

# THE PREAMBLE

*A free excerpt from Stop Winging It*

---

Moving From Chaos to Cash Flow

Robin Joanne Szuch

*Stellar Human Project Press*  
*robinjoanneszuch.com*

# THE PREAMBLE

## **Small Business Life.**

Small Business Life is not all about spreadsheets, and revenue, and accounting principles, and the latest in marketing techniques and trends. Small Business Life is also not all about big juicy ideas.

This book is about the life of business, the life of your business. Juicy ideas and spreadsheets. Messy. Unpredictable. Thrilling. Frustrating. Your business is a living breathing thing that will thrive or die under your attention. Like a plant, if you over water it will die and if you ignore it will die. Finding the right mix of water, sun, and attention is not as clear cut as a spreadsheet formula or as willy-nilly as caring for it only when you “feel” like it. Finding that right balance is going to take trial and error. Attempts, wins, and failures. And then just when you think you have it figured out, things change and move and alter and you are back in it. That’s the magic about life, there is no way to have it all figured out and hold onto that forever. Life is ever changing. Once you have it all running smoothly you have about 14 days to enjoy that before it all changes again.

Because that is life. It’s why I believe that your business is a life. It will forever be changing. When you finally feel like you have the perfect team, systems, project or service, someone will quit, or the rules of the game will change. It’s why I believe so strongly in getting your systems in place and your team on board for how you will handle the inevitable change. And that starts with you.

You have to Stop Winging It. We all know that when it’s easy it’s easy. It’s when the challenges arise that we need the tools and the systems to get through to the next time it feels great. The clearer you are about that path and those systems, the quicker you can get to the feeling great. Sometimes the world sends us a plot twist, and sometimes we create a plot twist. The first feels like a slog and the second feels exhilarating. At first. If we don’t have systems in place it won’t take long for our exhilaration to turn to dread and we hear ourselves saying “why did I do this to myself”.

This process, it’s going to be about you, about life, as much as it is about business structures and systems. We are going to build structures so we can take big leaps that assure success. Big leaps, big growth, big ideas is where I love to live. The thrill is the place I love to live. We will

talk about big ideas and how to get unstuck. But first, we need to systemize. We cannot wing it and get the results that we dream of.

There are tons of books out there about scaling your business. I love all those books and all those theories. The thing that all those amazing authors and coaches assume, is that you already have a business ready to scale. Stop Winging It is going to help you get from here to there. We are going to talk practical structures and systems, then we are going to use creative thinking to help really decide what you are building and why. Then boom, you will be ready to scale, or sell, or change.

I will share stories about my journey to help illustrate the points I am trying to make. I learned through experience. Lessons won through trial and error. I feel compelled to share those with you not to tell you how to do it wrinkle free, but rather to encourage you to make your own experiences. To let you know that trial and error is inevitable and glorious. To show you that if you are experiencing failures and misfires you are not alone. We all are, and you don't need to hide them or feel shame. It's part of the frustrating and thrilling journey you decided to take when you stepped into the world of your Small Business Life.

## **Who the hell am I to tell you anything?**

I will tell you off the top, I'm not a human with an MBA. I do not have a degree in economics. What I have is a lifetime of experience and a shit-ton of acquired knowledge. I have built multiple businesses, launched projects that took off and launched projects that failed. I learned through trial and error and a few amazing mentors. Mentors you will meet throughout this book.

My businesses have primarily been arts businesses. That is not an important detail to the work we are embarking on, or the act of starting or running a small business, but it has been important to the world of MY business life. It's the thing that shaped me, brought me to today, where I sit and write this to you, and it will take me to where I am going next.

I also believe with every fiber of my being that every single business that thrives has a creative magic that sets it apart from the rest. The magic that sets you apart from every other business that specializes in toilet plungers or candle making or software development, is what YOU bring to it. What you as a human add to your business. The parts of your journey that brought you here to the place where you are reading this. It's not all about the plunger, it's about what your life experience brings to the plunger, how you believe your plunger can transform people's

lives and forever change the way they think and feel about their plunger. And that's where the creativity comes in.

