

# The Rainmaker Letter

The Art of Client Attraction

Volume 2 Issue 4

## **An Open Letter to Any Service Provider Who's Ever Felt Like They're "Running Hard" But Not Getting Anywhere**

In music school, I was privileged to be able to call some of the most talented musicians in the world friends. These were freakishly talented people that, in the world of music at least, exhibited almost super human powers.

There were the folks who could hear something played, sit down at their instrument, and play it back to you. Then there were those folks who could play a bunch of different instruments, better than almost anyone could play one of them!

There were those wind players who knew how to circular breathe. That means they could play forever without stopping. If you've ever wondered how that works, it's pretty amazing to see, and it's quite handy if you play an instrument where having to breathe is a constant inconvenience!

And finally, there were those folks who were able to perform in front of TONS of people without their nerves getting the better of them. Let it be known that I was not one of those people.

All of these talents, however, came at a price. And often times, it was a very, very steep one. Because while many of these talented folks found an abundance of blessing in one area of their life, it seems to have come at the expense of some other part of their life.

To put it bluntly, these uber-talented folks were some of the most unbalanced and dysfunctional human beings I've yet to encounter.

### **A Lack of Constraint in One Area Seemed to Create Enormous Constraints in Other Areas**

I have yet to find a scientific explanation for this whole phenomenon, but it seems that the more talent one is given, the more imbalanced that person tends to be. Think of some of the highest achievers **you** know of. People that make the covers of magazines, people that are in the news, people that dominate the gossip columns, the titans of business... for the most part, these are **not** well balanced individuals we're talking about.

Why that is I don't know, I just see examples of it everywhere—a lack of constraints in one area of life (i.e. work, money, connections, talents and skills) tends to come with enormous constraints in other areas of life.

This issue of the Rainmaker Letter is focusing on constraints. In particular, on how you can take what most people might consider problems and actually turn them into strategic advantages.

I had a discussion with a successful business man and a deep thinker not long ago where we were talking about whether or not "greatness" and "balance" can go together in the same individual. He was quick to dismiss the possibility but I was not so quick to agree... at least not at that time.

But I've spent some time trying to find an example of someone who **is** successful (your definition of success may vary, by the way) and also living a very balanced life.

What are the results? I haven't found anyone yet!!!

### **Could Imbalance Be the Secret?**

No, I don't think that pursuing "imbalance" in your life or business is the secret.

Instead, I think it's the other constraints produced by the enormous talent in one area of life or work that are the secret.

It reminds me of an expression my wife's oboe teacher always used in college. I'm paraphrasing here but what follows is the gist of it...

*Making your way in music is hard enough. There are many, many challenges with this path if you choose to walk it. So for goodness' sake, if there IS any other thing that you can do with your life, you should definitely do THAT. This path of being a professional musician is only reserved for those who truly have no other options.*

This is an enormously powerful secret shrouded in something that's perceived by most people as a bad thing.

Constraints limit decisions. Constraints produce clarity. Constraints focus energy on fewer things whereby increasing the intensity of that energy.

My argument is that successful people actually thrive and exhibit greatness, at least in part, **because** of their enormous constraints (i.e. complete dysfunction) in other areas.

It doesn't matter if your experience shows that to be true for you or not. The place we're going with this will be equally as valuable to your business and your work with clients regardless.

### **The Entrepreneur's Biggest Challenge: Swimming in a Sea Without Limits**

I hate to be told what to do. In fact, if there's one way to get me to do anything, it's to make a rule that that thing is forbidden. Seeing that line in the sand somehow activates my cosmic energy that makes it impossible for me to do anything but cross that line. Dear System... I'm sorry, I'm a problem child.

Because of this "quality," I've spent years doing everything in my power to remove limits imposed on me by others. I won't work in a job, I won't be told what to do and when. I'm making up my life, on my own terms. The words "have to" just don't compute for me.

While this "freedom" might sound like paradise to some people, it does not come without cost.

When you make it a point to be able to do anything, how in the world are you supposed to decide what to do?

And this brings us to the "rat race" so many business owners find themselves running week in, week out. They're basically running hard, but getting nowhere. Without constraints, progress is limited.

