based on how hard you worked on it and how valuable you think it is, you’ll probably get it wrong. Most people don’t care about that. They *do*, however, care about how valuable the item is to *them*. The challenge is to find your pricing sweet spot, the fee or cost that is not too high as to be prohibitive but also not too low as to leave money on the table. Also, items or services that are priced too low right out of the gate may inadvertently send a message to potential consumers that the item is not worth very much. Luckily, any mistake you make is probably not fatal. If you must, you could increase sales or even

liquidate your entire inventory with a few good deals, coupons, and BOGOs (buy one, get one). Because online storefronts typically create an item on-demand, it's even easier. There is no inventory, so you can just delete the item if it's not selling and remove it from your catalog to make space for something else.

When it comes to services such as delivering professional development, writing assessment reports, consulting with an organization, or related work, pricing is typically reflected in two parts: expenses and fees. Expenses are easy. You just need to recoup your flight, hotel, travel, food, and other related costs. More challenging is how to find the "sweet spot" for your (speaking or consultation) fee. There are several considerations when determining your fees (Square.com, 2018):

Competition. Who else is providing a similar service as you are? While you don't need to adapt your competition's fees, it is important to weigh how much others are charging to remain competitive.

Location. Another factor that may drive competition is your location. If your services are needed in California and you live in New York, you may be outbid by someone who does not have as many traveling and lodging expenses to worry about. Then again, technology has somewhat minimized this factor. Some projects may be conducive to distance work with minimal face-to-face collaboration. Time is money. You may want to charge more for traveling long distances, especially when they require extra overnight stays just to get there and back.

Experience and Expertise. How much experience you have influences how much you can charge. However, content expertise is not the only factor. For example, you may be an expert in bullying risk reduction, although if you don't know how school systems work, you will fall short for how you might deliver that expertise to students, teachers, and others in a school system. The consultation process begins with assessing the "fit" between what a potential

client or client system wants and what you have to offer. This includes discussing and deciding on the most appropriate types of delivery methods such as onsite training, student assembly, webinar, retreat, academy, or something else. You will need to do some legwork to make sure that you aren't overvaluing or undervaluing your level of experience and expertise. For example, there are relatively very few people with both an understanding of school counseling and technology, both interactive and informational. These people can probably charge more for a quality product or service than others who know technology but do not quite reach the expert level of understanding school counseling programs.

Scope. Some school counseling related projects may require greater in-depth knowledge of the profession and any related issues. Consulting with a school district about a systems-wide issue surrounding equity is not necessarily the same as consulting with, let's say, a parent about their child's college admissions process. The former project will certainly require more time, expertise, and possibly support staff. And expectedly, successfully completing the project will cost more.

Just the right combination of these factors will help you determine your fees or whether you even take on a side hustle at all. If you land on a side project that requires a great deal of expertise, is large in scope, has little competition, and is not prohibitive because of location, you are on the right track to providing a valuable service/product and making a significant income. If the proper levels of these factors don't add up, then you might decide to pass on a project, or at least lower your fees to remain competitive and viable.

To best determine your price points and fees, you need to do some comparative research while keeping these factors in mind. Compare your product items or services to others that may be similar to the one you are offering. Now, make some adjustments based on a few important considerations. First, who is selling the item or providing

the services? You may be imparting much of the same wisdom as Oprah all these years, but you will not be able to charge the same speaking fee that she does. Your new tool, developed specifically for school counselors, may rival a similar tool at Apple or Microsoft, although I bet you don't have that company's reputation, distribution power, or scalability. They may be able to do it for much less (given their producing power) or be able to charge much more than you because of their respective track records. Second, although not very conventional, you might just ask your target consumer. Send them a description of your product or service, maybe even a draft/prototype, and then survey them about what they would be willing to pay for it. Third, what is the nature of the industry for which you will be speaking?

For example, early in my career, I (Russ) learned that the same keynote address is worth a whole lot more at a large corporate event versus a small organization on a relatively shoe-string budget. With so many side hustle lessons learned the hard way, I'm glad to report that this lesson was learned the "easy way." A huge health system in Florida was just launching their new social networking platform when they found me and asked me to provide some digital reputation and social networking etiquette training to their group. Without even negotiating, they offered me a fee payment three times what I was used to, would have asked for, or expected. This opened my eyes to the potential and possibility of getting into more lucrative markets. Since that time, I've successfully been able to land a few more of these speaking engagements (e.g., working with a group of pediatricians in the area of cyberbullying and a speaking bureau that coordinates significant gatherings for all types of professionals).

So, you still haven't told me what I should charge? . . . We're not there yet. You still need to think about a few more options.

What kind of fee *structure* should I use? Even after you have considered factors like competition, experience/expertise, distance,

and scope, you will still need to determine what type of fee structure to use. Consultants usually choose a pricing model or fee structure for their work to remain transparent. This also helps guide the consultant when setting the right price for the right job. There are a few different structures that most consultants use:

- **An hourly rate:** In this time-based arrangement, you would bill by the number of hours worked. For example, some of our school counselor side hustlers were earning about \$25 to \$45 per hour while doing online language tutoring.
- **A project-based rate:** Before the project begins, you and your client agree on a fixed rate based on the project. A typical project-based rate may be whatever a university offers its adjuncts to teach a class or supervise a group of interns. Your side hustle may include creating customized signs that school counselors can hang in their offices. Each sign is a certain price based on its size and complexity. A project rate may be determined after the consultant speaks to the client about their needs and defines the scope of the project. In this case, you would provide a quote and go from there, negotiating, and finally settling on a set fee or price.
- **Percentage basis.** You charge a percent of gross profit. For example, you agree to do a full-day (six hour) workshop for up to 200 people for a flat fee of 40 percent of all registrations. In this model, you share with the organization both the risks and rewards, especially without really knowing how many people may end up participating. A safer fee structure would be a minimal flat fee *plus* a percent of revenues. For example, in this scenario, you might charge \$1,500 plus 30 percent of all registration fees for the event (not including expenses).
- **A performance-based rate:** You charge the client based on the performance or results of your work. If your side hustle is

being a Solution-Focused Executive Coach, you might try this creative (and risky) model for determining your fees. In this case, you would set a fee that is only paid for if certain benchmarks have been met. The greater the company or person performs, the more you earn.

- **A combination fee:** You and your client set a fixed rate based on the project as well as time spent on the project. You can get creative and combine different fee structures. For example, if you have a book you want to promote, you may offer to do a workshop on the topic for little to no fees if an organization agrees to buy a copy of the book for each participant. Or conversely, every workshop participant may get a 50 percent off coupon for a related book which you have authored.

Especially with non-tangible services (such as professional development), there may be a tendency to undervalue and not charge enough for a given service. One reason for this is that a school counselor or educator may have unfortunately become accustomed to not earning fair pay as part of their main hustle, and this mindset has crept into their side hustle. Another reason is that we often tend to request payment on a per-hour basis. Consider the speaker who earns, say, \$2,000 for giving a full-day (six-hour) workshop. You could also look at this as making over \$330 per hour! Carried out to a yearly salary working 40 hours per week, that would be \$686,400.00! You may have doubts about whether what you are offering is worth a high six-figure yearly salary. However, know that this is a misleading calculation. You are not making \$330 per hour even though your work is delivered in that one hour. When you consider the dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of hours that it took you to develop that expertise, which you can so elegantly deliver in a few hours, your per hour earnings go way, way down. If you are

truly an expert and what you are offering is of high value, even if it only takes a relatively short time to deliver, you should not sell yourself short. Never sell yourself short. Remember how you got here.

So what should I charge for my services? Well, as you can see, that is a very tough question to answer given all the considerations. Although several factors go into it, it's not unrealistic to charge \$1,000 to \$2,500 for a featured talk at a conference. Add in some program presentations, it is not unheard of to earn from \$2,000 to \$3,000 for the day. If you are highly an expert, well-known, and one of the best in the world at what you do, you could command significantly more. If you have a few minutes, check out this website for some other ideas about building a speaking side hustle: <https://thespeakerlab.com/>.

Liability Insurance

If you are an ASCA member, you already have some liability insurance. Our recommendation is to consult with the provider to see if what you are doing is covered under that policy. If not, talk to them about supplementing your policy or getting an additional one that will. As of this writing, the company that administers the ASCA policy (Forrest T. Jones & Company, Inc.; <https://www.ftj.com/>) also has an option to upgrade your insurance for doing consulting work. For \$84 per year, you can increase your primary coverage and add a part-time rider that covers up to 15 hours per week of consulting or part-time work in a related field. If you do not currently have a liability insurance policy, you can still contact this company or search for one of their competitors (e.g., Google "small business insurance"). Another option is to speak with the company that insures your home and/or car to see if they can provide a rider or additional policy for your new small business.

Copyright and Royalty Free

When you enter the realm of getting paid for a side hustle, you no longer have the luxury of using other's intellectual property as part of education or "fair use." Lest you be accused of being a thief, it's important to know the usage rights for any intellectual property (e.g., a photo, handout, or PowerPoint slide) before you use it. Luckily, when it comes to graphics and illustrations, there is an amazing abundance of free content available. If it's not free, you can still sometimes legitimately use the content if you give appropriate credit.

When using Google Image search (Google, 2018), you can filter your results to find images, videos, or text that you have permission to use. In Google images, click on Tools, and then Usage Rights. The usage rights filter in Advanced Search shows you content either labeled with a Creative Commons, similar license, or is in the public domain. For images, the usage rights filter also shows you images labeled with the GNU Free Documentation license (Free Software Foundation, 2008). Then, click on one of the following three options:

- **Free to use or share:** Allows you to copy or redistribute its content if the content remains unchanged.
- **Free to use share or modify:** Allows you to copy, modify, or redistribute in ways specified in the license.
- **Commercially:** If you want content for commercial use, be sure to select an option that includes the word "commercially."

Even with free photos, read the license carefully. For example, you may be required to provide "attribution." That is, you must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner but not

in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. Of course, you can always contact the author for permission; however, you can search for items that are intended for use, even for commercial purposes, for free. For your convenience, check out a few of our favorite royalty-free image websites:

- **Pexels.** All photos on Pexels can be used for free for commercial and non-commercial use. Attribution is not required. Giving credit to the photographer or Pexels is not necessary but always appreciated. <https://www.pexels.com/>
- **Pixabay.** Over 1.5 million royalty-free stock photos and videos shared by a generous community. <https://pixabay.com/>
- **StockSnap.** Every image on StockSnap is governed exclusively by the generous terms of the Creative Commons CCo license (Creative Commons, 2018). The person who associated a work with this deed has dedicated the work to the public domain by waiving all of his or her rights to the work worldwide under copyright law, including all related and neighboring rights, to the extent allowed by law. You can copy, modify, distribute, and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, all without asking permission. <https://stocksnap.io/>
- **Unsplash.** Over 300,000 free (do whatever you want) high-resolution photos. <https://unsplash.com/>

Building Your Website

I remember when I (Russ) created my first website in 1995. The world wide web (WWW), as we referred to it then, was only recently made available to the public and just starting to gain awareness among school counselors (and the public for that matter). I received a grant to develop a website called the Counselor Education Resource Center (CERC) to share information among counseling professors. I remember learning HTML, the language of the web, coding my pages

in Microsoft Word, uploading it to a university server, fixing errors, and then re-uploading. Webpages back then were made up of just text. Adding graphics and placing them exactly where you wanted was complicated and not done very often. Then, I remember when Microsoft FrontPage was released. FrontPage was one of the first WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) HTML editors and website administration tools. Instead of coding with HTML, you could create your webpages more like a Word document. Life was good.

Fast forward to now. Web pages are considerably much easier to create and manage with built-in “do it yourself” editors. Today’s editors are quite powerful, allowing you to easily embed images, video, polls, links, and more. They support team collaboration and scheduling when pages get published and unpublished. With website building tools of today, you can automatically apply formatting and themes to your work which results in an overall slick and uniform looking website. Next, let’s turn to some options for building your website and what type of content you might include. We’ll look at a few choices that span the continuum between hiring someone and doing it yourself.

Hiring a Developer

If you are not up for it, don’t have the time to learn, and have from \$500 to \$800 to spend, you might seriously consider hiring a professional web designer to create a custom website for you. At the very minimum, this amount of money will get you the theme, navigation structure, links/buttons to your social networks, and a few empty pages to get you started on building content. You should also be covered for having the developer install some apps that enhances the functionality of your site. These can include apps such as:

- a “lightbox” for viewing photos and videos (i.e., photos and videos pop up on the screen with a dark background, like a theatre)
- an email subscription service
- visitor analytics
- a redirect app that forwards people from an old URLs to new URLs
- a file uploader
- share buttons (those little icons below a blog post that make it easy to share the post to social networks)
- automated data backup

If you are selling stuff, you can ask the developer if he or she would consider connecting a shopping button to your merchant account such as PayPal.

With technology, just about anything is possible with time and money. The less money you have to invest, the more time it will take you to do this yourself. However, even if you have time, remember that your website will probably be the face of your product, service, and/or company. Having a professional create your site can make a difference in your bottom line in the long run. Investing in a good website developer will save you time and may bring increased traffic to your site. This is better than doing it yourself and coming up with a site that has a less professional, homemade look and feel.

My (Russ’s) primary sites (schoolcounselor.com and mydatabootcamp.com) were developed by Ionicnet (<https://ionicnet.com/>); I highly recommend them. They are specialists in producing WordPress websites, the most popular type of platform in the world, probably because they make being online so easy. An advantage of using a web developer that has already done a website for a school counselor side hustle is that they are already “broken in.” In fact, all you have to do is let them know you want a

similar site to one that already exists (including mine), and they can duplicate the functionality or user experience while still making it look unique. Check out Ionicnet's portfolio at <https://ionicnet.com/portfolio/> which might serve as a menu for the type of website you might like to have.

You can also find a web developer on Upwork (<https://www.upwork.com/>), a freelancing website that connects you to experts from the US or worldwide. Other similar options include:

- Codeable. <https://codeable.io/>
- Freelancer. <https://www.freelancer.com/>
- Guru. <https://www.guru.com/>
- Thumbtack. <https://www.thumbtack.com>

DIY Websites

If you want or need to build a website on your own, there has never been a better time to do so. Let's overview how you might go about it. There are two primary components for you to consider—a domain name (the URL that people will go to) and a web host (the company that will host and serve your content). You can actually do both at the same time. That is, a hosting company can also register your domain name when setting up an account. Among the hundreds of choices, I (Russ) recommend four:

Google Sites (<https://sites.google.com/>). Google Sites makes it easy for anyone to create and manage simple, secure, group websites. Getting started is easy, and there are many helpful templates. More than just a visual theme, site templates can include site structure and navigation, custom page templates, embedded gadgets, and more. If you don't already have an account with G Suite, you'll be asked to create one before you can set up your Google Site. Once you've done that, you'll be asked to use your own domain that you purchased

from a domain registrar. If you don't have one, you'll be given the opportunity to buy one from Google before you move forward (Nations, 2018). Here's a YouTube site that shows you how it's done: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AoQCae6UuSY>.

Google Blogger (<https://www.blogger.com/>). Blogger is technically not really a site but a blogging platform. However, you wouldn't know the difference. My (Russ) GuardingKids.com site is built using blogger (<https://www.guardingkids.com/>). Blogger makes it easy to choose templates and embed various apps. When you create a new blog, you will also be given the opportunity to purchase a domain name. The biggest challenge with using this platform is that, although you can embed videos, photos, and links, Blogger will not let you host files (e.g., Word, PowerPoint, or PDF). This is an easy problem to solve as you can just link to and share files from your Google Drive, Dropbox, or other cloud-based server. Watch this video to see what I mean: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_8wFBC3c9I.

Wix (<https://www.wix.com/>). This company is known for an especially user-friendly editor. You start with a blank slate or choose from over 500 designer-made templates. Then, you simply “drag and drop” anything you want to include from backgrounds to custom forms to videos. You can easily include a blog, video/photo gallery, online store, and custom interactions.

WordPress (<https://wordpress.com/>). Another user-friendly web host, WordPress allows you to create an account, register a domain name, and begin editing within minutes. You can start for free and then upgrade for advanced customization, security, and other tools.

Content is King

Having a website is not a “build it, and they will come” situation. You have to provide valuable resources, tools, and information to make your site useful and, consequently, generate traffic and

business. Setting up your website is probably the easy part. Keeping it organized and consistently updated takes more planning and time. Consider periodically writing blogs, posting videos, and providing lots of free materials such as handouts, worksheets, curriculum, and videos. Include an app on your site that allows users to subscribe. This means that, after they enter their email address, they'll automatically receive new content from the blog portion of your site. Here are a few other strategies for drawing visitors to your site:

- Use Amazon Giveaway, which allows customers to create a giveaway using eligible physical products shipped and sold by Amazon.com or Kindle eBooks. To host an Amazon Giveaway, the host selects an eligible product from Amazon.com, enters the details of the giveaway, and pays for it up front. See <https://www.amazon.com/giveaway> to learn more.
- Advertise on a social network such as Facebook or Twitter. If you are promoting a book, you can also use Amazon Advertising (<https://advertising.amazon.com/>). Finally, think about placing an ad in a periodical such as the ASCA newsletter or magazine (<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/advertise-exhibit>).
- Make sure all of your handouts for presentations are available on your site. For example, see <http://schoolcounselor.com/professional-development/handouts/>.
- Post links to your website on social media networks (more on that in the next chapter).

Training/Service Request Forms

For many years, I (Russ) took workshop requests via email. Only a few years ago, it occurred to me that I should set up an inquiry form

on my website. The form made it quick and easy for people to inquire or begin the process of setting up professional development for their school or organization. Perhaps by coincidence (but probably not), the number of inquiries significantly increased. What I also discovered is that it made the process easier on my end because the form asked for information that, without the form, I would have to collect via a phone interview. The form seems to have saved me a big step and a lot of time to get the ball rolling. I created the form in Google forms and then embedded it on the schoolcounselor.com website. When someone submits an inquiry, I automatically get an email with the information. From this, I can quickly respond with any information they are requesting.

To accomplish having the form sent to me in a usable and friendly format, I used the Google Sheet add-in called autoCrat (see <http://bit.ly/autocrate-addin>). Here is the add-in description from the add-in website: *“AutoCrat is a multi-purpose document merge tool that allows you to take data from a spreadsheet and merge it into a document via a template. Tell autoCrat which fields to merge via <<merge tags>> and then let autoCrat mass-generate personalized documents. Optionally send the documents as email attachments. Optionally tell autoCrat to run when new forms are submitted to create a truly automated processes.”*

Pay Per View

As I described earlier, moving from a process of physically distributing my Data Boot Camp CD's to providing it online took a great deal of research. There existed two pain points in this process. First, how does one go about creating a “paywall” so that the content is only accessible after purchasing a license? Second, how to keep the content secure? That is, once accessed, how can you prevent others from downloading or otherwise moving the content into the public domain? To accomplish this, I spoke with programmers, domestic and abroad, who wanted to charge me thousands of dollars. Not

feasible. I finally figured out a low cost and elegant way to do this using WordPress, a plugin called WishList, and Vimeo. The system has worked beautifully and almost flawlessly now for several years. Here's how it works:

1. Set up a WordPress website with pay-to-view content.
2. If your content includes video, use Vimeo (<https://vimeo.com/>) to host them and, from there, embed them on your website. After uploading each video to Vimeo, make sure to set the privacy settings on “Only on sites I choose” and then specify your website. You will need a Vimeo Plus, Pro, or Business account for this which will cost you a very reasonable yearly fee. So, for example, my Vimeo setting for each Data Boot Camp for School Counselor video is set on <https://www.mydatabootcamp.com/>. This means that the video will only be displayed on pages from this URL. The next step will show you how to protect those pages using the WishList WordPress plugin.
3. Install the WishList plugin for maintaining a membership site (see <https://member.wishlistproducts.com/>). The WishList WordPress plugin will allow you to do two things. First, the plugin integrates very nicely with third-party payment shopping cart providers such as PayPal. So users can quickly pay for their membership and create their membership account in one quick session. With WishList, you can set up access levels such as free, basic, and premium if you like. You can also set up a trial membership too. In fact, you can have users upgrade or “graduate” their membership from one level to the next using a tiered payment structure. For example, after 30 days, you can automatically upgrade members from a Free Trial to the “Silver” level and charge more for higher levels of access—all within the same site. You will “embed”

your videos from Vimeo to your WordPress site. Second, the WishList plugin will only display webpages after a paid user logs in.