This book is not about plumbing troubles, I promise... although I do have an intimate relationship with my plunger. Old house = old plumbing = say no more.

## **My story. My life.**

I got into business. Well, I got into the arts.

I am the 4th kiddo and the only girl in my family. Being the youngest, and also the 'finally a girl' child, my mom and I had a special bond. Rumour has it that when I finally arrived there were pink gifts galore, and a closet full of little pink dresses. Naturally, when I turned six Mom thought it would be amazing to put me in ballet class. Me in a little pink tutu, what could be more fitting for her little girl?

That first year when the year end recital came, I stepped onto the stage with my ballet friends in our Teddy Bear's Picnic costumes. Pink Ballet tights, and little brown and pink costumes that my Mom had sewn. I remember every detail of the brown costumes with pink bellies, and gloves with pink paws, and hats with pink ears. I remember it so clearly because that was a defining moment of my life. One step on the stage and I knew at 6 years old that this was what I was born for, I would always be a performer. In that moment, my 6 year old brain knew I wanted to be on the stage. In that moment, I wanted to be a dancer.

From there, one ballet class a week mushroomed into dancing 7 days a week, a mirror and ballet bar in our home, with a mini dance studio so I could practice. I must take this moment to apologize to Greg, my brother, whose bedroom resided below the dance studio where I chose to practice tap at 8am on Saturday mornings.

Ballet class. Tap Class. Jazz. Musical Theatre. Lyrical. Performance Company. I was all in.

At 16 years old I got my first real heartbreak. I'm not talking about a boy. I'm talking about my sense of myself. I'm talking about the crushing of a dream. That first heartbreak was the first time I had to ask myself the question that I would ask 1000 more times throughout my career, "How badly do you want this and what are you willing to do to get it?"

My influencers at that time were (it turns out) small but seemed huge. Someone I admired, looked up to, and desperately wanted to be seen by, told me at 16 years of age, “if you want to have a life in the dance world, you’ll make a great teacher, but you are too fat to be a dancer”. Crushed. In a moment, via a comment from someone who I have since learned was not representative of the global dance world, my entire dream was put into question. That little girl in the teddy bear’s picnic costume was put to challenge.

No point in applying to dance schools, I was too fat for that. No disrespect to the amazing dance teachers that I have had and that have helped shape my passion, but I did not want to be a dance teacher. What I could not put into words at the time, nor did I have the ability to extract from the dream was that what I wanted was to be on stage.

So “now what” I asked my 16 year old self.

The following year I applied to go to University and take a theatre major with a dance minor (the minor just for fun since I would never be a dancer). That was still on stage, that was still performing. It wasn’t dance, but it was close. Close enough.

I had decided I would be a performing arts major. It turns out that even if I had pursued dance, I would be faced with the next hurdle. It would seem, that in the world I was living in, anything in the arts was not widely accepted as a legitimate career path to take. I have a very vivid memory of this phrase, “That’s a hobby, not a career choice” being expressed when I decided to study theatre and dance in university.

The irony, that did not become apparent until my 4th year of uni, was that I paid for my entire education by working as a dancer. No, not a stripper. Although I would have made more money that way, and I admire all the lawyers, doctors and moms who did just that to pay for their education and lives. No shame here. We don’t do shame here. You go girl.

1994 and off I go, into the world with my Bachelor of Fine Arts in Drama and Dance. What did I want? The same things I always wanted. I wanted to perform, I wanted to be on stage. Working part time at IKEA and at a staffing agency (where I met one of my most impactful business mentors and a human I will forever be grateful to - Thanks Steve. There are no words). I got an agent, I went to auditions, I took classes, I got work.

Fast forward to the year 2000. I’ve been an independent dancer and actor and I’ve accidentally discovered a new passion, Circus. I’ve quit training as a dancer, let go of my agent and am

pursuing Circus. By 2003 I've built a small performance company with a friend, and we are international touring circus artists. Living my best life watching the faces of the people we entertained. But it was not all chocolate chip cookies and butterflies. I lost friends when I transitioned from being a contemporary dancer to a circus artist. I was "selling out to commercial entertainment". I was no longer a "real artist".

