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Introduction

We need to earn money.

To buy things, to live comfortably, to be generous and to live our dreams. Our desire for money must be fulfilled by providing value and solving complex problems. The way we go about solving our money challenges is finding a job. Most jobs are provided by large corporates and entrepreneurs where we most likely handle a specific part of the production/service delivery process. By providing us jobs within a divided labour setting, we get to contribute towards a general grand goal in expectation for a scheduled payout whether monthly or weekly. For many years, that is what the average job has been about.

For some of us, we believe we can do more, contribute more, create more and entertain more. Hence, we are on the lookout for other avenues to contribute and make extra cash without necessarily breaking our backs or as we try to juggle both a regular career with this new venture.

This desire to contribute more in exchange for money aptly called “Side Hustle” is the avenue through which that can be achieved. Especially when we’re not necessarily looking to be an entrepreneur with layers of management and a boatload of client. We just need extra income!!!

This book, discusses, how we can strategize, formalize and picture the side hustle game to create something of value that we can exchange for money to live our dreams, contribute more to charitable causes and have an awesome life.

Kwaku Abedi

Why you need a side hustle

At its core, having a side hustle is about developing a skill you can fall back on in times of need. Something that can easily raise cash for you in a matter of hours. There are a thousand and one reasons for having a side hustle but the most obvious one being the “**ability to make money**”. This is super important since human wants and needs are unlimited.

A lot of people state financial constraints as the reason they are not achieving their goals in life. People would love to

- Travel
- Start businesses
- Donate to charitable causes in society
- Have the best life has to offer

But the challenge still remains; which is the lack of finances to do these things they set out to achieve.

Having a side hustle means that you can afford to achieve the above listed goals and more. The freedom to buy certain things without pinching pennies and obsessively counting the cost.

Money plays such a pivotal role in our lives and is the cause of arguments in most relationships and marriages. The fact that you can live comfortably and not constantly worry about how you're going to afford rent, buy a car or pay hospital bills takes a chunk of your burdens away from you.

The reason you have read this e-book to this point is that in the end, you would like to make money in order to make life easier and better for you.

The desire to live a comfortable life fueled by enough funds has been aggravated in this era of social media. People are twisting themselves into nuts so they can be popular on social media using all the tools and tricks in the social media popularity playbook. Yet we don't recognize that social media acceptability and popularity is also a money issue.

If you're constantly cash trapped, how will you go to the cool places, meet the celebrities, travel and do all the things that make people popular?

Now that you have accepted that money is a factor for your side hustle. Relax your brain and allow yourself to make it.

Starting a side hustle does not take much in terms of initial investment but it does in perfecting your skill to be the best on the market

The great service and skill you will provide to your clients is what will keep them coming.

Here are some reasons you need to start a side hustle

Jobs in the traditional sense are diminishing

The concept of a job being something we go to in the morning and return from at night is of the past. As resources become scarce, companies are constantly looking for ways they can cut cost and downsize as much as possible. Therefore, bringing valuable skills to the workforce is important. If the skills you provide can be replicated by so many other people, then you will not be paid competitive wages.

What a traditional 9 to 5 gives you is job security. Regular jobs come with benefits and end-of-service bonuses that can be quite attractive. It is becoming obvious that while there are so many avenues to spend money, finding ingenious ways to make money is a challenge. The earlier we accept that the work world will be shaping into an in-demand form of system, the better we allow ourselves to make money.

The concept of retirement is also quietly fading into the background as people look forward to working well into their old age. People cannot afford retirement as life spans improve due to advancements in medical technology, the nest egg they set for retirement might not be enough. If old people continue to be in the workforce, then there won't be any opportunities for fresh young vibrant people to join the workforce.

Full Time Employment is Shifting to Contract Work

Due to limited resources and an urge to cut full employment benefits, companies go in for contract workers to which they are not entitled to pay full benefits like a regular employee.

The situation is becoming dire, as companies instead of employing people and providing them full salaries and benefits are rather employing people and presenting them with 6-month contracts. These contracts do not enforce the companies to provide the full benefits they would otherwise have provided if they were full time employees. Benefits such as healthcare, catering, end-of-year bonuses and commissions are scrapped out of a contract worker's agreement.

Contract work has made many employees disposable and replaceable. This situation is particularly acute in developing countries where job opportunities are scant and many people chase a limited job pool.