Catalog

After a while, you might develop a menu of products and services, enough to create a catalog (e.g., see <http://bit.ly/russ-pd>). A catalog, like a logo or business card, is also a great tool used to identify and reinforce brand awareness. This can be accomplished using a standard app such as Microsoft Word. The advantages of using Word are that you can print a few copies to send out to organizations or other potential customers/clients, all on demand. Or you can convert your document to PDF and make it available online where people can read and/or print it out for themselves. By the way, if you have an extensive catalog, you may want to include a table of contents. To create a table of contents in Microsoft Word, watch this instructional video: <https://schoolcounselor.com/using-microsoft-word-styles/>.

If you are selling merchandise and using an online service (e.g., <https://tictail.com>) such as our side hustle star Jeff Ream does, then you can simply embed your catalog on your website using provided embed codes, in this case, called a storefront widget. Jeff's storefront is directly accessible on his website at <https://shop.thecounselinggeek.com/>.

Another way to create a menu or catalog of merchandise is to manually build a page for each product that includes a "purchase" button at the end. Using PayPal, you can embed code that allows users to build a shopping cart of multiple items and quickly check-out using several forms of payment. Or such tools may also be available from your web host, especially using a WordPress plugin such as WP EasyCart (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/wp-easycart/>).

Having a product or service ready to go is a wonderful achievement. You might believe that what you have to offer is so awesome that word will quickly spread, and it will sell itself. Going viral is a beautiful thought, although is relatively quite rare. Your next step is to increase awareness and motivation for others to purchase what you are selling. This takes a great deal of effort as well. Let's next focus on promoting your wares.

CHAPTER 11

USING YOUR NETWORK TO INCREASE YOUR NET WORTH

"People want to do business with someone they like. If people like you, they're going to want to do business with you. And if they don't, you're going to have an almost insurmountable obstacle to overcome."

Barbara Corcoran, *Shark Tank*

Humans are social beings: We like to network; we *need* to network. Without even planning for it, you may have already developed strong personal networks with others in your communities and neighborhoods just based on human need. At work, you may find yourself gravitating toward those with whom a relationship is mutually beneficial. You may belong to a religious or spiritual network where you support and care for each other. Sports, hobbies, interests—these are all areas around where we build networks—relationships with others to support a given set of activities. Having a strong personal network helps us be connected to others who share resources for mutual development and growth

(Anklam, 2009). In some cases, we may intentionally and actively build a network of others who are interested in our products, services, or ideas. These networks can seriously boost your side hustle success, and building them is easier today than ever thanks to information and networking technologies.

Companies often hire celebrities because of the size of the celebrities' network. You might remember the "Oprah Effect." *The Oprah Winfrey Show* reached 44 million people each week. And those numbers translated into big sales for the products Oprah recommended. For example, in 2002, Lori Karmel purchased a then-floundering bakery. She said, *"We struggled for two years before the company began turning a profit, but I was persistent in getting samples out to the public. And in November 2004, my company experienced a bump of huge proportions when our Key Lime Bundt Cake was chosen as one of Oprah Winfrey's 'favorite things.' The show sparked a tsunami of online orders that knocked out our website's server, causing us to upgrade our online operations and expand its scope."* Similarly, Lisa Price, founder and president of Carol's Daughter, started her natural beauty products in her kitchen in 1994. Sales skyrocketed after *the Oprah Winfrey* show featured the start-up business with CNBC's Carl Quintanilla (CNBC, 2012).

So how then do you build a network, especially if you are not yet so lucky to be mentioned by a celebrity? Some of this happens naturally at separate social events or gatherings. Professional conferences are well-known to help participants connect while you are learning about the latest developments in the profession. Network building almost always requires planning and work. Here are some tips for building your network (Schawbel, 2012):

- **Stay focused.** Concentrate on the people who you know will be able to make a difference in your side hustle. Who would most benefit from your product, service, or expertise? You should

have already answered this question from the beginning as you were developing your side hustle idea or product.

- **Win-win.** It's crucial that both you and the other party equally gain when networking. If you benefit more than the other person, others might feel cheated and used.
- **Give before you receive.** No matter what your side hustle, the beginning months and years are challenging as others learn about your product or service. This can take some time, but eventually, others will speak about how you helped them in their work or life. Building your network will come at a cost.” It is likely that in the early stages of your side hustle, you will need to give away samples, free services, free downloadable tools, and more before you can start expecting to profit.
- **Become a connector.** You don't always have to gain something in a networking relationship. If you can introduce people who can benefit from one another, it's just as effective. You can build a stronger rapport with multiple people, and it brings great vibes your way (Collier, 2018).
- **Remember to reconnect.** After you choose the right people to network with, remember to stay in contact with them.
- **Use social networks.** LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are tools that you can use to connect in a personal way to different people interested in your side hustle. Through these networks, you can get introduced to new contacts, get referrals, and find people with whom you could potentially collaborate or partner. More on using social networks coming up next.
- **Start your own networking group.** You might conduct free webinars or host online “meet-ups” among like-minded others. That is, you can be a leader, creator, and host to a wonderful gathering that is fun and beneficial. People will remember you as the one who made it happen. You can set up

face-to-face networking time at conferences, in your school districts, and in partnership with local businesses. For example, how about a book signing event at a local family-owned bookstore? Or in conjunction with your local library, how about giving a free workshop on helping kids study and get better grades? Just remember to gather participants' contact information so you can stay in touch (e.g., lots of people like <https://www.eventbrite.com/> to help them manage event invitations and follow-up).

The Message

Before we get into the nuts and bolts of building a network, let's first focus on the nature of the message—the reason why others would come together. Your message should be thoughtful and clear before your product or service even hits the light of day. Second, the message about your product or service should be part of a memorable story. Third, your message must be trustworthy.

For some time now, I (Russ) have been working on a project that requires a great deal of computer programming. I've consulted with several programmers, one of whom happened to be a former employee of Amazon. He offered a suggestion toward the end of one of our conversations that I was already practicing, although it was confirming for me to hear it from someone who was part of a highly successful company. He said that, at Amazon, before a new product is ever launched, they are required to have every detail of it completed as if it were already available. That is, the description, product features, specifications, price, etc. were all pre-determined before any real customer could even purchase the product. When I thought I was ready, he recommended that I first draw up a one-page promotional flyer for the product or service *before* it ever hits the market. *"If you have trouble explaining what your product/service is, how it works, and why it will be valuable to the customer, then your product*

or service is not yet ready for prime time (pun intended ... get it? Prime. Amazon),” he said. This is the minimum level of planning that must go into every item before you should launch.

Your side hustle needs to be more than a product or service; it should have a history. Unlike a police report, don’t just detail the facts, tell them a story. For example, when I (Russ) let a principal or superintendent know about my work in cyber safety (digital reputation and cyberbullying), I give them a quick history of how I got here. Here is the introduction to this professional development opportunity before I even mention the workshop description, objectives, or other details:

Even though many of my counseling and technology skills have come in handy over the years, parenting is still a tough challenge. Hands down, no doubt, technology has been one of the greatest challenges over the years as my wife and I have been raising our two boys, Matteo and Giuseppe, now 19 and 25 years old. When they were younger, it seems as if we were approached with questions and requests daily. From video games to social networks, from mobile devices to new gadgets, making informed decisions was tough. This is especially true because the technological landscape was changing and developing at a dizzying pace. As someone who straddles being a “Boomer” and “GenXer,” and as someone who is focused on helping counselors with their technological literacy, I’ve been keeping up with this crazy technology ride ever since it got good, really good, in the 1980s.

One day a few years ago, my wife, Betty, quipped about how grateful she was that I was able to successfully negotiate technology with the kids based on what I knew according to research and best practice. I was already doing a significant amount of work helping kids to make responsible decisions for themselves regarding technology use. What Betty made me realize that day was that I also needed to help the people outfitting their kids with all this power—

the parents/guardians. These days, when a school district or other organization calls about cyber training, I tell them that a comprehensive approach is best: getting kids, parents, and educators on the same page. I also let them know that training should be ongoing, not just a one-time event.

Every product or service has a story. Maybe you found creating art to be an effective form of self-care, gave away your creations to others as gifts, and discovered your side hustle after that. Or perhaps you discovered a technique that has made you more efficient in your work and now generate additional revenue streams showing others how to do the same. So tell your story and be clear and concise about why others should be interested in what you have to offer.

Now let's discuss trust. We've talked about the role and value of trust when it comes to meeting deadlines and developing collaborative relationships as they pertain to your side hustle. Trust is important when it comes to how you network as well. Why should someone take even a minute to read your Facebook post? Why would they click on your link and spend valuable time reading your newest blog post or watching your latest video? Before we answer this question, let's examine what we mean by trust.

Most people would say that trust is a feeling, and they are correct. They would say trust is necessary between people who rely on each other, right again. But that still doesn't cover what trust really is. How can you be intentional about being trustworthy to others? The simple answer is that trust is technically the ability to predict. It's a bet. For example, if you pick me up from work three times a week, and you are consistently on time within three to five minutes, I can reliably predict that you will pick me up, on time, in the future. I "trust" that you will pick me up on time. Conversely, if you show up 30 to 45 minutes late now and again, I cannot trust you when you say you will pick me up at a certain time and day. It would make for

a risky bet. So trust is based on a track record, one's reliability over time.

Companies know that trust is built on reliability. Coca-Cola knows that every time you consume a beverage, your experience should be consistent, one that does not deviate from what you expected. This is true for all companies, which is why the margin of error in making hamburgers at McDonald's doesn't differ much within one store or even among many thousands of stores. Getting it right helps consumers get what they expected and helps build trust.

The lesson for building your side hustle network is that you must work hard at being consistent and reliable regarding your end of the bargain. You must come through with what your product or services promise to provide. If someone is having trouble with using a tool you develop, you must work hard at helping them if they are to trust you in the future with anything else. Just about every one of your posts, emails, comments, and other promotions must consistently be meaningful and helpful. When I open your next promotion or invest 15 minutes of time reading your work, I have to *trust* that it will be a rewarding experience. If not, I am more likely to ignore you, skip over communications, and opt out of your network. Therefore, you must be selective about the types, intensity, and especially the frequency of online posts or emails if people are to trust their investment in you and your work.

Networking Tools

Now we turn our attention to how you can use various technologies to communicate and connect with others. Interactive and networking technologies are tools that, just a couple of decades ago, were accessible to only wealthy individuals and large, successful corporations. Today, just about anyone with a device and access to the Internet can participate, share, and publish to millions of others

with merely a few clicks. There has honestly never been a better time to start a side hustle.

Podcasting

Podcasting has its roots dating back to the 1980s. With the advent of broadband Internet and portable digital audio playback devices, such as the iPod, podcasting began to catch hold in late 2004. The term “podcast” was first mentioned by Ben Hammersley in a 2004 *Guardian* newspaper article in which he rattled off possible names for this booming new medium; the “pod” of podcast is borrowed from Apple’s “iPod” digital media player, and the “cast” portion of podcast is taken from radio’s “broadcast” term. As a matter of clarity, just because it’s named after Apple’s iPod does not necessarily mean that you have to own or use an iPod—or any portable digital media player for that matter—to enjoy a podcast (Hammersley, 2004).

A good way to describe a podcast is to think of it as an on-demand Internet radio show; some are video, although most are only audio. Some shows include one or two hosts analyzing and discussing topics of the day for a specific industry or interest. Other shows more closely resemble a newscast. And yet, other shows may be instructional in nature. The menu of topics is astounding. Although difficult to determine, there are an estimated 550,000 podcasts out there with over 18.5 million episodes as of this writing (Locker, 2018).

In your side hustle, podcasts can serve you well in different ways. First, and probably most obvious, a podcast is an effective method for developing your network and promoting your hustle. Listeners who subscribe to your show should learn things that help them in their work and life. Producing your own podcast can increase awareness and promote your new products or service opportunities. Second, subscribing to other people’s podcasts is a form of on-demand professional development. It’s a terrific way for you to stay

informed about what matters in your area of expertise (Ormond, 2008). Learning more about what others are saying and doing helps you in making sound business decisions and can inspire you to do something that you did not think of yourself. Third, podcasts can help you expand on your product or service. For example, if you have a new book out, a podcast can help inform others of the topic, provide sample content, and help listeners apply ideas in an efficient and friendly way. Reading about a topic is one thing but listening to an author discuss the topic and provide additional examples is even better. Those who have not yet purchased your product may do so because of listening to you on your podcast.

Consider several advantages and disadvantages of podcasting.

Advantages:

- Podcasts are cheap to produce. All you need is a computer, decent microphone, audio editing software, and a podcast host. The latter two are free (more on that ahead)!
- Podcasts are not that difficult to produce. Once you get the hang of editing audio (splicing, cleaning up, and inserting background music), it's also a lot of fun.
- Consumers can listen at their own pace and time, kind of like an audiobook. They can even listen on the go, starting on one device while showering in the morning, continuing in their car on the way to work, and then again while exercising that evening. You can listen to podcasts on just about any Internet-enabled device including tablets, gaming consoles, smartphones, MP3 players, Amazon Echo, or Google Home to name a few.
- Podcast websites usually have ways for listeners to leave comments about each episode, allowing them to enter into a discussion with other listeners. In this way, podcasts

listeners/subscribers can become a community of individuals sharing a common interest. Podcasting is networking.

- Podcasts make information personal. In a podcast, the content is communicated directly by you, either verbally or through video. That's a much more intimate way of getting out information than reading it from an e-mail or document.
- Podcasts are convenient. Once you subscribe to a podcast using an app like Google Podcasts (<http://bit.ly/gcastapp>) or the Apple podcast app (probably already on your iPhone or available at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/podcasts/id525463029?mt=8>), each new episode is downloaded so that you don't even have to have an Internet connection to listen.
- Your podcast can include links or references that generate traffic to your website.

Disadvantages:

- Podcasting does take time. From planning to producing to editing, you'll want to make sure that you plan for "studio time" in your schedule.
- Podcasting requires talent. Radio talk show hosts tend to make this part look easy, but it's not. Having a tone, focus, and rhythm that is both informative and somewhat entertaining to others takes practice, like effective public speaking. It's normal to discover that your audience will grow as you get better at it.

So how exactly do you create a podcast? Let's cover some of the basics to get you started if you want to. For an excellent (and more detailed) guide to starting a podcast, we refer you to *How To Start A Podcast: A Complete Step-By-Step Guide (2018 Edition)* available online at <https://www.podcastinsights.com/start-a-podcast/>.

First, deciding on a podcast is a lot like deciding on your side hustle. Will your podcast be valuable and unique? Or could someone get what you are providing from an already established podcaster? You'll first need to explore the podcast-sphere to see what is available. Once you have figured out the type of content you want to provide, you can then move on to deciding your format. Who will be on your podcast? Will it be just you, or will you be interviewing others as guests? Will you take questions from your listeners via phone, tweet, or online comment? Personally, I (Russ) like to have a co-host with me so that sometimes I can speak directly to my audience, and other times, my audience becomes the "third person" in the room when I'm talking to the person sitting right next to me. I find that this results in more engaging conversation and diversity in points of view on a topic. It can also be helpful to have someone to keep things on track.

Another factor to think about is duration and frequency. Will you have a once per week 60-minute show or perhaps cut it up into two or three 15-minute shows per week? There is no one right answer to deciding, it really depends on what is most appropriate for delivering your specific content and what works for you. Now for the podcasting tools and services, let's look at the main ones.

How will you create your audio file?

The hardware and software required for creating a podcast are not that expensive. You can purchase a pretty good, high-definition, noise-canceling headset for less than \$99 (see <https://www.lifewire.com/best-microphones-4118424> for some recommendations). If you are interviewing someone in front of you, you can buy a cheap audio splitter so that each of you can have your own microphone. Again, not that expensive. Audio recording and editing software may come with your podcast host services. If you are using your own server or web host, you can use free software to

both record and edit. Audacity is a free multi-track audio editor and recorder (available from <https://sourceforge.net/projects/audacity/>). If you are interviewing someone on the phone, you can use Google Voice (<https://voice.google.com>) for free to record your conversation and download the resulting audio file. For other audio recording and editing software recommendations, visit <http://bit.ly/podcast-tech>.

How will your podcast be served?

You can host your podcast on your own website for no extra charge. For example, if your website is a WordPress site, you can install a plugin such as Blubrry (see <https://wordpress.org/plugins/powerpress/>) and serve your podcast from there. This method does require a bit of time and some skill.

Or, you might even choose a podcast host, a company that will provide you with a way to upload your podcast and stream it to interested others. For a relatively small fee, podcast hosts may also provide other tools which will help you create, store, and serve podcasts from A to Z. For example, for just a few bucks a month, Podbean.com provides you with unlimited storage space, unlimited bandwidth (that's the capacity of the server to deliver your podcast to lots of users), your own podcast site, iTunes support, comprehensive podcast stats, and monetization capabilities (that's right, the podcast may be your side hustle if you think people would pay for your show). Google has a free podcast service whereby you can publish your shows, connect with your audience, and reach millions of potential listeners on Android smartphones (see <https://play.google.com/music/podcasts/publish?u=0#>).

Other podcasting resources and tools:

- Anchor allows you to record or upload high-quality audio, host unlimited episodes, and distribute everywhere with just one click. <https://anchor.fm/>

- If you're on WordPress, Blubrry will be a favorite, due to its simple WP integration. Blubrry offers integrated statistics, which can tell you your listeners' platforms, podcast clients, geography, referrers, and domains.
<https://www.blubrry.com/>
- Buzzsprout makes it easy for podcasters at every level to upload, share, and track a show without any technical training. <https://www.buzzsprout.com/>
- Libsyn is your one-stop solution for everything you need to start podcasting, get your podcast in Apple Podcasts and iTunes, and even turn your show into an App.
<https://www.libsyn.com/>
- Overcast is a powerful (and free) yet simple podcast player for iPhone, iPad, and Apple Watch. <https://overcast.fm/>
- Podbean is an easy and powerful way to start podcasting. Everything you need for a successful podcast. No difficult technology to learn. <https://www.podbean.com/>
- Podomatic makes it easy for anybody to be a podcaster. Just record your audio straight to the web and Podomatic will produce a feed that you can then use to subscribe your show to iTunes and Google Play. <https://www.podomatic.com/>

Facebook and FB Groups

Since Facebook exploded on the mainstream Internet scene in 2006, it has been THE standard for establishing a social media presence. It wasn't long after its inception that Facebook, also known as FB, started demanding the attention of the business world. In that same year, businesses began advertising through Facebook in the hopes of creating profitable customer relationships. The Who's Who of the business world jumped on this new way of advertising when Procter and Gamble attracted 14,000 customers with a Facebook

promotion of a teeth-whitening product. The type of large-scale consumer engagement was new territory, and businesses began aggressively using Facebook for their marketing, advertising, and networking needs (Hall, 2018).