When this small company got successful enough to let go of my part-time work I was asked why I would give up a job with a future to pursue a dead end that would never make me a proper living. Working as a circus artist was even less legit than being a dancer or actor. According to some.

To give the most grace I can, I have had to look at the crushing words of others and figure out how to make sense of them. The practical people in my life did not want me to struggle. Their objections came from a place of love. They wanted an easy life for me. My brother once told me, "You know Robin, you don't have to do everything the hard way". I laugh now, because I wasn't doing it the hard way, I was just doing it the way that filled my soul. I was doing it my way. He just didn't understand it, because his dreams and goals were different than mine. He was assessing my life through the lens of his goals.

Post performance career, I realized I needed to have some kind of job that paid the bills. Deeply wanting to do something that filled my cup, I asked myself what did I love as much as I loved performing. The answer, my dog. So, I followed that thread until I got a job in Veterinary medicine as a receptionist at a small rural vet clinic. That led to an assistant management position in a 24-hour vet hospital, and then management in a primary care clinic for a veterinary conglomerate.

I learned so much in my time in the corporate world, and I will forever be grateful to one of my favourite mentors, Darren. He taught me formal skills around budgeting, forecasting, management, that I did not need a MBA to be good at this, and ultimately, that this kind of corporate world was not for me. It didn't align with the future I wanted. What I wanted my life to look like.

In 2013 I left the world of pets and went back to the thing I loved, the arts. I opened my circus school and built my legacy. Here my performance became the art of teaching and mentoring.

Today, as I sit here writing this I have launched into being back on the stage. The place that fills my cup and my heart. The place I feel most at home. Not as a dancer or actor, but as a speaker. I

am speaking to fellow entrepreneurs about their business life, their creative life, and how the two can come together to build both a successful business and a beautiful life.

## Why did I write this book?

I have had the blessing of some pretty fantastic business mentors. People like Darren. People who championed my pursuits and taught me practical skills that have carried me through all my endeavours, successful and unsuccessful. I wanted to share this knowledge with as many people as I could, because I believe that my job is not to climb to the top of the mountain alone, but to grab hold of the people climbing next to me and bring them along with me.

When I first started business coaching, I was coaching fellow arts peeps. I really wanted them to understand that the things they may have been told or heard about life in the arts were not true.

*“Starving artist.”*

*“Real art doesn’t pay the bills.”*

*“Artists do it for love, not money.”*

*“You can’t make a living doing that.”*

*“Art is a hobby, not a career.”*

*“Only famous artists make money.”*

*“You’ll get paid in exposure.”*

*“Money corrupts art.”*

*“True artists don’t care about money.”*

*“If you charge for it, it’s not real art.”*

The further down the path I got into business coaching, I realized that no matter your business, the decision to forge a path and become an entrepreneur is often met with this same negativity from people who, giving them all the benefit of the doubt, wish the best for us and wish life to be easy for us. They view our lives through their lens.

This is your life and your dream, and your business. Many of us enter this business life with passion, a dream, and not much else. We learn as we go.

Whether we are starting our small business and we are selling plungers, or whether we are selling art, or whether we are selling house cleaning, or whether we are selling kids

programming, we all have the exact same set of circumstances. And that's what this book is about. To my brother Phil's point, we don't have to always do it the hard way. Sometimes we can learn from those who went before us. And so here we are together with this book, you and I.



## **This was the preamble.**

The book is where the systems actually get built: your numbers, your roles, your team, your time. Once the chaos has somewhere to go, you'll have what's left over, the time and money you didn't have before, to use your own creative thinking and decide where you're actually going next.

### **STOP WINGING IT: MOVING FROM CHAOS TO CASH FLOW**

Available on Amazon

---

Want help applying it? Robin coaches business owners through the exact systems in this book, one part at a time.

**[robinjoanneszuch.com](http://robinjoanneszuch.com)**

© 2026 Robin Joanne Szuch. Published by Stellar Human Project Press. This excerpt may be shared in full and unedited, but not reproduced for resale.