This is a key reason for getting a side hustle and creating income for yourself. Having specialized knowledge makes you much less disposable and creates premium value on you as a brand

Your side hustle can become your full-time hustle

Starting a side hustle can be equated to putting your future into your hands. This helps in developing your skills to the maximum potential. Skills once learnt and improved upon becomes

extremely valuable and the better your skill at what you do, the higher the prices you can command.

We need to recognize that side hustles are scalable and can grow to become huge companies given the needed investment and human capital.

The freedom lifestyle (laptop lifestyle)

Everyone wants the liberty to make money and spend it as they wish. Most employees feel tied down by their jobs which is understandable. No human wants to be held captive by a job, especially a job we don't like. While we see social media entrepreneurs having quite a carefree life which allows them to work from anywhere in the world.

We need to understand that they have been able to achieve that lifestyle after months or even years of hard work and perfecting of their skill. The travelling around the world, taking cool pics for Instagram and make money online lifestyle is totally achievable and doable. What it takes is dedication and the discipline to hone your craft that will make you a master of working from anywhere.

Having your side hustle can get you that lifestyle provided you're willing to dedicate time and energy to it.

Retirement is an Old Concept

Gone are the days people worked their butts off stashing every amount of money they could so they can enjoy it in retirement. People live longer than they did in the fifties, even in less developing countries. Global access to healthcare and quality of life is improving.

It appears people strive to live healthier lifestyles so the possibility of living longer is plausible. Retirement money as it stands will not be enough for most people to survive on, if we are going to live well into their 90's

How to identify your side hustle

Most career books and articles tell you to **do what you love**.

All though this may seem like good advice on face value, people might not be interested in paying you for doing what you love. Example, I am pretty good at watching TV and sleeping all day but no one will pay me for that. My counter suggestion for doing what you love is **Invest in a skill people will pay you for**.

It is only when you find something people are willing to pay for that puts you on a part to a profitable side hustle.

How do I find a skill people will pay for?

The challenge and mental agony of identifying and investing in a skill which people will pay for is not unique to just you. Several millions of people are also in the same dilemma not knowing what natural aptitude and skills they possess. My personal approach to finding a bankable skill is the "Influencer" approach.

Ask yourself the following questions.

Who are the people you admire the most?

What do you admire about these people?

If you admire someone because of a skill they possess, do you have those same skills but at an unrefined level?

I have asked myself this question several times, and I found out in my case, I admire Seth Godin, Mark Manson, James Altucher, Malcom Gladwell, Tim Urban etc. The common thread amongst the listed people is that they are all writers. It comes as no surprise that I write myself. Is writing a bankable skill? Yes!!!

This explains what I do in my free time.

- I started a travel blog to document my journeys a few years ago
- I have contributed to travel magazines and online journals for fun
- I have written business plans and white papers for my friends businesses
- I have written for crypto currency magazine

In finding your skill ask yourself this question.

Do I have a bankable skill people can pay me for but will do it for free if they asked anyway?

Do I have a skill people praise me for?

Do I have a skill I am enthusiastic to learn about every day without fail?

Here, don't discount any skill because there are "dating coaches" who make good money are a thing.

There are certain approaches I have gleaned in my years of reading about skills and careers, choosing a particular approach can work for you.

The Altucher Approach

Author, Investor James Altucher, constantly mentions an approach in developing a skill which I find fascinating and can be of immense help in finding your hustle. He proposes that you can find industries and cross match them.

Example, you're good at

Videography

Writing

Technical analysis etc.

Find an industry example sports industry, manufacturing industry, tech industry. if videography is your thing and you have an interest in the tech industry, start making video documentaries about the Tech industry and post them online, as you sharpen your skills and social network. People will be calling on you to do commercials and documentaries for any tech related project they might have.

If you possess a skill in writing, likewise you can choose an industry and write about it.

Industry – Sector Approach

Another cool way of finding your side hustle is to spot an industry, then narrow it down to a specific sector and pick a specialized skill within that sector and operate from there. Remember, you're trying to make a side income not to establish a company so a couple contracts a month from well paying clients can be enough to make you some good money.

During this process, do not be afraid in stereotyping yourself and making your services only available to a select group of prospects.