As you can imagine, networking through Facebook should be a priority for getting the word out about your side hustle. Luckily, it is pretty easy to do. After an hour or so of initial set up, it only takes a few minutes a day or maybe an hour or two per week to keep your Facebook networking game going strong.

In case you are one of the three people left on the planet who doesn't yet have a Facebook account, start by setting up your personal Facebook profile if you don't yet have one. Once you have a FB personal profile, it is important to establish a Facebook page to separate your personal profile from your business page. Having a FB page allows you to share what is going on in your side hustle while keeping a clear boundary from your personal Facebook profile. Additionally, it is good to set up a Facebook group for a topic or community related to your business as this creates positive exposure for you since a FB group is more of a forum-style medium where your FB group followers can interact freely with you and with others in the group. Let's now discuss how to set up each of these (Doyle, 2018).

How to create a Facebook personal profile page:

- Type www.facebook.com into your Internet search engine or browser.
- Follow the prompts on that homepage to enter your name, email address, password, date of birth, and gender.
- Click "Signup."
- To finish creating your account, you will need to follow the prompts to confirm your email address.
- Facebook will then give you various options and directions for creating your profile picture, adding a cover photo, and

inviting your email friends to follow your personal profile, etc.

How to create a Facebook business page:

- Sign in to your personal Facebook profile.
- Click on “Create” at the top of your profile page and then select “Page.”
- Click the “Business or Brand” option.
- Type in the required information.
- Click “Get Started” and follow the prompts to set up all the aspects of your business page and invite followers to join your page.

How to create a Facebook group:

- Sign in to your personal Facebook profile.
- Click on “Create” at the top of your profile page and then select “Group.”
- Follow the prompts to add your group name, your group members, and your group privacy setting. Then click “Create.”
- Now you can personalize it by uploading a cover photo and adding a description.

Once you have set up your Facebook page and group, it is time to start networking through frequent and meaningful communications with your followers. Here are some ways to communicate your FB presence, build your FB following, and keep your audience coming back for more:

- Put links to your Facebook page/group in any communications you have with your customers, such as PowerPoint presentations, books, articles, blog posts, Teachers Pay Teachers resources, websites, email signatures, business cards, and more.

- Post engaging content in a consistent manner. Let your followers know when to expect your Facebook posts—such as every morning, every Wednesday, etc.
- Find a professional organization that relates to your side hustle and then join their newsfeed. That way, you will be the first to know when any news breaks related to your hustle, and you can immediately share that with your followers in a Facebook post.
- Be careful not to spam your followers. One to two posts per day is probably the most you should do. Also, stick with a healthy ratio of at least five non-sale posts to every one sales-related post.
- Ask questions, stage events, show lots of photos/videos (these get the most engagement) and share a bit about yourself every once in a while. Sometimes your followers will like to see the human behind the side hustle!
- Build your follower base with giveaways! There are lots of Internet articles about how to do this—just type “Steps to Run a Giveaway to Gain Facebook Followers” into your search engine or browser.

You can find our FB pages and groups, in case you would like some examples to use in your own Facebook creations.

- <https://www.facebook.com/schoolcounselorstephanie/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/DataBootCamp/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1816103378518571/>

Twitter

Twitter is an online news and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as "tweets." *Tweeting* is posting short messages for anyone who follows you or accesses

your Twitter feed. People tweet messages with the hope that their posts are useful and interesting to someone in their audience. Another description of Twitter and tweeting might be microblogging. In addition to its relative novelty, Twitter's big appeal is how scan-friendly it is: You can track hundreds of interesting Twitter users and read their content with a glance. This is ideal for our modern attention-deficit world (Gil, 2018).

When you log in to Twitter, you'll land on your Home timeline. Your Home timeline displays a stream of tweets from accounts you have chosen to follow on Twitter. Some people call this their Twitter feed. Anyone in the world can also see your tweets by just going to your profile, even if they are not following you. When you land on someone's tweet, you can reply, retweet (share a tweet with your followers), or "like" a tweet from within the timeline. Twitter also allows you to receive mobile notifications from any user you choose, so you'll receive an email and/or text alert when they post a new tweet.

There are several different types of tracking on Twitter. You can track people and their tweets. To do this, you can simply follow them. How do you know who to follow? Good question! Here are a few ways:

- If you see the person's website, hopefully they have made it easy by providing you a link to their Twitter feed.
- You can see who "likes" any given tweet. Hover your mouse over any of these users and then click the Follow button.
- You can do a Google or other search using keywords like their name, "counselor," and "Twitter." If you know a person's Twitter ID, which always starts with the "@" symbol, search on that. For example, we are @rsabella and @bilinguallearn. The twitter feed for School Counselor Side Hustle is @Getting2Next.

- It is now common to include one's Twitter user ID in presentations, email signatures, and other materials.
- Based on your interests and who you are already following, Twitter will also recommend others to follow.
- Some school counselors have created lists of "must follow" colleagues. Do a Google search using all the following keywords: school counselor must follow Twitter.

You can also track topics on Twitter using a few different methods:

- Twitter has a list of "trending topics" in different locations, depending on how you access (e.g., on a computer or via your phone). Trends are determined by an algorithm and, by default, are tailored for you based on who you follow, your interests, and your location.
- When posting, your tweet should include one or more hashtags. A hashtag is a keyword or a phrase used to describe a topic or a theme, starting with the "#" symbol. You can search for a known hashtag or, even easier, click on one from an existing tweet, which results in a list of all tweets that include the hashtag. Hashtags give users additional context and metadata to your tweets. When creating a hashtag, avoid using any spaces or punctuation (even if you're using multiple words in a phrase).

Popular hashtags for the school counseling community include:

- #schoolcounselor
- #schoolcounseling
- #scchat
- #sccrowd

- #escchat (Elementary School)
- #mscchat (Middle School)
- #hscchat (High School)
- #edchat

By the way, if someone is following you on Twitter, you can also “Direct Message” (a.k.a. DM) them, which can be a quick way to make contact, especially if you don’t know their phone number or email address. There is still much more under the hood with Twitter. You might want to visit the company’s Help page (<https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter>) to get into more of the details of this popular social networking platform. Also check out TweetDeck (<https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/>), a highly specialized service that offers Twitter users a comprehensive and completely free way to manage and organize an unlimited number of Twitter accounts and keep track of Twitter lists, Twitter searches, hashtags and more (Cleary, 2018).

Instagram

Instagram (IG) is quickly closing in on Facebook (FB) as one of the top social media sites to promote your side hustle. Of course, this is to be expected since Facebook bought Instagram in 2012 and runs IG in much the same way it runs FB. Instagram is a mobile phone-based photo/video sharing app where you can upload your personal or side hustle photos/videos and then share them with your followers. IG also lets you view, comment and like posts shared by followers. Instagram is important because everyone is on their phones nowadays, and it is one of the most popular social media sites in the world with 75 million daily users (Johnson, 2018).

Instagram is also much more popular among the largest growing group of school counselors—the millennials. In fact, I (Stephanie) joined IG a few years ago when my two millennial interns looked at

me quizzically when I asked them why they weren't posting on their FB accounts. In answer to my questions, they just squinted at me and said, "*No one uses Facebook anymore. We stopped using it after high school.*" Hmmm. I set up my IG account that week. And true story: since I set it up, it has grown leaps and bounds faster than my Facebook page.

So while we know that *someone* still uses Facebook (2.23 billion monthly someones to be exact), it does seem to be considerably less popular with the younger professionals (Statista, 2018). And in the spirit of the successful side hustle, we must meet our customers where they are—and in the case of millennials—that is Instagram. So let's jump into the setup and maintenance of your IG page to get the most out of it!

It is very easy to set up an IG account. Just take out your phone and follow the steps below (Instagram, 2018):

- Download the Instagram app from your phone's App Store.
- Once you have the IG app installed on your phone, click on the IG app icon.
- Click on "Log in with Facebook" to sign up on IG through your Facebook account. It's a good idea to sign up with your business email that matches your Facebook business page info.
- Follow the prompts to enter your profile info and then click "Done."

And now for some tips and tricks for managing your Instagram page just right (Johnson, 2018):

- Keep your logo, brand name, etc. the same between your IG and Facebook accounts (as well as any other social media sites you have). The idea behind all this online networking is to get

your side hustle noticed and recognized. If you have a different name/presence on each of your sites, it's very likely that people won't remember you or your product.

- Consider using your logo as your profile picture—keep it simple and make sure it can be clearly viewed and engaging when small. Use colors/fonts in your logo that you will repeat across your postings as a symbol of your brand. Your description should be a line or two about what your business stands for or represents. Include a link to your main website page where you showcase your product. IG only gives you one link, so choose wisely to make it count big.
- Connect your IG to your Facebook account so you only have to post once, and it automatically uploads your posts to your FB business page.
- Similar to Twitter, use hashtags to drop your post into a feed seen by thousands or millions of people who wouldn't otherwise see your post if they are not following your IG account. Posting great content to a hashtag feed gets people to notice and then follow your Instagram account. You can use multiple hashtags on every post, but don't get too crazy. A good rule of thumb is to include the following hashtags for every post: your brand (i.e., #schoolcounselorstephanie), a related trending hashtag (i.e., #freebiefriday), and a huge group that would be interested in your post content (i.e., #schoolcounselor).
- Include photos of people, not just your hustle products. Faces get up to 40 percent higher engagement than any other type of IG post.
- Do giveaways to build your follower base—follow the same process as listed for FB giveaways in the previous section.

Head on over to our Instagram pages now and get yourself set up with your first two followers: follow us at our pages below, and we'll follow you right back!

- Stephanie: @schoolcounselorstephanie
- Russ: @sabellagram

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a valuable resource for career and business professionals to network, get resources and support, and build relationships with potential customers, clients, and partners. It's ideal for home-based business owners, freelancers, and telecommuters as it can help them develop their business and career, as well as help them avoid feelings of isolation by keeping them connected to the outside world. Unlike other social networks in which you might become "friends" with anyone and everyone, LinkedIn is about building strategic relationships. The site boasts members from just about every industry and country imaginable. In fact, many Fortune 500 executives are on LinkedIn. You won't find members posting cat videos or pictures of what they made for dinner. LinkedIn is a site for professionals, so everything is geared toward careers and business (Duermyer, 2018). Here are some of the noteworthy features of LinkedIn:

- Post an online resume and business card where potential clients and customers can learn about and connect with you.
- Get online endorsements and recommendations for your professional abilities and your character.
- Get introductions to potential clients, customers, or colleagues.
- Search available job postings.

- Join various groups that align with your interests and participate in discussions.

Set up your account at <https://www.linkedin.com/>. Start by connecting with us at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rsabella/> and <https://www.linkedin.com/in/stephanie-lerner-25552073/>.

The ASCA Scene

If you are an ASCA member, you should be engaging with others on the ASCA Scene, a professional network of over 35,000 school counselors. If you are not an ASCA member, you're missing out. The ASCA Scene works similarly to other social networks. You can share documents, links, and resources. You can ask questions and start discussions. You can join communities by school grade level or other interests. Create your profile and start participating at <http://scene.schoolcounselor.org>.

Email

In my (Russ) experience, email can be a useful tool for developing relationships with your target customers. Let's first focus on the mechanics of email campaigns and then move to tips for appropriate and effective email communications. There are three main ways to use email to connect with your target audience: single emails, email campaigns, and blog email subscriptions. Before jumping into sending out emails, read this entire section, especially as it relates to sending emails legally and within common etiquette guidelines.

Single Emails. One way that I (Russ) keep up with what is going on in the school counseling world is by using Google Alerts (<https://www.google.com/alerts>). Google Alerts is a content change detection and notification service, offered by the search engine company Google. The service sends emails to the user when it finds new results—such as webpages, newspaper articles, blogs, or scientific research—that match the user's search term (Wikipedia

contributors, 2018a). So for example, in addition to terms like “school counselor,” “school counseling,” and “American School Counselor Association,” I have Google alert me to new online content for interest areas including cyberbullying, sexting, counseling and technology, and solution-focused counseling. I receive daily emails from Google which alert me to websites where these terms have been recently detected.

When I see a news article about a school that has experienced a cyberbullying or sexting situation, I might find the contact information for that school and send them an email about the possibility of me coming in to work with students, staff, and parents as it pertains to responsible social networking and developing a positive digital reputation. Using Google Mail (a.k.a. Gmail), I can do this quite quickly using the “Canned Responses” feature. Canned responses is a Gmail feature allowing users to create and save multiple email templates in their Inbox. You must enable this feature in your Gmail Settings and create templates, or “canned responses,” before using it. The beauty of this feature is that it allows you to create a relevant email in just two clicks instead of repeatedly finding a sent email, copying, and pasting the same email response to a new recipient. To get started with this feature:

1. In Gmail, click the Gear icon in the upper right corner, then click “Settings.”
2. Click the tab that says “Advanced.”
3. Click to enable “Canned Responses (Templates).”
4. Start a new email by hitting “Compose.”
5. Type the email you want to save as a template, including any text, graphics, and formatting.
6. Click the down arrow in the bottom of the compose window, hover over “Canned responses,” and click “New canned response.”

Now, you will always have this as an email template for future emails. To send out a canned response, just click on compose, click the down arrow, hover over "Canned responses," and click on the response title you need. You can edit the response before you send it with new names or other information that you want to include. For example, I always let recipients know that they are not on an email list and that, instead, I am writing in response to a news story and provide a source link. For more on using Google Alerts, visit <https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/4815696?hl=en>.

Sometimes, when I get to a school's online directory, I may want to include multiple people. Instead of copying and pasting each and every email address one at a time, I use a couple of methods that automatically extract the emails from the website, all at once. The first method is to select the entire webpage and copy it into memory (select all, copy). Then I go over to a webpage called "Email Extractor Lite" (<http://eel.surf7.net.my/>), paste in the entire contents, click on a button or two, and have it provide me with a list of emails found in that content. Next, just copy the list, paste it into your email "To:" field, and send. A second and even quicker method I use is with an extension in my Chrome Browser called "Email Extractor" (<http://bit.ly/email-extractor-chrome>). After a one-time installation of this browser extension, I just click one button while on a webpage to get a list of available email addresses. You can watch this YouTube video to see how it's done: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-Gd8Yhg3yo>.

Sometimes, a single email is sent out in response to someone who completes a workshop inquiry form on my website. In this case, a canned response back to them might do the trick. However, because the sender is already showing interest, it is often more appropriate to send them a different email, one that includes an attached *prospectus*. You may have heard of the term used to describe a legal

document that describes a financial security to potential investors. For example, a mutual fund's prospectus contains information about the fund's objectives, investment strategies, risks, performance, distribution policy, management, and expenses (Motley Fool, 2018). But a prospectus is also defined as a brochure or other document describing the major features, attractions, or services of a place, institution, or business to prospective patrons, clients, owners, or members (Dictionary.com, 2018). So for example, I have prepared an individual prospectus for each workshop that I give which includes a description, intended objectives, cost, and a sample agreement. You can download a sample prospectus at <http://bit.ly/prospectus-sample>. Feel free to use it as you please.

Email Campaigns/Subscriptions. Conducting an email campaign is similar to sending out single emails, although it involves much greater planning and work. A campaign involves a coordinated set of individual email marketing messages delivered at intervals and with an overall objective in mind. A campaign allows each new message to build on previous messages. For example, if you provide services or products related to educating kids about substance abuse issues, you may conduct an email campaign that includes sending an email every evening during Red Ribbon Week. Your emails may provide relevant (and free) resources, commentaries, suggested activities, downloads, etc. At the same time, your emails may include advertisements for your own products or services.

Email campaigns are a bit trickier because they involve email lists, sometimes including tens of thousands of contacts. These emails are subject to laws that require certain features of your email, such as how to remove oneself off the list or unsubscribe (again, more on that next). In general, the safest and most compliant way to send out email campaigns is through a service in which each user has subscribed or signed up to receive communications from you with an easy option to opt out any time. You can set up your own subscription

service via your own website or through an email marketing service such as Constant Contact (<https://constantcontact.com/>), MailChimp (<https://mailchimp.com/>), AWeber (<https://www.aweber.com/>), ConvertKit (<https://convertkit.com/start/>), or VerticalResponse (<https://www.verticalresponse.com/>) to name a few of the popular services among many.

I (Russ) personally use Google's free email subscription service included with Blogger (<https://www.blogger.com/>). Any time I publish a blog post, Google will send it out via email to each subscriber. I can manage my subscription list via FeedBurner (<https://feedburner.google.com>), which also allows me to download my list in case I want to send an email out to each person without having to post something out on my blog. In this case, I use software called e-Campaign (<https://www.lmhsoft.com/ecamp/>). E-Campaign helps you send out mass emails one at a time using your own email account, provided by your web host. It's like using Gmail or Outlook if they were on steroids. The program also comes with a list manager that facilitates subscriptions and removals.

If you do this, you must be careful not to exceed the email limits of your service. My web host, for instance, limits me to 150 emails per hour and no more than 5,000 per day. Luckily, e-Campaign allows you to set throttles to stay within your limit. As you can imagine, sometimes it takes me days to send out an email even when the computer is running 24/7. Another area of caution is to make sure your emails are compliant. Since you are not using a commercial service, which automatically checks for compliance, you will have to do this manually (see below).

Tips for Posting, Sending, and Sharing

Before you start blasting your promotions all over the place, you'll need to know a few things. Following are a few tips that we wish someone would have told us about early on before we had to learn a

few lessons the hard way. These tips focus on helping people to see the opportunity in buying or hiring without annoying them with overexposure. Also, although we are not legal experts, we do want to share with you some *basic* information about bulk email regulations and compliance.

Understand CAN-SPAM rules

The CAN-SPAM Act, a law that sets the rules for commercial email, establishes requirements for commercial messages, gives recipients the right to have you stop emailing them, and spells out tough penalties for violations. The CAN-SPAM Act requires the Federal Trade Commission to issue regulations “defining the relevant criteria to facilitate the determination of the primary purpose of an electronic mail message.” The CAN-SPAM Act applies almost exclusively to “commercial electronic mail messages” (Federal Trade Commission, 2008).

Each separate email in violation of the CAN-SPAM Act is subject to penalties of up to \$41,484, so non-compliance can be costly. But following the law isn’t too complicated. Here’s an abbreviated summary of CAN-SPAM’s main requirements (to learn more, visit the FTC guidance at <https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/can-spam-act-compliance-guide-business>):

- **Don’t use false or misleading header information.** Your “From,” “To,” “Reply-To,” and routing information—including the originating domain name and email address—must be accurate and identify the person or business who initiated the message.
- **Don’t use deceptive subject lines.** The subject line must accurately reflect the content of the message.
- **Identify the message as an advertisement if appropriate.** The law gives you a lot of leeway in how to do this, but you must

disclose clearly and conspicuously that your message is an advertisement.