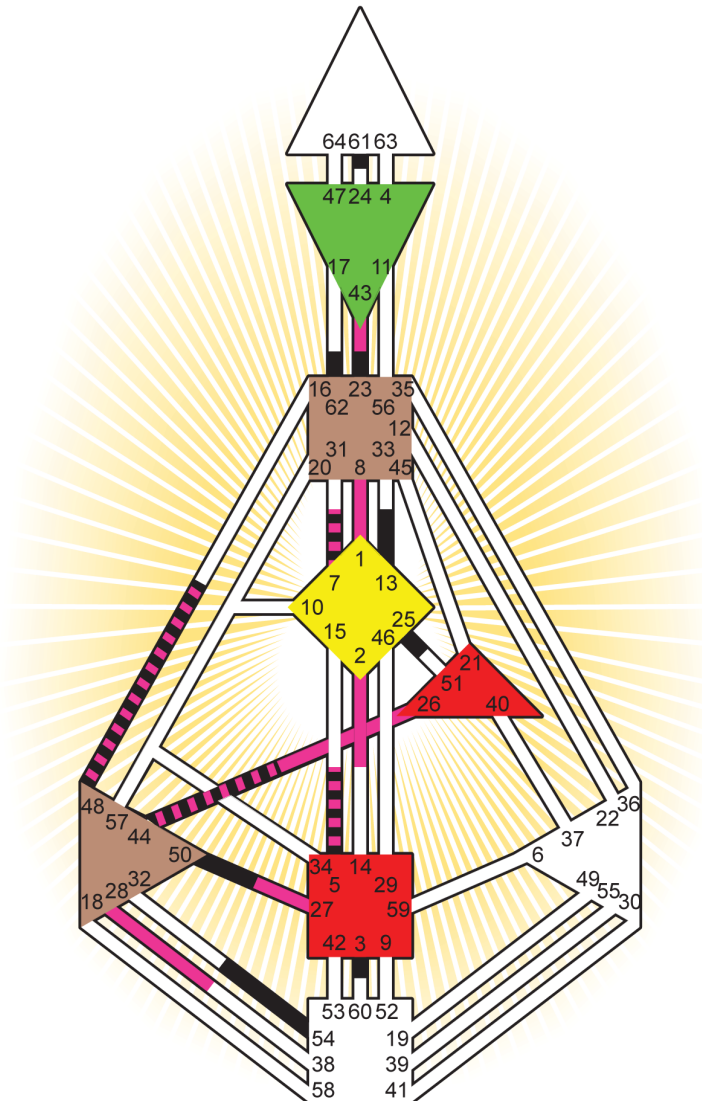
The funny thing is, we're machines. Our bodies are biological machines, our thoughts and emotions are chemical systems.

Systems have constraints. So to search for a way to go beyond constraints of your "system" while you're still stuck using your system is kind of silly and unproductive.

There's a much better way, which is what we're working towards...

### The Day I Saw My "Constraints" in Print

Have you ever seen something like the picture below? I hadn't, until a few years ago when I discovered something called Human Design. Actually, as can be said about many things in my life, I didn't find Human Design, it found me. There I am right there in the picture below!



So stick with me here. At first, what I'm about to go through is going to sound like a bunch of woo woo. But I assure you, it's immensely practical... even though it all started with a voice in some hallucinating guy's head! :)

So what you see in the picture on the last page is my Human Design bodygraph. It is basically an energetic system schematic of how energy moves through my body. You know the manual that goes with your refrigerator at home that shows diagrams of how things work? Well this is the very same thing, for a human being.

This chart is a combination of the I Ching (the numbers you see on the chart are called GATES which correspond to the hexagrams of the I-Ching), the Kabbalah and the Chakra System (there are 9 "chakras" in the chart above, which is more than the traditional 7.)

The big shapes you see represent the energy centers of the body. If the shape is colored in, that energy center is defined and produces a consistent type of energy flow. In other words, you can depend on it to function in a predictable way. If the shape is NOT colored in, that center is undefined and the energy flow is subject to external conditioning. That energy center will be influenced by the environment and people around you at any given time.

For example, take a look in the lower right hand side of my chart. Find the triangle shape with the numbers 6, 37, 22, 36 etc. That's my solar plexus, which represents emotions. My solar plexus is not defined (colored in). That means that I do not have a consistent and predictable energy flow when it comes to emotions. (For the record, I'm not a very emotional person on the surface, so this chart simply confirms what I already know.)