Example the events industry, within the events industry there are many event organisers, e.g Wedding planners, party planners, corporate event planning etc. Within the various sectors of the event industry, there is the need for especially skilled people to have a successful event. For example, corporate event planners usually need a Master of Ceremony (MC) for their event or a make-up artist. If your specialty is make-up for weddings then event organizers into the wedding business will call on you. If your "MCing" skills are the best, event organisers will call on you when they need an MC for an event.

Try Things and Challenge Yourself

Try as many skills you possibly can, if a skill peaks your interest, research into it and find ways you can study and immerse yourself into that skill. Study that skill at the amateur level with the aim of consistency. Practice that skill 3-times a week and observe your reaction to that skill.

Does learning about the skill feel like a chore?

Is the zeal still there to be engaged?

Does it light your heart on fire like it used to do?

I have used this approach severally to find out whether I am passionate about something or not. A few years ago, I started researching and learning about data science and coding because I believed it was something I could do. But after coding for 6 months continuously, I noticed my interest begun to wane. I realized it was a mere fantasy. Although I can work on basic websites and pages etc. It came to a point the art of coding did not appeal to me anymore so I decided to put it on hold and pursue something else. Presently, I have been experimenting with podcasting and I am enjoying it so far. If podcasting still lights my heart on fire like writing does, then I will stick to it a couple more months.

If you keep at learning a skill for a year and the interest and zeal is still there, then you know it is time to leverage on that skill.

Ask Questions:

Ask people what skill you possess they admire. What qualities do they see in you and what particular task will they call you on if they need assistance with something.,

Having discovered that, you know a point to start from. Have honest conversation with them as to whether they will be willing to pay for that skills.

The different levels of hustle

The key ingredient to being successful at your hustle is simple.

“Being so good at a skill that it takes you a proportionately less amount of time to work on anything that requires that skill than the average person”

Maybe my statement is not doing it justice so let me explain with an example. If your chosen field of side hustle is web design. Then it pays to be highly skilled web at web design to the point that it will take you a lesser time than the average person to finish a design job. The aim is to be highly skilled at your chosen hustle because being highly skilled at a craft means you can cut your delivery time shorter than most people and you will be able to do more work as a result.

One important caveat you should understand in starting a side hustle is that they are not scalable. Side hustles are usually not scalable because it is an economic activity that requires your time and input. Although hiring other professionals once in a while to help you with some aspects of your side hustle is a good idea, you bring in another layer of management which slowly morphs you into an entrepreneur. There should be a clear distinction between the desire to be an entrepreneur and having a side hustle that makes extra income.

Being an entrepreneur requires a more “hands-on” approach to your chosen craft and requires a lot of commitment in capital and investments. Having a side hustle requires more of your individual expertise and ability to deliver.

The Technical and Non-Technical

For easy understanding, I have divided side hustles into Technical and Non-Technical

It is important to note that the more technical a side hustle is, the faster people will be willing to pay a premium price for that service.

Technical

Side hustle that involves technical skills require, mastery and a lot of practice. Due to the high level of commitment needed in mastering the skill, a lot of people shy away from it. If you are marginally good at this category, a steady stream of income awaits you.

Examples of technical skills that can pass the side hustle test include

- Coding
- Web development

- High level writing (research reports, white papers, books)
- Chef

Under the technical section is a mini subsection of semi technical skills. Although these skills require some commitment, it doesn't have the level of learning intensity as that of technical skills. Examples below

Semi Technical

- Painting
- Masseuse
- Personal Trainer
- Cook

Non-Technical

The non-technical skills does not require much and can be done by pretty much anyone else.

- Cleaning services
- Driving
- Babysitting etc

Setting up the side hustle

How do I start?

Where do I start from?

It starts by creating a brief plan on the services you want to offer and how much you want to charge in terms of revenues. The most important part of this plan are the prospects who would be interested in the services you have to offer. If you have a service and no one is interested in it, that is another challenge.

You need skills and tools

The key inputs that make for quality side hustling are **Skills and Tools**. The skill is important that is why it has been over-emphasized in previous paragraphs. As stated, you should be so good at that skill that it marginally takes you a shorter time to deliver which helps you take on more jobs at a much faster rate. The faster you are able to deliver when someone requests your skills, the higher the chance of serving more clients thereby making more money

Tools

There is this wise saying that goes and (I'm paraphrasing)

if you have 4 hours to cut down a tree, use 3 hours in sharpening your axe.