- **Tell recipients where you're located.** Your message must include your valid physical postal address. This can be your current street address, a post office box you've registered with the US Postal Service, or a private mailbox you've registered with a commercial mail receiving agency established under Postal Service regulations.
- **Tell recipients how to opt out of receiving future email from you.** Your message must include a clear and conspicuous explanation of how the recipient can opt out of getting an email from you in the future. Make sure your spam filter doesn't block these opt-out requests.
- **Honor opt-out requests promptly.** Any opt-out mechanism you offer must be able to process opt-out requests for at least 30 days after you send your message. You must honor a recipient's opt-out request within ten business days. You can't charge a fee, require the recipient to give you any personally identifying information beyond an email address, or make the recipient take any step other than sending a reply email or visiting a single page on an Internet website as a condition for honoring an opt-out request.
- **Monitor what others are doing on your behalf.** The law makes it clear that even if you hire another company to handle your email marketing, you can't contract away your legal responsibility to comply with the law. Both the company whose product is promoted in the message and the company that actually sends the message may be held legally responsible.

Again, there is much more to learn about the CAN-SPAM law and how to comply. We recommend you carefully read "*CAN-SPAM Act: A*

Compliance Guide for Business” available online at <http://bit.ly/canspamguide>.

If your audience is receiving emails based on a subscription service such as the ones we previously mentioned, you should be covered. These services will make sure that you are offering a double opt-in sign up which means that a user can sign up on the website and must confirm via email or text message that they intended to subscribe. The services will also automatically include legally required content, usually in the footer of the message, which includes things like your contact information and a clear link to unsubscribe. Finally, many email marketing services will also check your email for “trigger words” that might be used to flag your email as spam.

Being Responsive

Be careful what you wish for. Your online presence and network building activities may generate many leads which you need to attend to, and quickly. No matter what the medium (Facebook, Instagram, email, etc.), your success will depend on how expediently you can respond to your customers/clients. One study audited 2,241 US companies, measuring how long each took to respond to a web-generated test lead. Although 37 percent responded to their lead within an hour, and 16 percent responded within one to 24 hours, 24 percent took more than 24 hours—and 23 percent of the companies never responded at all. The average response time among companies that responded within 30 days was 42 hours (Oldroyd, McElheran, & Elkington, 2011). The authors noted that the results are shocking given how quickly online leads go cold. They determined that when companies replied within one hour of the customer’s initial request for information, they were seven times more likely to sell to them.

Other Tips

Other considerations when sending out communications, posting, sharing, or commenting online include:

- *Use a URL shortening service.* A URL shortening service takes a long website address and truncates it. The service essentially forwards you to the appropriate webpage. Long URLs sometimes get hyphenated or broken across two lines, which renders the link dead. Shorter URLs reduce the risk of this happening. As I mentioned earlier, I (Russ) like bitly (<https://bitly.com/>) because it's free, provides the ability to customize short URLs, and also gives you some helpful analytics to see how many people are clicking on your links.
- *Beware of blocked links, especially within schools.* If you are sending emails out to work addresses, especially schools, you might want to test your email out first to see if anything you've included is likely to get blocked by the school's email security system. For example, although I love bitly, some schools block this URL shortening service because of the risk that a bitly URL may lead to a malicious website.
- *Make your emails count!* We all get too many emails, way too many! Your email should be brief but substantial. Your emails should only be as frequent as a subscriber would expect. For example, you may have a monthly newsletter, which means you probably should not be sending out more than two to three emails per month. Also, each email or online post should be valuable. Instead of promoting a service or product only, consider a contribution such as a link to a newly developed tool, lesson plan, tutorial, or other information with your promotion placed at the end of the email, perhaps in the form of a simple link to your website for users to learn more. In other words, don't just email when you need something from your readers. Be helpful. Be generous. Be

friendly. Technology has made it very easy for anyone to blast out emails, comments, and/or posts. Therefore, just as the wise Uncle Ben told Peter Parker/Spiderman, we must remind ourselves that, “*Just because you can, doesn’t mean you should.*”

- *Make your communications engaging.* Instead of focusing only on concepts or ideas, focus on the person. Inspire and help them. Ask questions. Invite them to an online discussion or free webinar with no strings attached.

Products, tools, and services don’t typically sell themselves, no matter how good they are. You will need to invest a great deal of time and some money into connecting with your audience on a personal level. The best side hustles are those in which you would do this anyway, even for free, because you enjoy it and value helping.

CHAPTER 12

MORE TOOLS AND TIPS

"You can always find a solution if you try hard enough."

Lori Greiner, *Shark Tank*

So far, we've explored some favorite ways that school counselors are doing more of what they love to do while supplementing their incomes. Extra money means greater freedom and less pressure. School counselor side hustlers have shared with us how much they enjoy the creative process—building, developing, and problem-solving—while also contributing to the lives of others. We have already covered a great deal of what we are doing and how we are doing it. But there's more. Let's now dig deeper and focus on other tools and tips that will help you leverage your side hustle success.

Getting Paid

Once you set up your side hustle, you'll need multiple methods for customers/clients to make payments. The two most common are by paper check or via credit card. Organizations such as school districts and companies still like to pay by check because it helps them with accountability, accounting, and an appropriate paper trail. Companies that hire you will usually start with asking you for a

proposal, then they will want to send you a purchase order (i.e., PO), request an invoice, and then finally pay you after the work is complete.

In addition to receiving paper checks, there are at least two reasons why you will want to accept credit card payments as well. First, if you are selling a product, especially online, paying by credit card helps the user have a smooth shopping experience. Click, choose the product; click, choose the quantity; and then click, pay for the goods. If you choose a service such as Amazon, eBay, or Teachers Pay Teachers, they will supply you with an online storefront and act as your merchant account provider. Whether you use your own merchant account provider (e.g., Google Pay, PayPal, or Square) or an all-inclusive online storefront, you will always pay a small percent for that service, usually about 2–4 percent.

Second, you may need a merchant account provider that can also supply you with a card reader if you are out in the field physically selling your merchandise. You’ve probably seen these before because they have become very popular. Card readers are small (usually square) devices that you can plug right into your smartphone or tablet and then use them to swipe a credit card. Some merchant account providers can also offer bigger, more sophisticated card readers that can read credit card chips and collect NFC (near field communication) payments.

NFC allows two devices placed within an inch or two of each other to exchange data. The technology is very similar to Bluetooth, but NFC uses far less power and works over much shorter distances (“How secure Are NFC payments?,” 2018). Someone who uses Google Pay (<https://pay.google.com>), Apple Pay (<https://www.apple.com/apple-pay>), Square (<https://squareup.com/>), or something similar can simply unlock their phone, put it up to the NFC reader, and the payment is made. Increasing numbers of people are using NFC, especially after it came

as a standard feature in the iPhone 6 and because of two major advantages. First, it seems to be even quicker than pulling out a credit card, swiping it, and then waiting for authorization. And second, paying by using NFC is more secure because of something called Secure Element Validation. Once a connection has been established, the transaction only goes through after the card or mobile device has validated the purchase using a secure element chip. This validation process assigns a unique digital signature to every payment instead of transferring credit or debit card numbers between the device and reader (“How secure Are NFC payments?,” 2018).

Several times, I (Russ) have experienced a situation where a school district or organization that typically pays by check inquired as to whether I could take a credit card. As it turns out, they were trying to spend some money quickly before a deadline passed and the money was “swept away” by the district. In this case, I can go online to my merchant account (PayPal) and create an electronic invoice, which only takes a few minutes. They receive the invoice by email, click on a link, enter their credit card information, and within minutes, it shows up in my account.

If your side hustle becomes sophisticated, you may choose to subscribe to an online accounting service such as Fresh Books (<https://www.freshbooks.com/>), Quick Books (<https://quickbooks.intuit.com/online/>), or ZoHo books (<https://www.zoho.com/us/books/>). These services not only help you to accept payments but keep track of your finances (e.g., cash flow statements, balance sheets, and profit/loss reports) to get tax ready.

Google Voice

You will need your own small business or side hustle telephone number, separate from your personal telephone number. For one, as we have continually emphasized, you will want to maintain

boundaries among your personal, work, and side hustle lives. Second, you will likely need to give potential consumers or customers your phone number to contact you, and you probably don't want to give your personal number out to people you don't know. Third, you may find the need to include this number in your promotions, agreements, and other documents. Of course, you could get a second phone line, even a second phone. Or current technologies do allow you to have two phone lines programmed to one phone (you would look for a phone that can handle dual SIM cards). However, all this could get expensive and a little confusing. I (Russ) have found an inexpensive (how about free?) solution to having a separate and versatile small business number—Google Voice (<https://voice.google.com/>).

Google Voice is a relatively comprehensive telephony system. With Google Voice, you get a free phone number for calls, text messages, and voicemail. You can use the Google Voice app on smartphones and computers, and you can link your number to any mobile or landline number. What this means is that you can set up your Voice account to ring your smartphone when someone calls your Voice number. Google Voice allows you to select multiple other phone numbers to ring if you like. So when you call my Google Voice number, I can let it ring both my home and cell numbers. Alternatively, I can also click on the “Do Not Disturb” setting so that none of my phones ring and the call goes to voicemail. Finally, if you somehow get unsolicited calls or get calls from someone you no longer want to be in touch with, you can block the number. In this case, the caller will receive a “this number is no longer in service” message (when the number texts you, you won't get the message).

What you can do with Google Voice:

- Text message from your computer or mobile phone;

- Conduct a "four-way" conference call "on-the-fly" (i.e., the host and up to three incoming callers; with Google Hangouts, you can do a nine-way call);
- Read your voicemail and search through it like your emails;
- Personalize voicemail greetings for family and friends;
- Seamlessly switch the call from one phone to another listed in your account;
- With the caller's permission, record the call (they have to be the one calling you for this to work);
- Make international calls at low rates; and
- Get protected from spam calls, block unwanted callers, and screen calls before answering.

Plus, Google Voice works on all your devices, so you can connect and communicate how you want. You can also see why some school counselors are using Google Voice as the telephone number they give out to parents and why others are using this number as their school's bullying hotline (Hinduja, 2015).

Virtual Office

As a side hustler, you may want more than just a telephony system. You may want the features of a virtual office. A virtual office provides an address (and sometimes communication) services for a fee without providing dedicated office space. This is different from "office business centers" or "executive suites," which do provide physical office space and/or meeting rooms. In addition to getting all the features of a free Google Voice number, a virtual office service can offer benefits such as having:

- A live receptionist answering calls;
- A fax number which can be converted to email;

- A virtual assistant, someone who works by the hour to help with tasks;
- A corporate mailing address that can be used for accepting, sending, and forwarding mail without the connotations of a PO box; and
- Other services which may include the creation of a website, business cards, and attorney consultations for example (Wikipedia contributors, 2018c).

Of course, these benefits are not free. You can google “virtual office” and you’ll find several options that might meet your needs.

Google Drive

Google Drive is a file storage and synchronization service developed by Google starting in 2012. Google Drive allows users to store files on their servers, synchronize data across devices, and share files. In addition to a website, Google Drive offers apps with offline capabilities for Windows and macOS computers and Android and iOS smartphones and tablets (Wikipedia contributors, 2018b). Since this service is so pervasive, you may already know about how useful a Google Drive account can be. Essentially, Google Drive is like having a free productivity suite, similar to Microsoft Office, in the cloud. Google drive includes tools for word processing, presenting, collecting data, crunching numbers (i.e., spreadsheets), and more. Two of the best advantages of Google Drive are that the productivity suite provides for real-time collaboration as well as sharing. With any file you produce, you can work on it with others, even a whole team. And you can make any file such as PDFs, available to others for download. It really is incredible.

Google Drive is also relatively inexpensive. Everyone gets 15 GB of storage for free. If you need more, you can purchase it. If you want 100 GB of storage, that’s less than \$20 per year. As of this writing,

Google has recently launched Google One (<https://one.google.com/>), which allows you to cheaply get even more storage: 200 GB for only \$29.99/year or 2 TB (that's 2 terabytes or 2,000 gigabytes) for only \$99.99 per year. Plans with even more space are available. We should add one more thing . . . Google Drive allows you to work both online and offline, without worrying about having a Wi-Fi connection. By the way, Google One has a free family plan option which allows you to create a group with up to six family members and get the most out of Google together (see <https://families.google.com/families>).

Data Backup

As is probably true in your work as a school counselor, your side hustle will undoubtedly generate lots of electronic files including documents, brochures, photos, email communication, agreements, videos, and more. In the back of your mind, you know you need to back up all your work. But your files are not safe or accessible in the back of your mind, so you need to back them up physically. But where do you start?

Before diving into the ways that you might back up your files, we want to talk about doing multiple backups. Hard drives can fail at any time for many different reasons. One day, you may plug in your portable drive, and it won't work, which means you won't be able to access the files you've stored on it. It's rare for a newer hard drive to fail completely, and most drives can last years and years before needing to be replaced, but just keep in mind that failures can happen. The best way to ensure that you do not lose your work is to not rely solely on one backup method (Mitroff, 2015). Make sure to store copies of files and photos on your computer and use two or more methods such as the ones listed below.

Backup to an external hard drive. An external hard drive is a hard disk drive just like the one inside your computer where you can store any kind of file. I (Russ) have two of these connected to my computer,

which I swap out every three to four years. That is, every few years, I buy a new hard drive and replace the oldest existing one. The bad news is that all hard drives and computers fail at some time; nothing lasts forever. The good news, however, is that the price of storage is very reasonable. I would recommend nothing less than a one terabyte storage device (I use three terabytes and will probably move to four soon). I also suggest that you purchase one that is mobile so you don't have to plug it in for power. A mobile storage drive is powered on its own using the USB connection to your computer. Finally, make sure that your storage uses the fastest USB available, currently USB 3.0. Companies like Seagate and Western Digital make outstanding portable external hard drives. For example, check out this one on Amazon.com: <https://amzn.to/2nTPJYG>.

With the right software, your files can be backed up as frequently as you like, such as when you turn your computer on, before you log off, or as in my case, every ten minutes. The external hard drives often come with backup software which you can use right away. My experience, however, is that there is software available that is easier to use and faster. I (Russ) have been using Allway Sync (<https://allwaysync.com/>) for many years now. Allway Sync does offer a free although limited version. The free version is for non-profits, which means that if you use the software for your side hustle, you'll need to purchase the professional version. The free version also limits a user to process no more than 40,000 files in any consecutive 30-day period. The "pro" version allows you to use the software on one device, such as your desktop computer. However, you are allowed to synchronize data with a remote computer (using a network drive) without obtaining a separate Allway Sync Pro license for that computer. And I don't believe that the pro version limits the number of files that can be processed.

Allway Sync also comes in a mobile version called Allway Sync 'n' Go. When your USB flash drive or portable hard drive is plugged into

any Windows computer, you get access to your synchronization application and personal data just as if you would be on your own PC. Sync the data by Allway Sync 'n' Go, then unplug the device to take your data with you. I use this one on one of my USB (a.k.a. thumb drives) to take with me in case my laptop fails while traveling. In case of fire or flood, I plan to grab these hard drives along with other critical belongings. However, if a disaster happens when you're not home, you are out of luck. Therefore, you need redundant (or multiple) backups, one of which should be located offsite. Today's cloud services are just right for this purpose.

Backup to the cloud. Before cloud services were available, I (Russ) remember going through the tedious task of rotating one of my two external backup drives and bringing it to my university office on a monthly basis. Every month, I would bring the office one home and swap it out with the other, more up-to-date backup. This way, I would only lose a few weeks of work if the worst should happen. Today, reliable and cost-friendly cloud services have made that practice obsolete. Cloud storage is a system where you move your files from your computer to a server in a data center away from your home or work. These days, I have backups of everything I do across multiple storage devices including my desktop, laptop, two external hard drives, and two different cloud servers, Dropbox and Carbonite.

Dropbox (<https://www.dropbox.com>). You can get Dropbox for free, although storage is somewhat limited, up to two gigabytes. You can get more storage by using their referral program. For every friend who joins and installs Dropbox on their computer, Dropbox will give you 1 GB and your friend 500 MB of bonus space (up to a limit of 32 GB). You can also get bonus storage space by allowing Dropbox to sync and automatically upload photos from another device, such as your smartphone (with desktop client installed). The professional version gives you a whopping 2 TB (2,048 GB) of storage and includes other features such as Smart Sync (ability to access your

files without taking up hard drive space), full text search, and mobile offline folders (the ability to access files without an Internet connection using your mobile phone). The professional version is \$99 per year as of this writing.

Another great reason to use Dropbox is that the service allows you to synchronize your files across devices. This means I can work on a project (e.g., a manuscript) at home and seamlessly continue while on the road or at the office. Synchronization is especially useful for presenting workshops. I can update a PowerPoint presentation from my home computer, continue when I get to the office (when appropriate), and those files are automatically synced to the laptop I use for making presentations. This eliminates the need for a physical “thumb” or USB drive.

A lesser known feature of Dropbox that is worth mentioning is Dropbox Paper. Like Google Docs, Paper is a product by Dropbox that helps you work in real-time with your team. You can write together, share comments, embed images, and more. If you have a Dropbox account, you can use Paper for free (Dropbox, 2018). With Paper, you create collaborative to-do lists and documents; watch this YouTube video to learn more: <http://bit.ly/dpapervideo>.

Carbonite. Once you sign up for a cloud storage service, you can upload files (automatically) with a desktop application or through the company's website over the Internet. With an Internet connection, you can view, modify, and delete files stored in your cloud storage account at any time from any computer or mobile device. You can move files or folders back onto your computer whenever you want (Mitroff, 2015). I (Russ) personally use Carbonite and pay about \$6 a month for unlimited storage. Another advantage of using an offsite backup solution is that you can better protect your data from ransomware and accidental deletions in addition to hardware or system failures. If your computer was hit with a virus and your files were held for ransom, you could essentially not pay,

clean your computer, and restore all your data. Another similar and reputable service is iDrive (<https://www.idrive.com/>), which gives you 5 GB of free storage to start.

Google Drive. Although I find Google Drive to be a much better solution for collaborating and sharing, you can also use Google Drive as an offsite backup solution. Your first 15 GB of storage are free with a Google account. As we mentioned earlier, like Dropbox, you can upgrade your Google Drive storage to fit your needs at a reasonable price. To backup/upload your files to Google Drive, you can just drag and drop them at <https://drive.google.com/>. To do this automatically, you will need to install the Google Drive app on your computer, which you can get at <https://support.google.com/drive/answer/2374987>.

Flyers, Brochures, and More

When possible, it's always a great idea to hire a professional designer to help you develop your promotional materials. However, at the same time, there are now available many free and low-cost tools that can help you achieve close to professional results. Starting with a beautiful template, and then using drag-and-drop technology to customize your content, you can achieve some impressive results. Here are a few platforms that stand out in this category:

Remove Background from Image (<https://www.remove.bg/>) removes backgrounds from photos automatically, in only five seconds and for free.

Canva (<https://www.canva.com>) has millions of available images, photo filters, free icons, and shapes, as well as hundreds of fonts for you to use. Canva even allows you to present your data as visually-stunning graphs using their free online graph tools. Canva can help you produce high-quality flyers, social media headers, business cards, postcards, presentation slides, posters, and more. The company now offers a print feature which means that with a click of

a button, your designs can be sent to print and delivered right to your doorstep within a few days.

