Worksheet 08 — The salable-parts audit

From Chapter 10 — Build it like you'll sell it.

Time: an afternoon for the first half, one uncomfortable conversation for the second.

Two questions, and they're the same question pointed in opposite directions. Could someone else *buy* what you've built? And could someone else *replace* you tomorrow? A business where the answer to both is no isn't safe. It's unexamined.

Step 1 — List the machine

Every internal function you run. Not services you sell — the plumbing. How you quote. How you schedule. How you intake. How you edit, deliver, invoice, chase. How you decide what to say yes to.

#	The function	Who can run it today
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

> If the right-hand column says "me" more than five times, you don't have a business yet. You have a job with unusually good branding.

Step 2 — The stranger test

Take the five that matter most. For each, answer honestly.

Function	Could a stranger buy and use this without me in the room?	What's missing

The "what's missing" column is your operational debt, itemised — probably for the first time. It's usually one of four things: **a boundary** (where it starts and stops), **documentation** (because a stranger can't ask you), **a price**, or **a quality bar** that isn't just "good enough that I can live with it."

Step 3 — Put a number on your own plumbing

For each of the five, what would you charge someone to use it?

Function	What I'd charge	What it costs me to run

- [ ] I could name a real number for every row.
- [ ] I couldn't for at least one — which means I don't actually know what that part of my operation is worth, to me or anyone else.

Step 4 — Finish one

Pick the function closest to being salable. Not the biggest — the closest.

The one I'm finishing: ____

What "finished" means, specifically: __________________________________

____

Done by: _______________

> You don't have to actually sell it. The discipline is the payoff — a thing you *could* sell is a thing you can hand off, price, and cut. A thing that only makes sense inside your head is one you'll operate until you quit.

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Step 5 — The lock-in audit

Now the other direction. Every partnership, client relationship and retainer you currently have.

Who	Could they replace me inside a week?	If not — why not?

Now the honest sort. In the "why not" column, mark each one:

Q — they'd struggle to replace me because *the work is genuinely good.*

S — they'd struggle because *switching is a pain* — contracts, embedded process, they hold no copies, nobody else knows the system.

Count your **S** rows: ________

> That number is revenue that survives on friction rather than quality. It feels like loyalty right up until the day someone finally does the math.

Step 6 — What you're charging for annoyance

Write the single relationship where you're most protected by switching cost rather than by being good:

____

What would you have to improve for that to flip to **Q**?

____

____

- [ ] I'd take this deal if I were on the other side of it.
- [ ] I wouldn't — and I've written down what I'm going to change.

Step 7 — Say the sentence

Pick one partner. Say this out loud to them, this week:

> **"If someone does this better than me, take them. I'd rather you have the better thing, and I'd rather know."**

Who I'm saying it to: ______________________________

Date I said it: ______________

What they said back: ______________________________

- [ ] Done. It’s now their job to keep me honest, and mine to stay worth keeping.
- [ ] Not done, because ____ *(read that reason back. Is it a business reason or a fear?)*

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Kill-or-keep date: ______________

On that date, check three things: whether the function from Step 4 actually got finished, whether your **S** count went down, and whether anyone took you up on Step 7. If a partner did leave — good. You found out on a Tuesday, cheaply, instead of in a year, expensively. Now go be worth coming back to.