More importantly, that means that what I'm feeling at any one moment is **extremely** susceptible to the environment around me. This explains why I have such a hard time dealing with conflict when I see it happening. I FEEL that emotion to such a degree that if I'm not aware of the fact that it's not MINE, I will make stupid decisions.

Ask yourself if you've ever done that in a client situation? Well, take a look at YOUR chart and you might see the reason why.

And that's just the beginning. These charts are full of insight about you and how you work out in the world. As you learn about them, you'll most likely be amazed that someone who knows how to read your chart can speak like they KNOW you even if they've never met you.

I'll give you links at the end to get your chart read. It's an eery experience for someone to be able to nail who you are from a bunch of numbers.

Everyone has a unique chart. And learning how to read your Human Design chart can provide you with tremendous insight about how you work and move through the world.

Before we go further, let me qualify this whole topic a bit. I believe in truth. But I also believe that my truth might not be yours. You are free to live yours just as I am free to live mine. So as you read the following, please keep in mind...

### **Human Design is Empirical, That Means the Only Test of Its Value Is Found in Your EXPERIENCE**

So that means if your experience doesn't prove it to be true, then you simply discard it. You don't mold yourself around a set of dogma like we find in traditional organized religion. (Just to be clear, this has nothing to do with religion :)

What you're looking at in my chart is basically a clear picture of all of the constraints in my "system." I'll give you some examples in a minute, but in an effort to keep this from getting too deep (it gets VERY deep), I'm going to make some generalizations so the main point is clear.

In the Human Design System, there are basically two types of individuals. One type is the "doer." This is the person who best uses their energy by initiating and doing things. The other type (me) best use our energy in response to things. In Human Design terms, we are designed to "wait." That doesn't mean sitting on the couch eating potato chips by the way, it just means that our energy is best used in response to other things.

The greatest use of my energy is in response. So it shouldn't come as a surprise that I spend my life in the world of direct response marketing. In fact, without knowing about this part of how I work, I've designed my entire life and business around responding.

Why? Because it works for me!

I can tell you a lot of stories about all of the things I've initiated in my life that have fallen flat. This is both personal and business I'm talking about. Just a bunch of self-initiated things I couldn't get to work. But when I **respond**, things are completely different. I respond to client inquiries. I respond to newsletter subscribers. I never had an explanation for why, but now I do. And I have to tell you, it's extremely consistent throughout my experience.

Why do you think I spend so much time focusing on client attraction? It's because I understand myself at a deep enough level to know that's the best direction for me to go!

The Human Design System is quite an amazing trail to walk down if you're one of those people who wants to learn about themselves. It can get very deep, but even at the outermost levels, it can be extremely practical and useful.

Like all things, you can go so far with this that it becomes a box you build around yourself that keeps you small rather than a liberating device. Some people do this, don't be one of them.

### **You Complete Me!**

Another fascinating part about these charts, especially in regards to client attraction, is that by learning to read them, you can understand why you are attracted to certain things and certain people and not others. Take a look at my chart again. Do you see how some of the "channels" (the pathways that connect the bigger shapes) are half colored in? What that means is that you're going to most likely be attracted to folks who have the other side of that channel colored in. When you're around them, that energy completes you.

It's a little bit like the "you complete me" line that Tom Cruise uses in Jerry Maguire. Except this explains why certain people "complete" other people.

The funny thing is, when I look at my wife's chart, you can see that she **does in fact** complete some of my channels. Very bizarre really.

Again, only your experience can validate or invalidate this for you. Imposing my thoughts, beliefs or inclinations on you is not the point. Opening your eyes to things that may help you is my goal.

### **Buyer Beware**

I do feel I should tell you that there is a bit of a schism in this whole Human Design world between those who were involved at its beginning and feel that the original body of knowledge was kind of "co-opted" by its founder in a way to control people and make money.

The accusation is that he made it unnecessarily complicated (and did not stay true to the original revelation) for his own gain.

Look at the facts and decide for yourself. The proof is in the pudding really. So you have to validate this to be true or invalidate it by TRYING it in your life. I make no comment other than to say I firmly believe we're all doing the best we can do with what we've got.