After you set up your account, the first step to creating a design on Canva is deciding what you need this design for. Canva has over 60 document types you can choose from. Then, the Canva editor makes it simple to change your document or graphic's look, layout, color scheme, and other elements. If you don't want to use a template, you're also free to create your own layouts from scratch. With over a million elements to choose from, you can mix and match them to create your very own customized design. You can even upload your own photos, backgrounds, etc. (see <https://support.canva.com/getting-started-3/>).

PicMonkey (<https://www.picmonkey.com/>), similar to Canva, is also an online photo editing and design service that helps you edit photos, create designs, and touch up portraits. It includes dozens of effects and filters; the ability to add text, graphics, and watermarks; and tools to whiten teeth and remove wrinkles, for example. With PicMonkey, you can create amazing designs as well as print your masterpieces on everything from cardstock to shower curtains. PicMonkey can be accessed from a web browser or through a mobile app (<https://www.picmonkey.com/mobile-app>).

PosterMyWall (<https://www.postermywall.com>) has a simple mission: to empower individuals and businesses to create their own professional graphics and videos. PosterMyWall specializes in high-quality prints and downloads and also offers social media post templates—including video—for your Facebook, Instagram, and other social media marketing. For premium services, you can pay as you go or purchase a yearly subscription.

CHAPTER 13

ANOTHER SIDE OF SIDE HUSTLE

"In business, it is most often all about getting your foot in the door, and once you do, everything opens up, and things start to naturally progress into bigger, and more, opportunities."

Lori Greiner, *Shark Tank*

In addition to our Big Seven school counselor side hustle categories included thus far, we were inspired by school counselors (and similar others) who were supplementing their income in other fun and creative ways. From working with a national tire installer association to doing voice-overs to bartending and coaching, these side hustles may give you just the idea and motivation you need to start yours.

Certified Tire Installer Certification

What does installing auto or truck tires and being a school counselor have in common? Here's a quick story that illustrates how you can identify a need and use your training in ways you didn't even think of. When I (Russ) was working at the University of Louisville in the late 1990s, I received a request from an organization I'll call

the “*International Tire Installers Association* (ITIA; not their real name). They were looking for a consultant who could help them develop a certification program for anyone who installed or repaired tires across the United States. At first glance, I was not sure how or even why they contacted me. I knew almost nothing about tires except that they were expensive and needed air now and again. At the time, I remember that I was about to dismiss the request. Not having a clue about tire installation, I couldn’t even give them a referral. Thank goodness that, right before I did, it struck me that although I didn’t know anything about tires or tire installation, I did know a great deal about the certification process. Could it be that getting certified or licensed in counseling might be similar to a process for becoming an ITIA certified tire installer? I thought so.

I let the ITIA know that I was able to provide consultation in several areas that related to the certification process, although they would have to guide me in how helpful or appropriate my work would be as it applied to tire installations. For the first few months, I helped them to identify important parts of the process including:

- Identifying knowledge and skills required for becoming certified (they also needed to decide if certification would indicate minimally acceptable levels of knowledge or exemplary levels);
- How tire installer knowledge and skills could be reliably assessed/observed;
- Defining a minimum set of completed and supervised hours toward certification;
- Identifying criteria for becoming an approved supervisor; and
- Finally, developing ethical standards of practice (which did not exist at the time).

Sound familiar? Turns out, my experiences in the counseling certification process was transferrable to what they needed. Moving forward, the first part of this consult included a couple, or three, meetings with the leadership to see what they envisioned and wanted in an ideal certification and to review their progress. The second part involved coming up with a comprehensive plan for how to make that happen, including the development of a written exam. Third, the ITIA started a pilot program in Louisville, KY while we refined and updated the plan over several months.

Once the program was up and running, I formally concluded the consult. But a couple of weeks later, the ITIA contacted me again. They asked if I would help score the certification exams. Although they never revealed why they wanted me to do this, I suspect it was for two reasons. One, they wanted to move quickly. Setting up a system and getting the equipment to score the exam would have slowed them down significantly. Remember, this was before the advent of Google forms or online assessments. I told them that I could help them shop for the equipment, set up, and learn how to use it. I reassured them that it was not all that hard, although they were persistent that I still do the scoring. This led me to believe that they wanted me to score the exams to prevent even the perception of any bias. They wanted a reputable and unbiased third party to do the scoring, off-site. I could understand that.

Scoring exams was even more lucrative than the initial consult. They would send a packet of exams over by secure courier and, with permission from my department chair, I used the “scantron” machine to score the exams and generate the results. You might remember the old scantron machine. It has a feeder on one end for the bubble sheets. The first bubble sheet would always be the answer key. Subsequent bubble sheets would then be scored with incorrect items being marked and results printed at the bottom of the sheet. I distinctly remember feeling like I was literally printing money. Each

time the machine fed in a bubble sheet, it made a “crrchunck” sound which was worth about \$3. I think there were about 25-60 in each packet, and they arrived two to four times per week. This went on for nearly a year and really helped my family make ends meet and catch up on paying off some debt. One time, the organization contracted with me to help them conduct a national survey about tire brand preference. Again, remember, there was no easy way to do this online. With existing technologies today, a middle school student could do it. The most effective and efficient method at the time was to once again use bubble sheets to scan the results quickly. I remember the scantron machine breaking down right before hundreds of bubble sheets were delivered to me. My wife and I spent dozens of hours and a few very long nights compiling the results by hand. That was a painful experience, although gladly paid for a month’s rent (or one week worth of diapers and formula; at least, that’s what it felt like).

Romance on the Go

Ta'Veca Collins, MSW is currently a Registered Clinical Social Work Intern that has been practicing marriage and family therapy for ten years. We love her side hustle story which, once again, illustrates many of the principles that we have been focusing on throughout the book. Ta'Veca is also the founder of Romance On The Go (<https://romanceonthego.com/our-story>). According to her website, Romance On The Go was established in 2012 after several years of planning and executing numerous romantic rendezvous for her husband, family, and friends. The defining moment that allowed for Romance On The Go to be born was in October 2010, when Ta'Veca's bridesmaids and close friends surprised her on her wedding night. The bridesmaids and close friends sneaked off and decorated the Collins Honeymoon Suite with battery-operated candles and rose petals throughout the suite. A Honeymoon Survival

Kit and other newlywed "Love Items" were placed throughout the suite. Imagine the surprise the newly married couple had upon entering the suite! Ta'Veca spent the next few years building and branding Romance On The Go into the successful business it is today! Ta'Veca has created a preferred vendor network that is utilized to render Romance On The Go's services ranging from: date night planning, marriage proposal services, vow concierge, honeymoon concierge services, to monthly "just because" subscription service. Romance On The Go's services and packages promote intimacy, rekindle romance, create priceless memories, and sustain healthy relationships.

After earning her LCSW, it is Ta'Veca's intention to offer "Quickie" Couples sessions with her business clients (she has had a lot of inquiries and has provided services to a beta test couple under the supervision of her supervisor) to serve as a wrap-around service. The "Quickie" sessions will focus primarily on addressing intimacy issues, sustainability of romance within a relationship, and how to communicate your romantic needs. The sessions will be offered once per month to couples for three months (additional sessions will be available upon completion of "Quickie" sessions). Couples will have access to Ta'Veca via video call and text messages in between sessions. Ta'Veca is currently working on the logistics of how to successfully implement "Quickie" sessions into Romance On The Go's business model to essentially have a mini private practice!

Voice-Overs

We found one school counselor who was doing voice-over work as his side hustle. Doing voice-overs struck us as a potentially lucrative side hustle; one with relatively little overhead or initial investment. And as we looked at people already in this space, we observed that you don't have to necessarily have the voice of James Earl Jones to be a valued voice-over actor. Generally heard and not seen, professional

voice-over actors play an important role in selling products and helping animated characters come alive in movies and television shows. Voice work requires a high degree of vocal versatility as well as attention to detail. There are no standard educational requirements for professional voice-over actors, but many of these professionals have completed some form of training or coursework in voice acting (Study.com, 2018). As we looked into this prospect more deeply, we found that, although you could invest in some expensive recording equipment, software, and a studio, you don't have to (e.g., see <https://amzn.to/2DXkfuu>). For instance, check out this YouTube video titled “How to Set Up a Voice-Over Studio at Home” from Earl Hall at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hbC8e3d42qA> to get some great tips for setting up your home studio, even in your closet. We also discovered some online platforms that provide support for a potential voice-over side hustle:

- **Fiverr** is the world's largest freelance services marketplace for lean entrepreneurs to focus on growth and create a successful business at affordable costs. Many beginning voice-over actors started on Fiverr to build their business (<https://www.fiverr.com/categories/music-audio/voice-overs>).
- **Voice123** is “The world's first and largest marketplace for professional **voice** actors.” (<https://voice123.com/>). You can watch an informative webinar about it at https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=14&v=cUwiyBW1Vzs and read a voice-over guide at <http://thevoiceoverguide.com/> to learn more about getting this side hustle started.
- **VoiceJockeys** (<https://www.voicejockeys.com>) is a virtual meeting place for voice-over talent and people in need of

their services. To be a VoiceJockeys.com Jock, you must be able to work from your home or office studio, be able to turn around projects promptly, and be a professional. Check out what types of fees that experienced voice-over actors are commanding at

https://www.upwork.com/o/profiles/browse/?q=voice-over&user_pref=2.

- **VoiceJungle** is a one-stop shop for voiceovers and music. If you're interested in joining the VoiceJungle roster, you may submit an MP3 voiceover demo for consideration. VoiceJungle talent is required to have a home studio and must meet quality specifications before being added to the roster (<https://www.voicejungle.com/>).

Event Planning

Danielle Gray, M.S. is a Lead School Counselor in Collier County, Florida and owner of Cherished Events, LLC. Here is what she told us about her side hustle.

Having five years under my “school counselor belt” this year, I can luckily still recall being fresh out of the Florida Gulf Coast University School Counseling Program back in May 2014. I was extremely nervous with a hint of delight when I landed my first school counselor position. I moved up the ladder quickly, working in a leadership position a year and a half later. Even though I earned the title Lead Counselor, I still became anxious and felt somewhat underqualified. Little did I realize at the time, but the FGCU School Counseling program educated and prepared me well for life as a school counselor. And I also did not anticipate how helpful those counseling, leadership, and related skills would benefit me in my side hustle.

Before becoming a school counselor, I was employed as a caseworker for Child Protective Services. I had more cases than you could juggle with on ten hands, dealt with some of the worst situations, felt in danger at times, worked countless hours a week to get everything done, and was drastically underpaid. The biggest letdown was that I never really got to see the kids directly. I didn't know much about them beyond what I learned in their files. I found myself constantly calling their school counselors to find out how they were doing academically and emotionally. This is what lead me to take a secretarial position while I went back to school for my masters in school counseling. Believe me when I tell you these were my frugal days! Good thing I was still living at home, but I didn't have much during this time financially since I was only working part time. I was taking home only about \$700 a month during this time. As most would, I began to think of what I could do to make more money. Something out of my "normal" routine, something that put money in my pocket, something FUN! Something I'm good at.

Brainstorming does help because I found myself researching how to start my own business by the end of that thought. I had enough people to answer and report to during this time, so working for myself sounded like the perfect idea. I always had very creative ideas but wasn't business savvy enough at the time to do it all on my own. This was when I partnered up with a good friend and colleague of mine at the time, Sherry Bryant. After a few hours, we finally came up with our idea, event planning! That was it: planning parties, local events, weddings, fashion shows, nonprofit events, and baby showers! This sounded like a million-dollar, or at least a few extra dollars, idea. Whatever work we wanted to accept, we could, and what we didn't, we wouldn't! We ran with the idea, immediately applying for a Limited Liability Company (LLC) business license and coming up with our name, Cherished Events. We choose to work when we want to and choose not to when we don't. We've made a few

thousand dollars a year each and have fun in the process. What more could you ask for?

Our first “gig” was a wedding event which has become our most popular. Sherry and I fit into our respective roles naturally. She is more of the business and negotiation side of the company, while I am the one who works more personally with the couple. This makes us amazing business partners. I’ll never forget the day one of our brides cried to me during a panic attack. As she was gasping for a breath, I found myself using person-centered counseling skills to help during this time. Once settled, I used the solution-focused brief counseling techniques to help her to stay focused, encouraged, and confident. How funny it was when I found my two worlds colliding. I would never have imagined that the lessons I used for practicum and my internships would also work for me as an event planner. I find my counseling and organizational skills extremely useful in both of my professions, and I believe my students and clients do too.

Since my career as a counselor has taken up more and more of my time these days, I find Cherished Events taking more of a backseat. Even though we did just complete a beautiful wedding with 200 guests, it’s been a slow year for Sherry and me. We find it a bit challenging to make networking events at 5 p.m., when most start, because we both work until that time. We also notice our social media “keep up” has been falling short lately. These are the biggest ways we gain our clients and grow our business. The good news, however, is that with more effort and time, we can gear back up if we want (which we have already started to do recently). Nonetheless, it’s nice not to HAVE to if we don’t want or just can’t right now.

I always encourage others to follow their heart. As the adage goes, *“You’ll never work a day in your life if you love what you do.”* I believe this to be true. Your whole heart and soul have to be “in it to win it” for your “side gig” to work. Time needs to be set aside for it, and the

passion and momentum must continue. I will admit it can be a struggle but definitely worth it.

Check out some photos of some of our events on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Cherishedeventplanning/> and on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/cherishedeventplanning/>. You can email me, Danielle, at Cherishedeventplanning@gmail.com.

Executive Function Coaching

Angela Molloy is an Educational Coach and College/Career Counselor. Here she shares her coaching hustle story.

It has been a long time since I have had only “one” job. I have been a school counselor for nearly two years; I was hired as a half-time high school career counselor in January 2016. In August 2017, my principal called me to fill the hospital liaison role at the high school after a social worker left unexpectedly. This brought me up to 90 percent fulltime. At the conclusion of that school year, the hospital liaison role was reassigned to a social worker because the district needed a full-time psychologist. I was prepared to work a 50 percent schedule again for this current school year, but after sorting out the budget, the school was able to give me more hours by making me the Remote Learning Coordinator (a.k.a. the person responsible for tracking students that take online classes). During this, I was interviewing for another position with Beyond BookSmart, a company that I was already working with as an Executive Function Coach since 2016 (see <https://www.beyondbooksmart.com/>). Is it hard to keep up with all of that? That’s how I feel nearly every day. I never imagined that this is how my life would have turned out as I was the type of kid that always had an end goal and well-crafted plan to reach that goal.

As a young child, I dreamed of one day running my own classroom. I would have my lessons ready to go every day, and my students were going to be eager to learn and follow directions. The

walls would be covered with inspirational quotes and students would have files to organize their paperwork. But as I got older, my vision became cloudy, and I wasn't so sure that teaching was the right thing for me. For starters, I was terrified of giving presentations (something that I finally got over in graduate school). I also get bored easily, so teaching the same lessons over again was probably going to get old fast. I explored many options, ranging from an editor to a psychotherapist. After I finished my bachelor's degree in psychology, I knew that I didn't want to go the clinical route, and so I considered teaching once again. After landing on school counseling as a profession, I finally felt like I found what I was meant to do. What I did not expect was an over-saturated job market and fierce competition for the few openings each school year. It took me nearly three years to secure a part-time position as a high school career counselor. And while that may seem like a dream job (no specific contract hours or caseload!), it doesn't lend itself very well to supporting a family or paying a mortgage (even with a spouse that works fulltime). Since I'm a part-time employee, I'm also released from my contract each year and need to wait until all staffing decisions are made before I know whether I'll be able to keep my job the following school year. I had to piece together some resemblance of a full-time income, which is what led me on the path to balancing multiple roles between two companies.

I started working for Beyond BookSmart about a year before I got my counseling position at the high school. My primary role is to work one-on-one with students that struggle with executive functioning to help them become more effective and efficient in school and beyond. I do this by first building a relationship with each student and then teaching them skills for success.

Reflection is a considerable part of this process because my goal is for students not to need my support anymore. For students to truly see a transformational change, they must reflect on what they are

learning and really understand why they are learning it. Not all students want to do this work, especially middle and high school students, which can be difficult to handle in the moment. However, every coach has a supervisor with whom they can problem-solve these situations.

My counseling skills absolutely transfer to the work I do as an executive function coach. Before students buy into making changes that will affect their work and study habits, I have to “reach” them based on their mindset before I can teach them any tools or skills that will stick. I’ve also been able to take what I’ve learned from coaching back to my work at school. For a short period, I supported students that had been hospitalized and often missed three to six weeks of school. Upon their return, they were often faced with a mountain of schoolwork that they were not able to do while they were hospitalized, so I would work with them to create daily and weekly plans to chip away at the missing work, as well as help them advocate for themselves with their teachers. Working with students that have severe anxiety and depression at the high school has also helped me be more aware of the emotional struggles some of my Beyond BookSmart students face, thus making me a better coach.

In addition to coaching students, I am also a supervisor for new executive coaches. This role allows me to apply what I know about coaching to help my peers find their own coaching style, while making sure they’re up to date on the company policies and procedures. I am also an intake coordinator, which is a coach that interviews new students to determine the goals of coaching before they are matched with a coach. As an intake coordinator, I must review and interpret parent and student surveys, neuropsychological reports, and other educational data to get a sense of the student’s strengths and weaknesses in terms of executive functioning. Once the student is matched with a coach, I will consult with that person

to discuss the information gathered from the intake meeting so the coach and student can get started as soon as possible.

If that was not enough, I'm also Beyond BookSmart's outreach coordinator for my location, a position I sought out due to continual job fluctuation with the school district every year. As the outreach coordinator, I meet with potential referral sources to tell them about the work we do at Beyond BookSmart. This is essentially a sales position because I need to convince other professionals to trust the company, the coaching process, and the coaches so they feel confident enough to refer students to us. I've seen many similarities between counseling and sales, so this position seemed like a natural fit for my skills and experience.

With both my school counseling students and my executive coaching students, I must build trust and rapport with potential referral sources and maintain those relationships. I also continually seek out new opportunities, which is both exciting and challenging. I would not consider myself a risk taker, but when I'm reaching out to a potential referral source, I'm always taking a "shot in the dark" because I have no idea if they will be receptive when I make that first cold call. When I'm successful in getting someone to meet with me, the biggest challenge becomes the schedule because I'm at school for nearly 30 hours a week. While I have some flexibility as a part timer, I still need to make sure I'm working my contract hours. Luckily, my supervisors at Beyond BookSmart are extremely understandable and flexible with my job at school. Without this supportive team, I don't think there's any way I would have made it as far as I have with the company.

While there are, of course, challenges within the job, being a mother of two young children adds another layer of difficulty to balancing the work between school and Beyond BookSmart. The fact that I have multiple roles in each company further complicates everything. I work very hard to help support my family and pay back

those student loans. One major drawback is that sometimes my kids must do without. I'm always working (exact words from my nine-year-old son). Even when I'm home with my kids in the evening, I find that I'm still checking my email, answering a text from one of my students, or taking a call from someone that I'm trying to set up an outreach meeting with because I can't do these things when I'm at school during the day. Sometimes I feel so scattered that I wonder whether I'm effective at any of my jobs. My husband works evenings and weekends, so there is literally no time for me to get a break from work or taking care of my kids. We struggle to get it all done, which would not be possible without the side hustle.