When you have the best tools to work with, the task intrinsically becomes smoother and the pleasure you derive from delivering value is many times increased. Therefore, in pursuing your side hustle, make it a point to have the necessary top-notch tools to use in delivering your work. Inadequate tools and resources lead to poor work outflow and reduced efficiency.

How I Approach "Tools"

Tools does not mean investing in the most expensive software or buying the latest upgrade of everything. Tools mean having the required instrument for the job and seeing to it that the instrument is in good working condition. Identifying what type of instrument works for what type of job and having them at the ready for the client is extremely necessary.

Tools also includes consistent training to sharpen your skills. The best way to go about this is set aside some hours every week to sharpen your skills, harness industry knowledge, explore how technology is having an impact on your chosen field and connect with people in the field

As a writer and podcaster, my tools are the things I need to write effectively about the things I am passionate about. These are

- Ideas and research files. My collection of journals, books, articles and literary works from various sources which helps enrich my work.
- The various software I need to do my work, i.e word processing software, digital camera etc.

Once a week, I take a critical look at these things and figure out what I can do to improve the quality of my work via sharpening the tools, i.e finding the necessary updates and new creative ways within the loop to be better.

How Much to Charge

This is a question that most side hustlers have to deal with.

To tackle this properly, we have to eliminate our “fraud complex”. By fraud complex, I mean the self-limiting beliefs we put on ourselves by saying we are not worthy of charging premium prices so we charge the lowest possible price for our work. We are desperate for whatever amounts comes through the door without considering the time and effort it will take in executing the job brilliantly.

A lot of people who want to start a side hustle feel they need to charge the least possible amount to feel competitive. That is one of the worst mistakes you can do for your side hustle. If you better position yourself as a brand, then upselling yourself should not be much of a problem especially when the client know they are dealing with a master craftsman and they are going to receive unique work.

Do not charge a price you will regret!!! Regret is a powerful emotional feeling that can derail you and not make you present your best work to the client.

A speaker I listened once said **“set a threshold for how much you want to make and work towards charging that price”**. In the category that you occupy, you’re the best and you can charge a premium for your services.

Make a budget of how much you need to live for a year. Work towards that to determine whether your side hustle income can support you without you dipping into your regular salary. Figure out whether you can consistently do that for 2 to 3 years. If you’re committed to your side hustle and continue to create value. 2 things will happen,

1. you will start drumming up more business from your side hustle
2. The income from your side hustle will surpass that of your regular job, and you will get more well-paying clients to the extent of sometimes keeping potential clients away because you’re fully booked and do not have enough time to do the remainder of the work.

Have something you do for free which will further sharpen your learning skills and can double as content marketing for your side hustle.

Won't my boss fire me?

A tricky scenario that will surely arise as a result of starting your side hustle is whether your employers will be cool with you taking up some other jobs.

We have to establish that side hustles are to be done in your free time and must not take precedence over your full-time job if you are a regular 9 to 5er. As you build your skill and craft to become a master at what you do. It will become easier and quicker to achieve the task. Without a doubt, being good and having better clients will catapult you to a point where the income from your side hustle will be at par with the income from your regular job. Before you know it, the income from side hustle will surpass that of your regular income if only you're willing to put in the time and commitment to be extraordinarily good at what you do.

There are scenarios where there might be some similarities between your side hustle and that of your main job. For example, if you're on staff as a photographer for a production company, doing photoshoots out of work as a side hustle can be tricky. But there is a window of opportunity. That is, every job has a job description. Every employer presents its employee with a job description. Hence if the style of photos you do varies from the one stated in your job description then there shouldn't be a problem.

In cases where there are no similarities between the side hustle and what you do for your day job, then you have free reign to go in hard and make magic.

The great thing about side hustle is that, it can steadily become your full-time job which will make you a freelancer.

How to Market your Side Hustle

Do work for free

Working for free is one way to get your foot in the door. Every entrepreneur or business owner I know always wants something for free. The tried and tested approach is to find something basic within your hustle that can be of benefit to the client and present it to them. The natural follow up is for them to get in touch with you if they want to complete the work.

Example, starting a side hustle as a web developer, you can begin by mocking up websites for your prospects so that can get have a “feel” of how their work will look like. This is a step that most other web developers will not take but gives you an extra edge.

Before getting paid opportunities to contribute to magazines and write white papers, I had already been writing articles on various topics for news publications and blogs.