Here's the website of the founder of the Human Design System:

[www.jovianarchive.com](http://www.jovianarchive.com)

Here's the website of an individual who was there at the beginning who is working to keep this System devoid of "corruption."

[www.zenhumandesign.com](http://www.zenhumandesign.com)

I can tell you that I spent a lot of time studying the materials produced by the founder until I discovered this world of "purists" whose work is focused on keeping this knowledge as it was first intended to be.

I don't need another GOD to tell me what to do, this is about deepening my understanding of ME and using that knowledge to enrich my life and business.

I've gotten chart readings from both camps that I found helpful. Just to make sure the picture is clear in your mind about this. Getting your Human Design Chart read isn't like going to a "psychic." Human Design isn't really so open to interpretation where if you go to 10 different people you're going to get 10 different readings. This is a rather objective system.

Your birth date, time and location produces a very unique chart that is very numbers based. The numbers mean something They are not really open to "interpretation." So it's a very objective approach.

### **Bringing This Back to Earth**

OK, so if you've stuck with me so far, let's come back to earth for just a moment. The entire Human Design System is about one thing and one thing only: **making it easier for you to make the right decisions for you.** Really simple when you put it that way.

It gives you a readable schematic of your inherent constraints. Developing the ability to make clear decisions... the right decisions... is immensely valuable in the world of business.

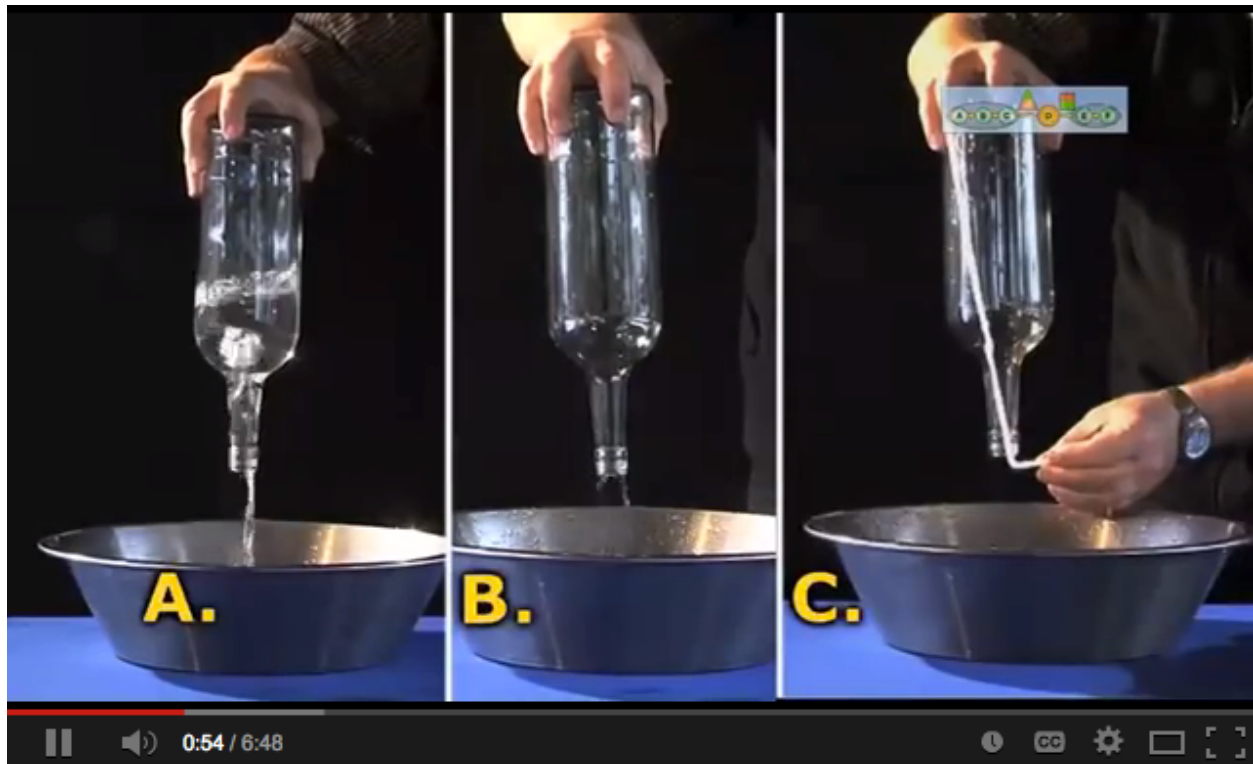
In fact, in simple terms, your path through life and business is dictated by the decisions you make. Period.