I don't know if I've painted the best picture, but I think my situation is unique because I hold a leadership role within Beyond BookSmart, which is not typical for the other coaches, many of whom are also full-time teachers, counselors, and school psychologists. If any other school counselors are considering the work of an executive function coach, I would absolutely recommend working for Beyond BookSmart. The company is well-organized, we get free professional development, and everyone is so supportive and willing to help. Coaches get to set their own schedules, so it's relatively easy to work around your life instead of living life around your work. Despite how difficult this past year has been, working for Beyond BookSmart has, by far, been the best and most rewarding job I have ever had. In the almost three years, I've been a coach, I've been able to build strong relationships with my students, and grow as a professional with the most supportive team of coaches and supervisors. I've discovered a passion for working with college-aged students, a chance I may not have otherwise had. A college student that I had for nearly 18 months said that working with me was life changing! She feels that everyone needs an executive function coach and has referred several of her friends to the company as a result of her positive experience. Those words of encouragement are what I always draw on when I feel like

giving up because I know that I'm over-extending myself and at high risk for burn out. But I keep going because the one thing I need in my career is a variety of job tasks and the ability to make a difference in the lives of others. The stability and steady income are nice too.

For more information on becoming a coach, learning about our coaching process, or signing up for our blog, visit www.beyondbooksmart.com. You can find me, Angela, online at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/angela-molloy-15549648/>.

Tutoring

As a school counselor, your knowledge and skills are highly transferable to the job of tutoring. With tutoring, you may be equipped with the subject matter, but also will be adept at helping kids who are feeling frustrated and hopeless. Your counseling skills can help you provide timely encouragement and tips for staying motivated throughout the process.

We found school counselors who are tutoring by providing private instruction to individuals outside of the classroom. School counselors as tutors help students in many different areas, such as filling in instructional or knowledge gaps (e.g., Math or English), learning study skills, preparing for an exam, raising low grades, re-teaching difficult content, preparing for college, and more. Effective tutors find ways to motivate their students and individualize their instruction to the specific needs of those students. Some tutors choose to work at their side hustle on their own, independent of an organization. However, many different organizations employ tutors as well. In our research for this book, two companies that we kept hearing about were Wyzant and VIPKIDS.

Wyzant

Wyzant is an online-based service that matches tutors with students. This organization, co-founded in 2005, is headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. Subject areas include Math, Science, English,

Language, Test Prep, and others such as Music, Sports, Technology, and Special Needs. You can tutor in-person from the comfort of a coffee shop, in the student's home, or online in the comfort of your slippers.

Becoming a tutor with Wyzant is easy, which includes only six steps (as described on the company website, <https://www.wyzant.com/>):

1. Choose the subjects you'd like to tutor.
2. Review a brief rundown of how the relationship works between tutors and Wyzant.
3. Write your Free Response, providing detailed information about yourself, including any relevant tutoring or teaching experience, degrees, licenses, and certifications, educational history, mailing address, hourly rate, and travel radius for in-person lessons. It is important to be specific about your experience.
4. Personalize your profile. It's a good practice to upload a photo, create an eye-catching headline, and include information about your education and certifications in the appropriate fields.
5. Read and agree to the Independent Tutor Agreement.
6. Verify your email address.

After that, there are two ways to connect with students through Wyzant: apply to jobs on their built-in Jobs Board or get contacted by students who discover your profile. If a student reviews your application and is interested in working with you, he or she will respond, and you'll receive a new message in your inbox. Students can also reach out to you directly from your public profile. A direct inquiry from a new student will also appear as a message in your

Inbox. Wyzant takes care of a tutor's marketing, payment processing, and scheduling (Rogers, 2014).

VIPKID Teaching

Several school counselors who indicated that their side hustle involves tutoring students mentioned on social media that they are doing well with a particular company, VIPKID (<https://www.vipkidteachers.com/>). According to their website, VIPKID provides an international learning experience to children in China between the ages of 4 to 12. Headquartered in Beijing, the company offers fully immersive, one-on-one English language instruction provided online by highly-qualified teachers. The curriculum is based on the US Common Core State Standards and uses a flipped-classroom approach to foster creativity and critical thinking skills. VIPKID is very strict on applicants' education level and requires applicants to have at least a bachelor's degree, so you will be fine there. Basically, you can work with a VIPKID from anywhere as long as you have a computer (Desktop, Laptop, MAC, Surface), stable Internet connection, a high definition (HD) external camera or HD integrated camera (most laptops have it), and a headset with a microphone. You should understand that, at the time of this writing, the company requires a six-month minimum commitment from its applicants. The contract can be renewed if your reviews are favorable.

Here are a few other things to know about this possible side hustle: All VIPKID classes are one on one. The curriculum is already provided for every class. However, teachers must prepare for class by reviewing the class materials beforehand. Teachers may preview class materials in the classroom on the teacher portal 6 to 12 hours in advance. You won't have to communicate with parents; representatives of the company do that. You may not work with the same students, only those that book your class. In regard to pay, you

are an independent contractor; your payment or “service fee” is calculated on a per-class basis (scheduled in 30-minute slots) and is composed of a minimum pay between \$7–9 plus incentives (that’s \$14–18 per hour). Your minimum pay will be determined by your demo class performance, while incentives by your monthly class participation and completion as a VIPKID teacher. This is the minimum rate. There are incentives such as for showing up on time and teaching the lesson according to schedule and the number of classes you finish in a month. When it’s time to renew your contract, you could be eligible for a raise. And of course, you are responsible for your own taxes.

Also, to maximize the number of classes you could get scheduled, VIPKID recommends you be available for at least 7.5 hours (15 time slots per week at 30 minutes per time slot) during Beijing peak times. The following tends to be the most requested time periods in Beijing time: Monday through Friday 6–10 p.m., and Saturday through Sunday 9 a.m.–10 p.m.

VIPKID has received some pretty good reviews. For example, one tutor wrote, “This is a great job for stay-at-home parents, travelers, or anyone else looking for a work-from-home job that pays decently well. The kids are a blast to work with (and I didn’t have a ton of experience working with kids before)! You can set your own schedule, but you typically end up working early in the morning or through the night because of the time difference. You are a contractor, so there are no benefits, and it can take a while to get regular bookings, but it is different for everyone. Overall, a great option with flexible hours and the ability to work from anywhere.” Someone else added, “VIPKID is a great company! The hours are flexible, and all of the teaching materials are provided to you. Each class is between 25 to 27 minutes. No two classes are alike in that each student is at different levels of their English proficiency, and you will need to adjust your teaching so that the student will be

encouraged to participate. This allows for creativity when working with each student. VIPKID also offers workshops for teaching ranging from how to teach a trial class to how to write effective feedback. As a consultant, you will have to really "sell" yourself so that the parents will choose you to teach their kids." (Indeed.com, 2018).

In addition to Wyzant and VIPKID, other online tutoring platforms include:

- Tutor.com – Online Tutoring, Homework Help and Test Prep in Math, Science, and English. <https://www.tutor.com/>
- TutorMe – Online Tutoring, on-demand homework help, and test prep courses. <https://tutorme.com/>
- Skooli – Online Tutoring from only tutors who are certified and credentialed. <https://www.skooli.com/>

Stunt Actor

If you've watched an episode of AMC's zombie apocalypse thriller, Fear the Walking Dead (FTWD), you've probably seen the talents of Shawna West, another fascinating side hustler. Shawna is a teacher and school counseling graduate student by day and a stunt actor by night! Let's find out what her super-cool side hustle involves!

Shawna describes her side hustle as being an all-action actor for television, film, and commercials. She is a member of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG-AFTRA) union to do this; SAG-AFTRA also works as a credentialing and certification agency; being a part of this union is evidence that one has the training necessary to safely and believably do the stunt work. In Shawna's case, she received a SAG-AFTRA emergency certification for tumbling around in an RV falling down a hill for a monster movie . . . when no one else would do it! You can see a video of her in the RV tumble on her IMDb page here:

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm5976490/>. Most recently, she's done stunt work in *FTWD Season 4*, she doubled for Cindy Crawford in a Rooms to Go commercial, and she did the action shots for the indie films *Dark* and *Undying*. This year, she is doing stunt work for the movie, *Alita-Battle Angel*, as well as for Season 5 of *FTWD*. She says that lately she most often plays a stunt zombie that gets killed up close. She also does lots of choreographed fights, she gets killed a lot, and she does a little climbing/rappelling/wire work for superhero or adventure movies. These days, she's been doing more and more stunt driving training to transition out of body stunt work, which is hard on one's health.

Shawna first considered doing stunt work in her teens when she was approached by a Los Angeles stunt coordinator while doing gymnastics at a Dallas gym. While this encounter planted the idea in her head, it was her middle school students during her first year of teaching that pushed her to actually do it! While doing a goal-setting exercise, her students challenged her to pursue her dream. So she started researching the Austin film industry and Googled 'stunt training.' There, she found Austinite Richard Hancock who ran stunt person training at a gym every Sunday. Through this activity, she met action actors who she networked with and who taught her how to start building her side hustle. Shawna said that her overall love of action keeps her going at it; the rush and thrill of fighting on camera and getting that intricate choreography just right is quite fun and challenging.

Even though she obviously doesn't get any fight training or experience in her school counseling classes, Shawna says there is more transferrable knowledge between school counseling and stunt work than you would think! She says socializing and quickly building rapport with unknown stunt professionals is crucial because of the nature of contract work. Similar to counseling, she has to be able to talk and get to know strangers quickly through the techniques of

open-ended questions and actively listening; this is needed so you can learn enough to trust them and their stunt timing/skills.

In addition to these wonderful interactions with fellow stunt professionals, Shawna says she feels so lucky that she gets to engage in an entirely different environment and be a different person through this job. She notes that she gets to do exciting things that no one else gets to do in their daily lives. For her, it is gratifying to be a part of something so magical and exciting, not to mention that the pay is triple what she makes in education. She says that stunt work is a great escape from the grind and the drudgery of everyday life. It is also heartwarming to be taken so seriously and treated with so much respect—the media colleagues know that what stunt actors are doing is so important for film and indeed dangerous/difficult.

Unfortunately, there are a few pretty significant challenges to her hustle. As mentioned before, stunt work is terribly hard on the body; she says that replacement surgeries and physical therapy is commonplace in stunt showbiz. Shawna also has to balance using her vacation days versus spending lots of time away from her students so as not to disrupt their learning.

In conclusion, Shawna has some words of advice for anyone out there wanting to break into the stunt business. She says to do your research on where to train well; the key is to get excellent training because there's so much lousy training that can actually harm your stunt career. She also mentions patience as a necessity because stunt work is sporadic and there is lots of competition for stunt jobs. Shawna says you will spend a significant amount of time sitting around on set too. Finally, her biggest take away is to be kind to everyone and to be appreciative with people who take a chance on you. Never give up if stunt work is a passion of yours! If you have any questions about stunt work or you'd like to talk more with Shawna, you can reach her at sswest81@gmail.com.

Solution-Focused Coaching

Many school counselors are already familiar with Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC) as a strengths-based approach to doing individual counseling. SFBC emphasizes resilience, strengths, and resources that people possess and how these can be utilized in the pursuit of positive change (Corcoran & Pillai, 2009; Grant, 2012; Sklare, 2014). Some school counselors are also applying SFBC techniques to other areas such as classroom lessons and parent conferences to set a positive focus and facilitate goal setting. Did you know that the principles and techniques of SFBC are also being used for private practice *coaching*? Solution-Focused Coaching (SFC) can involve different areas of focus such as personal, social, executive, marriage, career, and parenting, to name a few. I (Russ) have believed for quite some time now that solution-focused coaching is currently an underused opportunity that would probably make for a lucrative school counselor side hustle. School counselors who are already using SFBC in their work would be naturals for having a solution-focused coaching side hustle.

An effective life coach aims to help and empower others to make, meet, and exceed personal and professional goals. Life coaches foster resiliency: the ability to take on pressure in a positive way and to successfully navigate difficulties (Green & Palmer, 2018). This can include achieving promotion in the workplace, becoming happy and fulfilled in your relationships, or exploring your potential and achieving other ambitions. Life coaching is about objectivity and empowerment; a coach can't do something for you, but they can help you do it for yourself.

The basic assumptions of solution-focused coaching are that for each coachee, specific, individualized solutions for problems work best and that any person is competent to solve his or her own

problems. Solutions emerge by asking useful solution-focused questions by the coach (Grant, 2012; Visser & Bodien, 2002).

Using the SFBC techniques as a coach in one's side hustle makes sense for several reasons, mainly because of the difference between counseling and coaching. Whereas counseling or therapy focuses on more intense issues and problems, coaching focuses on helping people through the ups and downs of life. For someone who has a mental health diagnosis or is suffering from significant issues such as loss or trauma, a licensed counselor is best. However, for others who need more time-limited encouragement, goal setting, and accountability, coaching can do the trick. Diann Wingert (2016), a Licensed Counseling Social Worker and Coach, writes, "*Coaching tends to focus on the present and future rather than the past. Coaches help people identify their goals and the obstacles they are facing. Like therapy, coaching involves guidance and support but also places a great deal of emphasis on accountability, enabling people to do more than they might on their own.*" (p. 2)

The solution-focused approach lends itself beautifully to doing any aspect of life coaching. Because of the focus on strengths, opportunities, resources, and supports—combined with a focus on the present and future—the SFBC method to coaching comes with very low risk and potentially high benefits for the coachee. For example, the SFC model:

- is easily applied to a diversity of people including race, religion, sexuality, ethnicity, abilities, or gender because it focuses on goal setting within the context of the person's own values and interests;
- tends to be brief because of the primary focus on goals/motivations versus barriers and shortfalls. SFC is also brief because it focuses on what the coachee is already capable of instead of learning new behaviors or attitudes; and

- does not require extra credentials. While many coaches seek specialized coach training and certification, no licensing board requires this. In fact, anyone who wants to use the title of coach can do so because coaching is an unregulated industry at this time (Yann, 2018). There are no formal education requirements needed to become a life coach, either. However, similar to counseling, it does help to have some expertise in counseling or therapy.

If you are interested in learning more about solution-focused brief coaching, check out the following resources:

Websites and Videos

Coert Visser is one of my favorite SF Coaches, and he has some very informative videos on his YouTube channel (Videos)

<https://www.youtube.com/user/coertvisser>

How Solution-Focused Coaching Works (Video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JX2FnFUqLMo>

Solution-Focused Coaching Demonstration (Video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cxRiGecfo4k> with follow-up at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zeMyDX1_Zh8

About the Woww Program: A solution-focused coaching method for schools (Video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdOUyWTpUTc>

Why we are excited about Solution-Focused Coaching (Video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8W1ciza1pCA>

Russ Sabella's solution-focused handouts.

<http://schoolcounselor.com/professional-development/handouts/>

Introduction to Solution-Focused Brief Coaching (PDF)

<http://verti.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/IntroBriefCoaching.pdf>

Coaching with OSKAR, a solutions-focused approach to effective and sustainable change (PDF)

<http://sfwork.com/pdf/Coaching%20with%20OSKAR.pdf>

The Solution-focused Approach to Coaching (PDF)

<http://bit.ly/2Fc10x9>

Brief Coaching for Executives | Chaco Canyon

Consulting (Example of Coaching Practice)

<https://chacocanyon.com/briefcoaching.shtml>

Books

Review solution-focused coaching books on Amazon.com by going directly to <http://bit.ly/sf-coaching-books>. Specifically, I (Russ) recommend these:

Bannink, F. (2010). *1001 solution-focused questions: Handbook for solution-focused interviewing*. WW Norton & Company. <https://amzn.to/2CTzoeV>

Green, S., & Palmer, S. (2019). *Positive psychology coaching in practice*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge. <https://amzn.to/2SEn9bg>

O'Connell, B., Palmer, S., & Williams, H. (2013). *Solution-focused coaching in practice*. Routledge. <https://amzn.to/2SCiuGT>

Szabó, P. & Meier, D. (2009). *Coaching plain & simple: Solution-focused brief coaching essentials*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. <https://amzn.to/2CodHYQ>

Side Hustle Shares on Facebook

Without any solicitation or prompting from us, we noticed that, on several different Facebook groups for school counselors, users inquired or posted information about doing side hustles. For

example, one school counselor wrote, *"So slightly off topic, but do any of you have side jobs outside of school counseling? Just curious what people do for extra income on the side!"* Of course, this caught our attention. What ensued was a flurry of interest and responses. Following are a few examples. If a school counselor referred to a company or website, we included a link for your convenience so you can more easily learn about a specific opportunity.

"I'm a server on the side. It lets me earn a lot of extra money but with minimal hours. Plus, it's flexible enough to pick up more shifts during breaks and summer."

"SAT and ACT administration!"

". . . we are a test site already. If your school isn't, then you can reach out to CollegeBoard (SAT) or ACT to become a test site. Easy money."

"I sell weighted blankets online,
<https://jenssoothingnuggles.dudaone.com/>."

"Bartend at a brewery."

"Flip a house each summer."

"I cat sit for Rover (<https://www.rover.com/>)!"

"Coach cheerleading and design for weddings part-time."

"Travel agent. You have to find a travel agency that will work with you while you learn! I got lucky because a friend of mine is a travel agent, so he got me into their company. It's super fun!"

"I have a cleaning company, and I'm also a real estate agent."

"Receptionist at a nail salon. Love it!"

"Private college and career counseling. I have been doing private for five years. If it weren't for my kids attending my school, I would go for it fulltime. I offer Myers Briggs and Strong Interest inventory through Skillsone (<https://www.skillsone.com/>). Right now, I am in the middle of ASCA specialist for College admissions and another Career Development (<http://bit.ly/college-admissions-specialist>). I have done so much over the years at work; attend counselor lunches

at universities and read, read, read. When I took career counseling in my masters, I fell in love with it. Joined NCDA and my NACAC affiliate is SACAC. I joined that too. ASCA has some good stuff too. Joined the College Admission Counselor's Facebook group. If it's out there, I read it."

"Yes. I teach dancing. It's extra money and a little bit of self-care."

"Uber driver! I do lots of advocating for our profession every time someone asks 'is this your side gig?'"

"Invitation and print design."

"I own The Oak Market (<http://bit.ly/oak-market>) with my husband, and we make hand painted signs and home décor."

"Deliver groceries with Instacart (<https://www.instacart.com/>) on weekends and in the summer." Note: also see <http://time.com/money/5355103/teacher-quit-shipt-delivery>.

"I work Bingo Saturday nights!"

"I sell Mary Kay."

"I am the counselor for night school for a stipend."

"I sell Monat (<https://monatglobal.com/>) haircare . . . It's really easy, great compensation, and I love the products!"

"Younique (<https://www.yuniqueproducts.com>) makeup. Their company proceeds also help abused women."

"I'm a counselor for our expulsion program, supervise SATs, and work ACTs. I'm also the summer school counselor."

"I teach sewing classes, have an Etsy shop with hand lettering prints, and sell items at a local boutique (<https://www.etsy.com/shop/marciekochedesigns>)."

"Umpire baseball, coach football, and I'm a fragrance rep at Macy's during the holiday season!"

"I became a Travel Agent. I make commissions when I book others' travel and save on my own travel. But the money has been

great. My vacations are no longer vacations, they're my classrooms (for market research), so I can file them on my taxes."

"I work at a gym! I am also an RA, Resident Assistant, at a Nursing Home and a Soccer Coach."

"Adult Ed four evenings a week doing a modified version of what I do during the day. Transcripts, college presentations, job fairs, and pretty much preparing students for graduation."

