



Hey there!

### A Puzzling Inspiration

When I launched my business, my mission was to build a company where I would want to work. For me, that means a business that runs efficiently, where we optimize systems to do the tasks at hand.

It also means creating a team that wants to stick around for the long haul. "Happy workers, happy everybody," I say.

So what does that look like? How exactly do you make your business run as smoothly as possible while also empowering your team?

As a life-long reader, my first instinct was to turn to books, and after a referral from a colleague, I discovered "Clockwork" by Mike Michalowicz. There are lots of great lessons in his book, but the one that stood out for me was, "**Make your employees act like owners.**"

I've been taking this lesson to heart as a business leader, encouraging my staff to make decisions independently and, more importantly, make mistakes. After all, that's how we learn, right?

Around the same time that I read "Clockwork," I spent an afternoon with a friend's 3-year-old daughter. We were working on a puzzle together while her parents were moving into their new home.

I don't know the last time *you* did a puzzle with a three-year-old, but let me remind you: **It is excruciatingly hard.** I watched Martie make mistakes, again and again, turning pieces over in her little hands, trying to make things fit. It was so evident to me where the pieces should go and that she didn't have a strategy. It took all I had not to jump in and move the process along.

**Yet, I knew my job was to guide her instead of telling her what to do!** Instead of doing for her, I asked her questions like, "What pieces are the same color?" or made suggestions like, "Maybe put the pieces that don't work aside for a little bit."

As the puzzle started to come together, I had an epiphany: My job as a

business leader is essentially teaching people to put puzzle pieces together but in a different context. I'm their guide, here for questions and suggestions, but not to *do* for them.

If you want your team to act like owners, you have to let them own the process.

My little friend did finish her puzzle and, at the same time, taught me a valuable lesson in solving my own. I'm delegating more to my team and encouraging folks to seek answers rather than come to me for each question they encounter.

As the saying goes, "Teach people to fish rather than fish for them."

Happy January!

*-Beth*

Email Beth

P.S. Share your secret weapon to running a smooth, successful business with your friends and family by having them [book a strategy call!](#)



## Beth's Blog Series



## Tip 10 Hire the Right Bookkeeper

Congratulations! The time has come, and you realize that in order to work more efficiently, you need to hire a bookkeeper. Now the questions become: How do I go about hiring someone to handle my books? What do I look for? What questions should I ask?

Fear not, friend. I'm here for you with the key areas to focus on when hiring the bookkeeper of your dreams...

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## Small Biz Spotlight



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## Beth's Favorite Things

**Circadian Optics Light  
Therapy Lamp**



Being able to get the amount of light our bodies need, especially now that we're in the winter months can be quite the challenge.

I love this lamp because it's small, and folds up right behind my monitor when I'm not using it.

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At Beth Blaney & Associates our top concern is providing small businesses and solopreneurs freedom from the number-crunching and office work that pulls them from their fields of expertise. We relieve our clients of the demands of running an office so that they can find freedom to focus on what they love to do. We alleviate the stress and chaos that can accompany bookkeeping and office tasks. We also keep up with new regulations so you don't have to!

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