### **The Theory of Constraints**

I first heard about the theory of constraints (a theory first coined by Eliyahu M. Goldratt in his book *The Goal*) back when Rich Schefren was doing his initial Business Whatchymacallit System (I don't remember what he called it.) which he launched in conjunction with the Internet Business Manifesto whitepaper.



If you're brand new to this idea, watch this video to get a brief overview.



## <http://www.artofclients.com/constraintsvideo>

OK, so the gist is that you can increase throughput without necessarily removing the constraint. The funny thing is, I'm not really interested in the Theory of Constraints, only in my bastardized version. :)

The main reason is that the value I've gotten from thinking about constraints has little to do with breaking through them and everything to do with using them and adding MORE. In the life of a service provider, you can make more progress by adding constraints instead of removing them. Call me crazy but it's working for me.

Constraints make decision making easier. Constraints make decision making quicker. Constraints make decision making more productive.

### **Success By Constraint?**

I have to admit, I chanced upon this whole thing (like most things!) completely by accident. I was getting really annoyed at the quality of my experience throughout my work

week. I felt like I was running around like a headless chicken most days. Like I was running a sprint from this to that to something else.

It might make you feel like a hero to do this for like a day or two. But after a while, it gets really, REALLY tiring. The telephone was particularly annoying. It felt like my days were peppered with phone calls to the point that I was interrupting myself so much I couldn't even get anything done. Sadly, that's exactly what I was doing.

And so I did something very brain dead simple. I starting doing phone calls only on two days per week, during certain times. I setup a self-service scheduling system that allowed prospects and clients to schedule themselves. No more phone tag, no more constant interruption. I **added** a constraint and increased my productivity and peace of mind.

And that's when I really started realizing that constraints... the **opposite** of what my independent thinking mind perceived as the route to freedom, could in fact BE what I was missing. And so I added yet another constraint...

### **Getting More Done By Working Less**

I have to tell you, I actually enjoy working. For me, it's a creative outlet and something that I actually like. That said, "working hard" can easily become an addiction. It makes you feel needed, it gives you focus, it makes you "productive," and more. When in doubt, work. Work is a virtue right?

Not so sure actually... Unfortunately, this propensity to work can lead to you forgetting that you actually have a life... or a family... or a being (yourself) that needs attention on various different levels.

For this reason, and because I want to raise my kids without them growing up to hate me :), I've been on a quest of sorts to minimize the time and effort required to reach my work and business goals.

I recently began a new experiment to work towards working 4 hours per day. Yes, that's a lot less than almost every entrepreneur I personally know. And it's way more than Mr. Ferriss and his seemingly mythical 4 hour work WEEK, but it's where I'm starting.

So here's the breakdown of how the schedule will flow:

1 hour spent on lead generation (this is an enormous amount of time if you've ever tried it day after day, but this activity, above all else, contributes the most to forward progress at this point in my business...)

1 hour spent on my own writing (Client Letter, Rainmaker Letter, articles, books etc.)

2 hours available for client work.

This is the goal I'm working towards.

Mind you this is a completely arbitrary constraint I'm setting. I have no idea if 4 hours is the right number. And you know what, it doesn't even matter. Because the minute I plop that constraint down in my world, I am immediately paid with what is one of the most valuable assets I can acquire: **clarity**.

Another point: So far on this journey, I'm realizing just how much I suck at this.

But the fact that it's actually hard to discipline myself this way shows me there is value there. And you can't argue with the fact that this constraint I've created leverages one of the most powerful productivity secrets I've ever discovered.

### **The Power of Doing It Every Day!**

I can't believe it's taken me 37 years to figure this out, but it has. Pick any activity. If you can commit to doing it every day, for years, you're pretty much going to be unstoppable. Every day, baby steps over a long period of time, THAT'S the secret to just about everything.