"I teach classes at our local community college."

"I have worked part-time at the local stadium as a ticket taker; I used to coach the high school track and cheer teams, I am currently the yearbook and senior class advisor. I also grade test online for ETS."

"I sell LimeLife (<https://www.limelifebyalcone.com/>)—professional makeup and skincare."

"I am an independent jeweler with Premier Designs Jewelry (<https://www.premierdesigns.com/>) which makes 50 percent commission on the first day. I also just started with a brand new company called Revital U. Revital U (<https://revitalu.com/>) is a ground-floor opportunity as there were under 10k consultants a few weeks ago. It's exploding, and people are seeing great results! It's the easiest thing to do because it is all online."

"I teach a Spanish class online, teach Zumba, teach yoga, teach strong by Zumba; lol, we gotta hustle . . . I am also the ninth-grade class sponsor and the GSA sponsor."

"I am a stylist for Stella & Dot (<https://www.stelladot.com/>)—an in-line jewelry and accessories boutique."

"I directed a summer camp two summers after Hurricane Katrina, I was a Weight Watchers Leader for three years, and I taught adjunct one semester!"

"Calligraphy! So relaxing!"

". . . worked at Children's first; it is for supervised visits with children (<http://www.childrenfirstvts.com/>)."

“I do closed captioning from home. I've had a chance to see such a fun variety of educational, human-interest, and funny videos (<https://www.rev.com/freelancers/captions>; also see <https://wahadventures.com/closed-captioning-jobs/>).”

On a different Facebook Group, a school counselor posted the following: *“Feeling burnt out and unappreciated. What other jobs can we do with our degree? I feel like I need a change.”* In addition to words of encouragement and tips for self-care, here are several responses as they related to doing a school counselor side hustle.

“I taught child psychology this semester as an adjunct at a community college and LOVED it (except the pay was really low). So, after being budget cut and applying to over 25 jobs the past 18 months and thinking back to how I was treated at the second school I was employed at, I've decided to go back for my teacher certification in psychology and found a one-year program to get it, and my ultimate goal is to teach college fulltime one day because let me tell you—I never got observed once or asked to turn one piece of material in, and I had so much fun. Good luck.”

“Online entrepreneurship :-) Life Coaching :-) You get to choose your clients and who you want on your team.”

“Check out <https://www.idealists.org/en/?type=JOB>; there'll be loads on there, which will be transferable. Good luck!”

“I have two interviews scheduled this week [and] am super excited!! They are both intervention specialist positions. So I will still be helping students but on a different level.”

In yet a third Facebook group for school counselors, someone posted, “I'm looking to find a second source of income to help out my family! Any suggestions of things y'all have done from home would be greatly appreciated!” Responses from this group include:

“I'm also an affiliate for CBD oils, creams, sprays, and other amazing CBD products (<http://www.hempworx.com/drhart>)! It saved my knee from surgery, plus it pays my car note!”

“I am a farmer. My husband and I raise beef cattle.”

“I do crisis work in the ER.”

“I do adoptive family home studies for DSS. They contract them out in SC, and I was licensed to do it from my previous job.”

“I have a home business that I have been running 15+ years part time. I create montages for special events like rehearsal dinners, funerals, bat/bar mitzvahs, anniversaries, etc. I also convert film to digital and can make DVDs, etc. I scan photos/slides/negatives and can do basic photo restoration. I love my home business, and it brings in close to what I make as a part-time counselor.”

“Mental Health First Aid Instructor

(<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/become-an-instructor/>).”

“I do [behavioral] risk assessments at hospitals part time. Right now, it is extremely part time due to 504 taking over my life. It is good money and helps me with my direct hours for licensing.”

“I conduct home assessments for adoption agencies and other child placement organizations.

(<https://www.facebook.com/CKFamServices/>)”

“I work for a health and happiness company. I’ve been working for them for a year, and I’m making \$1200–\$1700 extra a month. Plus, I feel so much better now that I am getting healthy AND getting paid while doing it (<https://plexusworldwide.com/home>).”

“. . . 36 years of selling Avon. I love it, but I need a paycheck without having to put money out. Kind of like a clock in, clock out summer job to help pay off my medical bill.”

“I am a professional musician. I record out of the house or go to the studio and play in a cover band, along with freelance work that comes my way. It’s a fun detour from my other work-life.”

“I am a site coordinator for a group known as the ATEAM—Adopted Teen Empowerment and Mentoring program (see <http://bit.ly/ateamprogram> or <http://bit.ly/ateamprogram2>).”

“I write resumes.”

“I work additional hours, one month basically, outside of my contract each summer. I was an eBay seller (creating personalized scrapbook paper) for many years. I also have worked as a party planner, as requested. Currently, I am working two to six hours a week at my district as a tutor for a student on medical leave and also working four hours a week as a family counselor for an outside agency.”

“I am a Krav Maga instructor helping people learn to defend themselves.”

CHAPTER 14

PARENT COMPANY

"Mentors don't have to be the Daymond Johns or the Mark Cubans. A person running a successful bodega or a tax firm in your community for the last 20 years, that person is working just as much as the individual who's running General Mills."

Daymond John, *Shark Tank*

Early in the development of *School Counselor Side Hustle*, we began reflecting on our own side hustle stories. What motivated us? How did we learn some of the basics? Who inspired us? What we quickly realized more clearly than ever before was that our parents are significant characters in our story, an important *who* in our *why*. We are delighted and humbled to present the next very special side hustle spotlights.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Sonny Lerner (Stephanie's Dad)

Harry "Sonny" Lerner says that his side hustle mantra is: "The requirements for a successful side business are passion and need." He definitely turned his passion for the performing arts and for teaching into a successful side hustle to meet the need of families wanting theatre in their lives! Read on for his inspiring story of how he created a children's

performing arts center from a fifth-grade social studies project!

From my experience as a teacher with a side business, I realized there are two foremost requirements to be a successful side business owner. The owner must have a passion for what they do, and the public must have a need for what the owner offers. I discovered my passion for the performing arts in 1955, when my parents took me to see the musical *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*. Sitting in a darkened theater, I gushed, “*I can do that! I would love to do that!*”

In 1972, as a 5th-grade public school teacher, I directed students in the musical, *Oklahoma!* as a culminating activity to a Westward Movement unit. Similar fifth-grade productions continued with different plays for the next 12 years. Then, in 1984, a parent said, “(My son) Steve had such a good time in the play, we would like him to continue with you next year.” When I expressed my concern that Steve could not be in the play next year because it was only for fifth-graders, the parent, quietly but forcefully, asserted, “*No, Mr. Lerner, you don’t understand! We want you to do this outside of the school system. We want you to start a performing arts school.*” So after a year of planning, I started the Drama Learning Center, Inc. (D.L.C.) in 1985, which continues to this day.

I needed the year of planning to write the curriculum and resolve five important concerns. First, how would I ‘get the word out’ to register students in a time before the Internet and social media? I used a two-pronged approach for ‘getting the word out.’ First, the D.L.C. formed sponsorships with several elementary school PTAs. The schools sent out winter and summer registration fliers to hundreds of households. Second, the D.L.C. formed a partnership with the county Recreation and Parks organization. They advertised the D.L.C. in their brochures, which were mailed out to thousands of households four times a year. The second concern to address was

where would I hold rehearsals and performances? The PTA sponsorships and the Recreation and Parks partnership solved this problem. The two organizations not only sent out the fliers and brochures but they also submitted Building and Use forms to public schools which enabled the D.L.C. to use school stages. My third concern was how much would I charge the students to make a profit? Discovering how much to charge was a three-step process.

To begin with, I added up the cost of the projected expenses, which included payroll, taxes, royalty costs, material and equipment, and attorney and accountant fees. Next, I subtracted that figure from the projected income associated with ticket and merchandise sales. Finally, I arrived at a dollar amount which would be large enough to generate a profit, yet small enough to keep the tuition less than the competition. A fourth concern I had was how I would protect myself from lawsuits. A performing arts space can be a dangerous place for rambunctious students if they fall off the stage and cause an injury. I was concerned that if sued, my family could lose everything. With this worry, I met with an attorney who recommended that the D.L.C. incorporate. If a lawsuit were filed, it would be against the D.L.C. Corporation, not against an individual. The corporation could be sued for its assets but neither my family nor our personal assets would be sued. The fifth and final concern for me to address was how could I ensure that all students, not just the talented performers, participate in a meaningful manner? Most performing art schools utilized the 'Lead and Backup' system. This is a system where the same talented students perform in the leading roles, and the same, less-talented students perform in the backup roles. I did not think this system was acceptable because it gave only the talented students a chance to shine and grow. Therefore, I created a 'Two-Cast' system in which all students had the leading roles in half the performances and the backup roles in the other performances. This guaranteed that all

students, no matter their talent level, enjoyed the opportunity to stand out and develop.

After the year of planning, I began the Drama Learning Center, Inc., as an after-school program during the school year and a full-day theater camp during the summer months. The after-school program consisted of six, two-hour rehearsals in which the students spent half an hour learning acting skills, such as stage movement, stage locations, pantomime, and improvisation, and an hour and a half rehearsing for a play. After six weeks of rehearsals, the students performed twice for their family and friends. They performed once as the lead actor and once as the backup actor.

The three-week, full-day theater camp in the summer was all-encompassing. It began as early as 7 a.m. for the students of working parents. The core components of the camp began at 9 a.m. and ended at 3:30 p.m. During that time, the students learned basic acting skills, wrote original one-act plays, rehearsed for the main play, and planned, painted, and constructed scenery. In addition to lunch, snacks, and recess, the students participated in theatrically related field trips. For most of the students, the day ended at 3:30 p.m., but for those needing aftercare, fun activities were provided until 6 p.m. At the end of the three-week camp, the students performed their one-act plays and main play twice. They performed once as the leads and once as the backups.

People often stated, "You've never run an after-school program or an all-day summer camp. How did you know what to do?" My answer was simple. "I was teaching. No, I was not teaching math, or science, or social studies, I was teaching theater, and if you're a good teacher, you can teach anything." So if you have a passion for what you do, such as teaching astronomy, ballroom dancing, chess, or ping pong, and if there is a need for what you offer, you have the basic ingredients to be a successful side business owner, where the

extra money is nice but the gratification of enriching the lives of others is priceless.

Read an article about Mr. Lerner's story at <https://www.ocala.com/news/20070324/lure-of-the-limelight-draws-former-professional-back-to-stage>.

Side Hustle Spotlight: Giuseppe & Sina (Russ's Parents)

My parents, Giuseppe and Sina, immigrated from Sciacca, Sicily to the United States in the early 1950s. Like so many other immigrants, they made the challenging journey by ship across the ocean, landing on Ellis Island in Upper New York Bay. With nothing more than some clothes and a great desire to succeed, they slowly found work and learned basic English. Sina was a seamstress in a factory on Mulberry Street, Manhattan, and Giuseppe was a bricklayer. Eventually, Giuseppe and Sina joined forces to work as mobile caterers, developing a food truck service, also affectionately known as a "roach coach." They catered to construction sites, factories, and other blue-collar locations throughout New York's Triboro area: Brooklyn, Harlem, and the Bronx. She would make over 300 sandwiches a day that included authentic meatball subs, chicken parmesan, and sausage and peppers, which would become their signature meals (and also their cash cow).

Because of escalating crime, the family moved to southwest Florida in 1976, essentially starting over. Giuseppe found a job as a tile and marble installer, and Sina was once again a seamstress at a factory. It was during this time when they both developed their side hustles. First, Giuseppe began to build and flip houses, duplexes, and condos. Working with a general contractor, he planned, coordinated, and sold several per year, significantly enhancing his annual salary. Then, after a few years, they teamed with a couple of partners and opened up the first Italian restaurant in Cape Coral, Florida. They

worked their respective jobs by day and, in the evening, they both worked at the restaurant. Sina made many of the entrées like lasagna, ravioli, and steak pizzaiola. Giuseppe made the pizzas, calzones, and garlic rolls. All in all, they worked from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m., six days a week; they did what they had to do for themselves and for us. There's more. In their "spare" time, Giuseppe and Sina began buying and selling property in this emerging city that was experiencing burgeoning development. Giuseppe and Sina made all of these achievements with the equivalent of a fifth-grade education and English as a second language.

What can we learn from Sonny, Giuseppe, and Sina? A lot. Once again, we see that there is no substitute for "sweat equity." You have to work harder than you thought possible, stay focused and determined. We also learned from our original mentors that you should seize on your talents; do what you are good at and what you enjoy. Third, we are reminded that there is no guarantee of success. We highlight here the crowning achievements of our parents and all of our school counselor side hustlers, although these are built on less than notable disappointments. There is no straight line to success or accomplishment. Our successful side hustlers might tell you that there is no such thing as success and failure, just success and *learning* for the next time. Perseverance is the difference. Finally, among the many lessons we could learn, we would be remiss by not pointing out another important one that comes from our parents. One of the greatest benefits of the side hustle is to provide your kids with opportunities that they would otherwise not have. In addition to earning extra money for accessing greater opportunity (i.e., better lifestyle), our parents have passed on to us a robust work ethic, the importance of productivity, and a deep determination to succeed. We both learned the importance of quality goods and services. That is, "doing it better than anyone else around." For this, we are grateful and inspired to pass on our passion for the side hustle to others.

Now, we'd like to share our own side hustle spotlights. We believe that our stories will assist you in your own side hustle development. Between the two of us, we have almost 50 years of side hustle experience. We hope that our stories will give you insight into our experiences, which have formed the basis of how we approach the side hustle world.

Stephanie's Side Hustle

I first got the idea of my own side hustle, writing school counseling books, back in 2010 while browsing through a Youthlight Publishing kiosk at a school counselor conference in Texas. I was looking for some bilingual counseling books for my students, and I couldn't find any. I struck up a conversation with the sales representative at the kiosk, and he told me that there was a real need for bilingual counseling materials. Lightbulb moment: I could write them! I spoke Spanish fluently, and I ran numerous counseling groups for my English Language Learners and Newcomer students, so I knew what the bilingual counseling needs were exactly. I had already written a lot of bilingual counseling materials for my own use with students. Plus, in the back of mind, I'd always had a persistent desire to be an author. And I had so much inspiration! Over the years, I was inspired when I observed my counseling materials helping young people overcome obstacles and find success. I was further inspired by seeing these materials helping my colleagues who borrowed them. Last but not least, I was most inspired by my dad who is happiest when he is starting a new project to provide others with what they can't find anywhere else.

That First Side Hustle Summer

These inspirations led me to get writing! A few summers later, I was finally ready to publish my first two bilingual counseling guides: an anger management group guide and an individual counseling guide, both based on the solution-focused brief counseling model. I

promptly sent my book manuscripts off to all the educational and mental health book publishers I could find. Side note: it took me FOUR YEARS to hear anything back. Then, I set up a website and Facebook page for myself and started selling my two books on my website. That same summer in an offhand remark during a dinner out, my husband gave me the genius idea to post my books on Amazon through CreateSpace and sell them there. His casual suggestion made me the most side hustle money during that first year!

Evolution of my Side Hustle

Over the next eight years, my original side hustle idea of authoring took on a life of its own and turned itself into about ten other projects, some that became a bigger focus and income generator than my original idea of writing books! Creating counselor resources for Teachers Pay Teachers, tackling the marketing beast of my side hustle, becoming a conference presenter, becoming a social influencer and consultant for a large SEL company, blogging, teaching university classes, serving as a board member for a counseling association—these are just some of the projects that my side hustle turned into. As for my original side hustle idea of writing counseling books for a national book publisher, well, that only recently took off in 2016 with *Get Your Group On Volumes One and Two*. These two books, with their group counseling curricula based on solution-focused brief counseling (SFBC), vaulted me into a whole new world. Even though I had been writing about my group counseling practices for many years, suddenly people wanted to hear what I had to say—they wanted me to present on my techniques and activities such as Mindful Minute and the 6 Point Data Plan (Lerner, 2018). Having a major publisher pick up my work validated it to the masses on so many levels, which opened countless new doors for me. Though I made very little money off this first book deal, the

opportunities it created led me to lots of new income streams. In fact, I just signed a contract to create a social-emotional learning (SEL) video game!

What a marvelous journey it has been—to have all these adventures over the last eight years as I worked to achieve my book writing side hustle. I attribute these side project adventures to working hard, staying true to my core values (even when it meant losing an opportunity or money), having the confidence to fail, and experiencing a little luck. Plus, I was always open to trying out any opportunity that came my way. Of course, as I navigated through all these side projects, I was always keeping my eye on the prize—a book deal.

A Description

So now that you know a bit about the history of my side hustle, let me get into the actual details of writing school counseling books and how I made it happen. Despite all the different side jobs and projects I relayed above, my main side hustle is writing books. I love to write and will write pretty much whatever someone asks of or needs from me. I have written counseling books, group guides, guidance lessons, ESL lesson plans, curriculum guides, SEL articles, educational blog posts, adventure stories, travel guides, and more. My main motivation in writing is to provide best-practice counseling and educational tools so professionals can guide their students to succeed. My belief is that if I can provide a tool that directs the counselor or educator each step of the way, they will have more face-to-face time with students to create positive change.

Everything I Know, I Learned in School Counseling

In terms of the knowledge, skills, and experiences I transfer from school counseling to my side hustle work, I'm sure I utilize all of them in some capacity! But to be more specific, the central school counseling knowledge I have that transfers to my side hustle is actual

counseling theory and practice, specifically solution-focused brief counseling. Spending the last ten years studying counseling theory and then applying it in my daily experience with students has given me a rich reservoir of experiences and strategies to share in my books. Along with counseling theory and practice, my knowledge of and experience with social-emotional learning (SEL) and human behavior have significantly contributed to the information I share in my books. Here are a few other skills and experiences that I transfer from my school counseling job into my side hustle:

- **Strong writing skills.** As a school counselor, I get lots of writing practice penning reports and case notes regularly. In addition, writing my school guidance lesson plans and counseling session plans for the last ten years has really honed my writing skills.
- **Public speaking abilities.** Little did I know that being an author meant getting out there and constantly doing book presentations to large groups. After all, if no one knows about the book, no one will read it! Luckily, as the school counselor and resident mental health/SEL expert on my campus, I frequently present to staff, so I am comfortable with speaking in front of large groups of people.
- **Daily interactions with students.** My work with students gives me so much heartwarming and hilarious material for my books. Plus, it allows me to field test all the activities and lessons that I include in my books.
- **Experience in working within a large system.** Despite how important WE know we are, school counselors (like all staff members) are considered another brick in the wall of the school institution. Working within a large institution has given me invaluable experience in navigating successfully through the very similar worlds of writing and publishing.

Being a mental health professional in an environment where academics (not mental health) is the focus has taught me self-sustainability. Additionally, it has built up my courage and confidence in working alone and outside of the mainstream group, when necessary. All of this directly enhances my skills in working alone as a writer.

- **Classroom management skills.** I couldn't write about how to manage a classroom during a guidance lesson if I couldn't actually manage a classroom during a lesson!
- **Skills related to advocacy, flexibility, and patience.** These are school counselor must-have skills that I also find myself using on a daily basis in my work with customers, publishers, editors, illustrators, and more!