Start a blog/website/social media page etc.

Your website is like your portfolio which will be a landing destination for all your creative works so people can see what you have to offer. If you do not have one, start by looking into creating a website or an internet page that people can go and view your work.

There is no point in investing in fancy hosting and paying for expensive themes. You can secure the domain name and host it on a blogging platform if you desire, but by all means have a website.

Some of the places you can go create a website include

Wix

Blogger

Wordpress

Typepad

Etc.

Start today, go there pick the domain, choose a theme and just run with it.

Trying to achieve perfection will slow down the momentum you started with. Be a rapid note taker and take notes of anything you think of that will be of help to your side hustle. This will come in handy at a point. Consistency is key but few people pay attention. It takes time to build a following. No matter how great your content is, it will take sometime before people warm up to you. Anywhere between 2 - 5 years is feasible.

Consistent Content Marketing

Content marketing is highly imperative in kickstarting as side hustle

When you start out your side hustle, you might not be known by everybody. To draw attention to what you're doing, you must contribute value to the sector you want to work in. Example, going into the catering business as a side hustle makes for good content marketing if you create a blog or website about food and recipes.

Teaching your audiences how to prepare various dishes, creating recipes etc will be of benefit to them. This helps in establishing a brand name.

Famed Author, Seth Godin suggests, you have something to offer to the community for free. It could be blog posts, infographics, podcast whatever it is that will make your targeted audiences feel the depth of what you have to offer. That is extremely important because coming into the side hustle world you are basically unknown. Giving

Form and lead a community

Reach out to people who are in the same field as you. Work with them and build an alliance and be part of the 'scene'. People in the same space providing the service you do does not necessarily mean you must become fierce competitors. There must be room for collaboration and dialogue on how you can all influence and make a positive impact on the sector. Build a virtual network and support each other. Share ideas, bounce ideas off each other and act as a sounding board for one another. As James Altucher says, you need a scene to work with. Members of your scene will challenge you and push you to become the best. Through that way you all rise together and make great strides.

What are some of hottest industry

If you possess the skills, you can look further into starting a side hustle in the following areas. These industries do not require much to start in terms of capital.

Remote

- Writing (e-books, copy, research report, white paper)
- Web development
- Web design
- Online Marketing

Non-Remote

- Cleaning
- Private chef services
- Baby sitting
- Massage

Prospecting

Prospecting is an art that never ends in doing business. This is because there must be a continuous cycle of prospects in the sales funnel that should be converted to sales. Otherwise what happens to your side hustle is that, it is going to hit a dry patch when the funnel is empty. This brings about the lucrative and not so lucrative times in running your side hustle

You must be disciplined in your prospecting, therefore as, stated in previous chapters, there must be a strong emphasis on creating quality work for free in marketing to your targeted audiences. When people visit these free resources, this presents you the opportunity to capture them as a lead by collecting their names, email addresses and possibly their phone numbers. Capturing this data is the beginning of the funnel which gives you the opportunity to send more targeted promotional offers, resources and materials to them. Some of these target prospects finally become clients. The loop therefore continues by creating more fresh content to capture the leads.

Nothing is as important as personal communication and advertisements in side hustle. References from friends, family, business associates and work colleagues can do wonders for your hustle. Therefore, involve the relevant personal connections who can help you find relevant leads and prospects. Prospecting can be difficult but do not give up. When you hit a brick wall, come back, re-strategize, figure out how you can do better work and delight your prospects.

As stated earlier, all these will not happen in months or a year or two. It will happen if you're consistent overtime and continue to contribute value until the prospects see the need to stick with you. Metrics are important but building the right content for the right lead is more important. With quality content comes quality leads which translates to quality prospects and quality customers. Mastering the prospecting process will make your side hustle further enjoyable.

Conclusion

Having a profitable side hustle is a guaranteed step for freedom and opportunities. But the road to a profitable side hustle comes with many twist and turns you must be prepared for. The goal is to be an expert and excel at a skill in a way that you become a master at that craft. This is the major hurdle to cross in your dream to build a profitable side hustle. Mastering your craft and being able to sort out clients needs to satisfaction within a short period is the most important.

The rest will gradually fall into place with work and consistency. Keep fine tuning that side hustle dream and soon you will be headed for the top.

Good luck!!!

Kwaku Abedi