I "wasted" an entire career in music because I didn't GET this at a deep enough level. I was one of those procrastinating practicers. That meant that I didn't enjoy practicing and I kept putting it off. Then when I'd have a performance or something coming up, I'd cram all of my practicing in.

On one hand, I was talented enough to get by with this. But I was hardly maximizing my potential. I was hardly pursuing **mastery** on a level that was appropriate for my talent. I WAS only like 19 or 20 years old, so I do have to cut myself some slack.

The fact that kids this age are supposed to go decide what they want to do for their life is crazy. Especially when the system they come through is designed to SEVER their connection with who they really are. But still, if I had just understood the principle of the daily practice (and there I mean practice in the figurative sense of the word), I would have gone far. And who knows, I might have actually enjoyed it.

### **The Magic is in the Daily Practice**

This is why the Platform model that I talk about all the time works. It's because it takes advantage of the magic of small actions taken over a long period of time.

This works the same as compound interest works at the bank. Remember what Albert Einstein supposedly said about that?

*"Compound interest is the eighth wonder of the world. He who understands it, earns it ... he who doesn't ... pays it."*

So bringing this down to a practical level, the goal as I see it is to maximize results, productivity, quality of decision making and lifestyle by creating constraints that focus you on taking (the right) small actions, consistently, over time.

As a single service provider, that is a direction that both increases results while at the same time improves the quality of your life. The predictability of what you do every day allows you to avoid that "gotta do something," "gotta make it happen" fight/flight feeling we entrepreneurs get so often. Bleh.

But there's another benefit to this approach that will speed up your progress even more...

When your **activities** begin to take on a more predictable routine, it allows your mind the space to think. Instead of cramming your mental highway with the noise of "what do I do next? what's the next thing that's going to move my business forward?" your brain is clear and quiet. And that's when the real breakthrough ideas are able to emerge.

That's when you can start to make strategic improvements in your business instead of just making it through each day by the hair of your chinny chin chin.

When you only have a limited number of moving parts (controlled by the constraints you put in your business on purpose), you can make fewer, more important decisions.

What happens when you go forward and busy yourself with a bunch of work and **skip** the strategic work? Well, you deal with issues like the one my friend is dealing with. These issues are not created by "problem clients," they are created by structural problems in a business.

### **Sitting By the Pool For Fun and Profit**

Last weekend, I took my kids to the pool for a few hours so they could get their crazies out **there** instead of in the house. We were dealing with a super-duper air conditioner that had a problem so bad it took a full 10 days to fix. 10 days in San Diego

without air might be called a vacation, but in the Arizona desert, it's just a few steps from hell :) (And yes, I realized that humanity somehow survived for eons without A/C, but knowing that just didn't seem to help.)

While we were there, I met a friend who was telling me about her husband, a web designer.

Long story short, the guy is finding some challenges in client situations where he's been hired as "the tech guy" but now provides a whole lot more value... even into business development and marketing strategy. That's way beyond "scope creep" if you ask me. That's like entire business creep.

When stuff like this happens, it's a sign that some real strategic thinking should take place. With a few changes, I think my friend could actually turn situations like this into a good thing... and profitable too.

At the end of the day, many service providers get so busy they really lose sight of the fact that profitability is the goal. Increasing profitability actually.

Is your service business more profitable this year than it was last year? Do you know? If you're a solo service provider basically selling your service or ideas, how in the world do you even MEASURE profitability?

Do you figure out how many hours you worked, then divide your income by that? Well maybe. But on the other hand, it doesn't really matter what the numbers say, because great NUMBERS just don't make up for a miserable service provider.

I think there's a much more straightforward way to get a "close enough" answer about the profitability question.

### **Screw Spreadsheets, You Can Measure Profitability With a Feeling!**

OK, so it might not be exact, but we don't need exact. Ask yourself if you feel like your business is getting better? Do you feel momentum? Do you feel you're making good progress with LESS effort than it took last year?

If not, working **harder** isn't going to fix anything. In fact, the only way through that I've discovered is to do the thinking necessary to figure out how to work LESS!

Sounds backwards but I assure you it's not. By adding in the admittedly arbitrary constraint of working less (be specific about what that means for you). You "bake in" a requirement to make better decisions about how you use your time.

Not only that, but you might be forced to change the very structure of how you receive money for the service you provide.