Benefits and Challenges

There are so many benefits to my side hustle that it is hard to know where to begin! I think the main benefits are that it allows me to help others, it makes me feel good, and it earns me money. I've always been a helper; I come from a long line of helpers since both my parents are educators and there are doctors, teachers, and counselors all over my family tree. My dad is a mega-volunteer who runs his senior citizen community's theatre guild, which is an 80-hour-a-week job that allows older adults to experience theatre therapy. At 75 years old, he's still helping! As for me, providing resources for counselors and students fulfills me in a way nothing else does—because I know I am giving support, help, and encouragement to those in need. Another benefit is that I get to do what I love! My passion (writing and creating counseling resources) keeps me thinking, fulfilled, and challenged. Finally, the money aspect: My side hustle writing projects pay for our family summer vacations, my business trips, my Starbucks runs, and soon, the

upkeep of all the rescue animals who find their forever home at our ranch.

Of course, we can't talk about benefits without mentioning the challenges too. I would have to say that the main one is time . . . which leads to another challenge of doubting and questioning if I am spending that time living my best life. My husband calls me a workaholic and probably wishes I'd work a bit less. All the time that others spend at neighborhood birthday parties, surfing the Internet, watching TV, chatting over coffee with friends . . . I spend working. But I never really liked birthday parties, surfing, or TV for that matter. And writing is what I love to do, so I'm pretty okay with it taking up most of my free time.

Advice

I think my biggest piece of advice to those who want to write school counseling books is know what you are getting yourself into before committing. Publishing a successful book is 50 percent writing and 50 percent marketing and promotions, maybe even higher on the marketing and promotions percentage. You can write the best book in the world, and if people don't know about it, your mom will be your only reader. Ask yourself if you are willing to dive into website creation, blogging, social media marketing, and speaking engagements in order to get the word out about your book. Because you will be spending a lot of your time doing this. Honestly, in being an author, writing books sometimes feels like the least of what I do. Even publishers nowadays usually want to see evidence of your large social media presence before they sign you, and then once they do sign you, they ask you to sign a contract that includes some level of marketing and promotion on your end. I didn't know any of this when I was first getting started. Luckily, I was pleasantly surprised to find that I love speaking at counselor conferences and school districts, I really enjoy interacting with counselors and

readers on social media, and designing my website (despite endless frustrations) is one of my biggest points of pride. But imagine how my side hustle would have turned out differently if I discovered that I didn't like any of these marketing pieces. If that had been the case, you would be reading the words of a different author right now.

A close second piece of advice if you want to write school counseling books is to do your research before you start writing. I didn't do this, and I am still paying for my ignorance and mistakes. For example, I didn't do my website research and just jumped in with the first web host I stumbled across. Mistake. Big Mistake. It is so difficult to change websites once your site is established. I stayed with a poor-quality web host for years because I didn't want to deal with this change. All of this could've been avoided if I had spent the time and energy thoroughly researching website creation before I started writing. My website story is just one of many examples that I can give of how jumping in before doing the proper research did not work out in my favor. So once you decide to write books, make a list of all the big tasks you will have to do, and then research each of those tasks thoroughly. This "presearch" will allow you to start right and not spend the next five years fixing your mistakes like I had to do.

In conclusion, I will leave you with a final piece of advice that is maybe the most thought-provoking: pick a side hustle you love so much that you are willing to spend all of your free time doing it. After all, you already have a full-time job. Your side hustle passion must have you running to start your latest project when the "real job" work day is done.

Russ' Side Hustle

The theme that runs throughout my side hustles is empowering others through quality professional development (PD), resources, and tools. I have given workshops, presentations, and keynote

addresses to tens of thousands of professionals, K-12 students, parents, educational leaders, and others. I've delivered PD live via synchronous webinars; through television, radio, print, and blogger interviews; and asynchronously via online tutorials. As well, I have developed publications and tools to facilitate the work of school counselors and other educators.

How Did You Decide to Do This?

Good question. Thinking back, it occurs to me that, during my middle school years, I started to do what my parents were doing—seeking out work for hire. I hustled by reaching out to friends, family, and neighbors to see if they would pay me for doing chores. Among other things, I cut grass, bathed pets, pulled weeds, and washed cars.

During my junior and senior years of high school, my side hustle included teaching judo at the local YMCA three evenings a week. At first, I did this in exchange for continued judo training. I didn't realize it at the time, but I was learning valuable skills for how to manage a class, develop learning activities, deal with conflict among students, and motivating them—more important lessons that would help me for many years to come. Eventually, I took the lead in expanding the judo experience by connecting with the community. Together with other organizations, I coordinated martial arts demonstrations at schools, malls, and events throughout the state. Eventually, as a college freshman, I continued this work and started a judo class for my residence hall where we trained in the basement of our building. In graduate school, I landed a position as a Staff Resource Assistant (SRA) where I was responsible for providing PD and programming help to new resident assistants (RAs) and their residents. In retrospect, I now know that these experiences would become foundational for my future career.

These jobs were, at the time, the beginning of both my main hustle and side hustles. Regarding the leap to side hustling seriously,

the lightbulb moment for me is still crystal clear in my memory. I was in my early 20s, again doing presentations as part of my job as an SRA. One of the more popular presentations that I often did around campus was Basic Self-Defense. One day, a community organization called me to see if I could do this presentation for an event they were hosting. Just as we were finishing the conversation, the person on the phone asked, “*How much do you charge?*” The question was unexpected. It was the first time that getting paid extra to do extra work, outside of my current employment, was even on my radar. That was probably around 1988, and I’ve been doing it ever since.

Fast forward to today, the financial pressure is not as high it once was. The extra money is wonderful, although now more than ever, I’m driven by the privilege of meeting so many interesting and inspirational school counselors throughout the country. The more I collaborate with practicing school counselors, the better I stay in touch with what’s happening in the profession. Staying as close to the front lines as possible helps me be a more effective school counselor educator because I can bring real and timely examples of school counseling related issues to my graduate students. As well, helping others with professional development keeps me on my toes, continually learning about changes, developments, and updates to best practices.

Transferable Knowledge, Skills, and Experiences

Being a former school counselor—together with being a professor, husband, and dad—has helped me develop a successful side hustle practice. The transferable set of skills includes two primary areas: group facilitation and counseling theory. Understanding group development, process, and procedures as it applies to all kinds of groups have been essential. For example, group skills have helped me manage and facilitate both small groups (e.g.,

governing boards, committees, work groups) and large groups, such as delivering a presentation, workshop, keynote address, or classroom lesson effectively.

Knowledge and application of counseling theory have also been invaluable, both personally and professionally. Being a solution-focused brief counselor (SFBC) helps me pay better attention to what is working, both in the profession, in my family, and my career. SFBC also helps me stay focused on hypotheticals, envisioning “where the puck is going” in school counseling. The principles and techniques of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) and Choice Theory have also helped me to stay rational, reasonable, and exercise the power of choices. These have been vital, especially when working with the occasional difficult person or group.

Finally, serving in leadership positions over the years has pushed me to refine my skills. Working on various national, state, local committees, governing boards, and task forces have helped me sharpen my negotiation, strategic thinking, and goal setting skills. Serving on both the ASCA and FSCA (Florida School Counselor Association) governing boards, including as President of both organizations (2002–2005; 2011–2013, respectively), stands out as a time when I was able to broaden my perspectives, get a sharper snapshot of the profession, and garner the courage to take risks. I always strongly suggest that school counselors get involved in association leadership because, when done right, it can be the best professional development of your life.

What Have Been Some of the Benefits?

Of course, the extra income has allowed our family to stay out of debt, even while getting our kids through college and with helping one of our sons get his private pilot’s license. The side hustle has also afforded us luxuries (e.g., vacations, hotels, and dining) that we would otherwise not be able to consider with only a main hustle. As

it turns out, professors in education don't make relatively large salaries either. Finally, my side hustle income has helped me build a decent retirement fund or inheritance for the family, whichever comes first.

The main benefit of having a side hustle, however, is the experience. To make significant contributions to the profession or make someone's life better is an incredible honor and privilege. Meeting and teaming with so many wonderful people in their own backyards has been inspiring. And every side hustle "gig" allows me to learn more, sharpen my skills, and enhance my worldview.

What are Some of the Challenges?

Having a side hustle is no different than having two or more jobs. It's a ton of work and requires a great deal of time and stress management. Side hustle success can come at a relatively high personal cost. Getting your side hustle up and running may consume most of your "free" or "flexible" time and energy, including evenings and weekends. You will need the support of your friends and family who will need to be understanding when you can't always attend a dinner party or binge a Netflix show. Having a side hustle means that you must work extra hard at staying organized, focused, and balanced among all your roles and responsibilities. Another challenge is keeping it all straight—making sure that nothing you do conflicts with anything else you do, especially because there is usually overlap between one's hustle and a side hustle.

Advice to Others Who Want to Do Something Similar?

Have patience. Developing a successful side hustle takes time and, at first, is slow to grow. Related, you will need to establish a high level of frustration tolerance. Many ideas will not work out, even after you have pursued them for dozens of hours and put in lots of work. Some projects will turn out different than you intended and lead you in a direction you had not planned on. And know that there

are always some people who will not share your enthusiasm and vision.

Work hard. Be prepared to put in long hours without an initial return on your investment.

Do your homework. A successful side hustle comes from knowing the value that you add to someone's life. Why is your service or product important? The answer to this question comes from people in the field, including ourselves. What are the challenges that I wish I could overcome in my work? Would others in the field agree with me? How would I know? Luckily, social networking provides us with incredible amounts of data in the form of posts from the people we intend to serve. When looking through social networking groups, what do you notice about the types of problems people are trying to overcome? What are the persistent pain points in their work that you can help alleviate? What are the resources and tools that will help them to be more effective and efficient in their work? Also, a successful side hustle comes from carving out a special contribution. In other words, what services or products are you offering that are unique or better than anyone else can provide? There is no substitute for doing your homework before leaping into a side hustle project.

Focus on your strengths. A successful service or product ideally monetizes what you do well every day and what you enjoy. What are the knowledge, skills, and experiences that you bring to the table that others would pay to access? You must be good at what you do, and what you do has to make someone's life better. If you think you are good at something, you are probably 60 percent of the way there. You must get *really* good at it. The kind of good that takes hundreds of hours to develop. And getting to the top doesn't mean you get to stay there without continued skill development, homework, planning, and working diligently.

Conclusion

Our hope with this book has been to provide you with ways to use your talents to set you on the path toward pursuing your side hustle dreams and put extra cash in your pocket. From our own experiences to those of our talented side hustle contributors we've provided a vast array of different part-time work opportunities that capitalize on the unique skills of school counselors and educators.

From those who rule TpT to school-counselors-turned-action-heroes, and everyone in between, we are grateful to have learned from the best.

With the lessons and insights we shared in the Nuts and Bolt section, you have our best beginning tips that we wish we'd known early on. We hope that our stories of blood, sweat, and tears means that you'll have a little less of all three. This practical information, refined by our own trial and error experiences, worked for us and will hopefully work well for you!

While earning a profit is often a top reason for starting a side hustle, we've shown you that passion and hard work come first and then the money comes later. Once your side hustle is humming along like a well-oiled machine, you will start to see the financial fruits of your labor. However, the machine requires a lot of love in the form of research, planning, and creating before it works well. Sometimes, you won't even know how successful your side hustle is becoming until after you "arrive." That's fine. If you are enjoying the journey, your success will just be the icing on the cake.

We are confident that within these pages, you found answers to your side hustle questions; perhaps answers to some questions that you didn't even know you had. If needed, feel free to reach out to us or any of our contributors with the contacts provided in this book. Remember, it doesn't necessarily take an MBA degree or lots of fancy formal business training to succeed in your side hustle. Hard work,

passion, talent, and vision to create something you love will likely lead to success! And what better plan is there in life than to do more of what you love and get paid for it?



Appendix A: Sample Conference Program Proposal

Actual proposal submitted and approved for the 2019 ASCA conference.

Solution-Focused Parent Conferences: Revolutionary Results

Learn how to apply the techniques of solution-focused (SF) counseling to parent/teacher conferences. Turn adversaries into allies. Reinforce your assets and win the battle for student achievement. When adapted to parent conferences, the solution-focused approach can be an elegant and powerful way for school counselors to help students and other stakeholders make positive changes and meet their goals. Video demonstration, handouts, packets, resources, and more will be available.

Goal of the session in one clear statement

Learn how to make your parent/teacher conferences more positive, effective, and efficient by applying the solution-focused approach and techniques to empower all stakeholders toward common goals.

Strategies to be utilized in achieving the stated goal

Instruction, video demonstration, discussion.

Objectives:

- Learn how to bolster the child–parent–school alliance.
- Learn how to use solution–focused scaling as an overall framework and guide for leading parent/teacher conferences.
- Identify three ways to get “unstuck” when dealing with real or perceived resistance.
- Empower students to be more responsible and accountable for their own achievement.
- Learn four ways to more efficiently move from complaints and wishes to appropriate goals.
- Enjoy positive parent conferences instead of “taxing” meetings you would rather avoid.

Appendix B: Standard Agreement for Consulting Services

[Your Logo Here]

Agreement for Consulting Services

THIS AGREEMENT is entered into this **25th day of August, 2019** by and between the Wildcats School District, herein also referred to as “Organization” and **YOUR NAME**, hereinafter also referred to as “the Consultant”.

I, **YOUR NAME**, hereby agree to perform certain work and services for the Organization at the times and locations listed below under the terms and conditions provided herein. I understand that I am an independent contractor and no liabilities or benefits, such as worker's compensation, pension, insurance or any other employee right shall arise or accrue as a result of the performance of this Contract.

Description of Consultation Work and Objectives

- 1) PARENTING IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A GUIDE TO HELPING KIDS STAY OUT OF HIGH-TECH TROUBLE (75-90 minutes)**

Parents and caretakers need to understand how to make informative decisions about how their children use technology, how they monitor, supervise, and provide support. This presentation will help them to understand the potential risks of technology and several ways to reduce that risk using both human and technological strategies. See

<http://schoolcounselor.com/safety> for more info and click here to download and preview the presentation materials.

- 2) 4 student assemblies, 2 parent nights and 1 staff training (staff training would be scheduled immediately after student dismissal 3:35 pm).

Day, Time and Location of Training

Date: _____

Location: _____

Consultant will:

1. Provide the trainings.
2. Provide up to 150 DVD's with all materials for teachers and counselors (also available online at www.guardingkids.com).

Organization will:

1. Provide computer projector and sound amplification (computer speakers).
2. Provide participants with appropriate handouts (available online).

Travel Arrangements Made By:

☒ Consultant ☐ Organization

Recommended Airport: _____

Lodging Arrangements Made By

☒ Consultant ☐ Organization

Consultant's Fee

Wildcats School District agrees to pay Consultant an honorarium of \$ _____ AND all relevant expenses (e.g., flight, hotel, food, mileage, toll, and gratuities) for the full and satisfactory performance of the services described above. Full payment is expected after completion of work and services and no later than thirty (30) days after submission of a signed, original invoice.

Consultant:	YOUR NAME
Address:	5555 Memory Lane Fort Myers, FL 33912
Telephone Number:	239-XOX-0XOX
Check made payable to:	YOUR NAME or COMPANY NAME
Federal EIN Number:	20-XXXXXXX

Liability

I indemnify, defend and hold harmless Organization for any liability, injury damage, and/or claims by any party arising from my performance of this Contract. I do not, however, indemnify or hold harmless Organization for any injury or damage caused solely by Organization' own misconduct.

I further acknowledge that my presentation and materials do not infringe on any copyright held by a third party and I will defend and indemnify Organization against any cost or liability arising out of any infringement claim. I maintain adequate insurance to protect myself and Organization from any injury or damage that I cause.

Further, Organization will indemnify, defend and hold harmless Consultant and its agents, officers and employees harmless from any

claims, demands, actions or judgements resulting from any actions of Consultant or Consultant's agents.

Terms of Agreement

COMPANY NAME makes no warranties, expressed or implied, except to use its best efforts to provide the Organization with an agreement for services rendered.

This agreement may be terminated by either party at any time more than 72 hours prior to the beginning of the Event by written (including email) notice to the other party. In the event that Organization cancels or terminates the agreement, Organization will be responsible for reimbursing Consultant for all pre-paid expenses.

Either party may terminate this agreement at any time by oral or written notice, without liability of any kind, for force majeure causes including, but not limited to, acts of God (i.e. fire, flood, severe inclement weather, epidemic or earthquake), war (declared or undeclared), government regulation, terrorism, disaster, strikes, civil disorder, curtailment of transportation facilities, or similar causes beyond the control of either party which would make it impossible, illegal or commercially impracticable to perform the agreement, or for actions of the other party which would, in the reasonable discretion of the terminating party, reflect adversely on the other party if the agreement is not terminated.

The Consultant hereby gives permission for the use of his/her name, likeness, photograph, biography, original material, video, film or computerized image to be used in connection with the promotion of this event and any publication in any form by Organization of the contents of the Event.

Photo: <http://bit.ly/sabella-photo>

Bio: <http://www.schoolcounselor.com/about>

Flyer: <http://bit.ly/russ-flyer>

Vita: http://www.schoolcounselor.com/sabella_vita.pdf

SCHOOL COUNSELOR SIDE HUSTLE

This agreement contains all of the representation and understandings, terms and conditions of our agreement with regard to the Event, and there is no other collateral agreement, oral or written, between us in any manner relating to the subject matter. This agreement shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of **YOUR STATE**, and shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties, their respective heirs, executors, administrators, successors and permitted assigns. If any part of this Agreement is held to be void, against public policy, or illegal, the balance of this Agreement shall continue to be valid and binding.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Agreement as of the day and year first written above.

Wildcats School District
Authorized Witness

Date

YOUR NAME
Consultant
President, **COMPANY NAME**

Date

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About the Authors

Russell A. Sabella, PhD

Sabella@SchoolCounselor.com

<https://about.me/sabella>

Russ is a Professor in the Department of Counseling in the Marieb College of Health & Human Services, Florida Gulf Coast University and President of Sabella & Associates. He is author of articles published in journals, magazines, and newsletters. He is co-author of three books including *Stress Management* (Faulkner Press, 2017), *Confronting Sexual Harassment: Learning Activities for Teens* (Educational Media; 1995) and *Counseling in the 21st Century: Using Technology to Improve Practice* (American Counseling Association; 2004). Russ is also author of two books including *SchoolCounselor.com: A Friendly and Practical Guide to the World Wide Web* (2nd edition; Educational Media; 2003), *GuardingKids.com A Practical Guide to Keeping Kids Out of High-Tech Trouble* (2008, Educational Media Corporation) and well-known for his Technology and Data Boot Camps for School Counselors workshops conducted throughout the country. He has trained and consulted with tens of thousands of school counselors, educators, parents, and organizational leaders throughout the country. Russ is past President of the American School Counselor Association (2003-2004) and the Florida School Counselor Association (2013-2014).

Stephanie Lerner, MS

Stephanie@schoolcounselorstephanie.com

<https://schoolcounselorstephanie.com/>

Stephanie Lerner is a Johns Hopkins University-trained educator. She holds a BS in elementary education and an MS in counseling. With more than 20 years in both public and private education, she has Texas certifications in school counseling and bilingual/Spanish

education. After traveling the world and teaching in such far off places as Mozambique and Bolivia, Stephanie came home to the United States to be a bilingual school counselor in a high-need public school system. She has also written numerous books and is an adjunct professor of school counseling at Angelo State University. When she's not writing or educating, she enjoys ranch life with her husband and their menagerie of pets—all of whom practice healthy coping skills, of course!