Let's say you're a lawyer who creates the constraint of working only 2 hours per day only 10 months of the year. Sounds like a great life doesn't it Mr. Lawyer? Except for one thing... YOU CHARGE BY THE HOUR! So that means that to hit your income goals for the year you only need to charge \$3,750 per hour. :) Good luck finding clients willing to pay that!

If you're going to make this 2 hour a day thing a reality (or anything even remotely close to that), something's got to shift. And killing the time based billing thing is one way to do it. Because without doing away with that model, you can't lift off out of the prison of time.

And this is why time based billing (like most service providers do it) is flat out dumb... even unethical.

The first time I ever heard anyone call time based billing unethical was when I read Value Based Fees by Alan Weiss. Alan's a smart cookie and has made quite a name for himself consulting with companies like Merck etc.

But really, isn't it a little bit over the top for him to accuse your little ol' service providing lawyer of being unethical?

But here's the ethical conundrum that's created when you bill for your time. You get penalized for solving a client problem quickly. The client gets penalized by you for choosing to maximize your revenue. Either way, someone loses. Score one for Mr. Alan Weiss!

I still remember the high I got when I first read that book. It's like an entirely new world of possibility was opened up to me. For the first time, I got a glimpse of a way for a single service provider to earn a million dollars without working 40 hours a day. I was super excited, until...

### **Until I Went Out into the World and Actually TRIED to Make Value Based Billing Work!**

So apparently it's a bit difficult to overcome hundreds of years of training the general public has received about how they pay service providers.

I still remember some of my first attempts at "value based fees." I was in the technology consulting business at the time.

The point is to make **more** money doing less right? Because you're billing for the value of the project to the client NOT for the effort invested.

Sounds obvious enough, until you try to explain it to a prospect and they kind of just sit there looking at you like you told a bad joke, badly. The confused look on their face was a clue that I had missed something in the recipe.

I really had no idea what I was doing back then. And I didn't realize that I had put the cart before the horse. I was trying to harvest the crops before I had even planted any seeds! To be frank, I had no idea how to plant seeds that would blossom into a well-qualified, well-trained prospect.

I didn't realize that I had skipped over the entire positioning part of the puzzle. I had not clearly set myself and my service apart as a **better** solution than my client's other choices.

I didn't have any marketing to speak of really. Unless you count my weekly attendance at the BNI meeting and some happy clients who mentioned my name to others. Why am I telling you all of this?

Because when you have a clear picture of even SOME of the objectives you'd like to achieve (like moving your revenue model away from time based billing), then you can work backwards to discovering the **constraints** you need to create in your business to reach them.

Life is too short to spend your time swimming in a sea of unlimited possibilities. When your options are **limited**, it is far easier to make decisions about how to proceed. So why not limit your options on purpose and propel yourself forward?

Remember that video a few pages ago with the water coming out of the bottle? As the narrator highlights, the opening of the bottle (that's a metaphor for you and your business) didn't change... in fact, the opening got **SMALLER** with the introduction of the straw.

But instead of the smaller opening *decreasing* the rate of the water flow, it increased it.

Just think about what would happen in your business if you could do the very same thing.

Without structure, it's often more difficult to make progress. When you have unlimited choices, it becomes harder to make a choice! Maximize your progress by using structure (constraints) to your advantage.

See you next time!

**Jason Leister**

**P.S.** If you're curious to learn more about the Human Design thing, I'd recommend you get your chart for only \$3 here:

<http://www.humandesignsystem.com/shop/charts.php>

If you want a personalized reading (I got one a few months ago), you can find those here:

<http://www.humandesignsystem.com/readings/>

Please tell them I sent you.

To the extent you understand **yourself** at a very deep level, you can make extremely strategic decisions to improve your life and your business. That's really the value I've gotten out of the entire Human Design world. It gives you a pretty objective view of the natural way you're made to function out in the real world.

**P.P.S.** If you think all of this sounds nuts, please direct your hate mail to the following non-working email address: [\*\*youcwazy@artofclients.com\*\*](mailto:youcwazy@artofclients.com) :)

**P.P.P.S.** If you want to hear the originator of Human Design tell the story about how it all began, you'll find that here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88EC8LTz9Rk>

Regardless of whether or not you believe it, the 90 minute video is a masterpiece in the art of storytelling.