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FOREWORD

I'm Raymond Aaron, the top ten New York Times Bestselling Author of the books *Branding Small Business For Dummies*, *Double Your Income Doing What You Love*, *Chicken Soup for the Parent's Soul* and *Chicken Soup for the Canadian Soul*. I have been a real estate investor, a business mentor and coach for over 30 years. I have shared the stage with former President Bill Clinton, Sir Ricard Branson, Donald Trump, Steve Wozniak, and many other world-class leaders and speakers. I have dedicated my life to teaching people like you how to dramatically change your life for the better by helping you to tap into your potential.

There are countless books on business in the marketplace today, but Laurie K. Grant's **Create CALM From Chaos™** is the one book you don't want to be without. Why? This book is worth thousands of hours of your time and is full of comprehensive strategies to use to make more money for your business. It's concise, well-written, and insightful. I highly recommend **Create CALM From Chaos™**, an approach this book describes in detail.

When you read **Create CALM From Chaos™** and follow the ideas presented to you, you save thousands of hours of wasted time. You learn how to keep your business running in a structured, organized way which allows you to focus on what you do best and to provide **WOW** experiences for your clients, your employees, and even your vendors. Every page of this book is overflowing with extensive approaches, which are simple to understand and easy to implement.

Create CALM From Chaos™ covers everything you need to know to simplify and systemize your business, including why you need to get organized, how to cope effectively with the fear of change, what to do to manage your time (you will be surprised how you do this), and your work environment. Laurie reveals how to run projects, how to manage your data (business information), and most importantly, how to manage people: your clients, your employees, and your vendors. She shares important areas of your business finances, ways to increase your knowledge, and how to create an organized, structured (systemized) framework for you to operate your business.

In 2013, I had the pleasure of being introduced to Laurie K. Grant because she attended one of my events. I have since learned she is an incredibly intelligent, clever, and powerful woman who is very determined and extremely successful at anything she focuses her mind on. Laurie is a true entrepreneurial spirit with more than 20 years' international experience delivering business transformation solutions for Fortune Top 50 corporations, multi-nationals, mid-sized businesses, and startups, Laurie is esteemed by her clients and colleagues for an unprecedented ability to assess any challenge at hand generating the most innovative and sustainable solution.

I'm **WOWED** by Laurie K. Grant and her unique ability to **Create CALM From Chaos™**, and I know you will be too.

Raymond Aaron
New York Times Bestselling Author

Author of:
Branding Small Business For Dummies
Double Your Income Doing What You Love
Chicken Soup for the Parent's Soul
Chicken Soup for the Canadian Soul

DEDICATION

I write this dedication to the three people who I know without a shadow of a doubt believe in me. I am deeply honoured to have them be a part of my life and my memories.



First and foremost, **Dr. Harold Laurier Grant**, the man who chose me at age three when my mother no longer wanted me, the man who I called Daddy and who I am named after. He was a lifelong learner with a keen interest in nature, science, and truth. He was my knight in shining armour who always encouraged me to be the very best me. I loved to mentally spar with him on Physics vs. Quantum Physics vs. Metaphysics.



Secondly, **Harley Jaymes Grant**, my son who has taught me many things about life. He was to be my birthday present, but came earlier just to surprise me. Harley has a keen interest in art and psychology intersecting in the human experience. It's been a delight to share my life with one who is my intellectual equal and who isn't afraid to challenge the status quo.



The third and final person is my dear friend, **Carla Wynn Hall**. She was the catalyst to show me I needed to share my brilliance with the world and by not doing so, I wasn't in service. Carla has a keen interest in the art of storytelling, not only to keep culture alive for years to come, but to use the craft of putting pen to paper as a means to heal the wounds held within.

THE LAW OF ONENESS

Without you –my journey is less
Without you – I have less yes
Without you – I'm not the best me
Without you – I may never be free

THANK YOU

May My Brilliance Shine to Light Your Way

CHAPTER 1

WHY SYSTEMIZE YOUR BUSINESS?



Join Me on the SYSTEMIZATION Journey

Glad to see you stopped in. Are you ready for some tough love? In these next pages, you will either recognize yourself or someone you know. You may not like some of the things I'm going to tell you in my book, but I'm not going to walk softly. In fact, I'm going to be blunt and direct. Why? Because the reason you bought my book is you already know in your heart of hearts you need to get organized, structured, and focused or in other words **SYSTEMIZED**. Especially because you want to grow your business to the next level and beyond.

SYSTEM = Save Yourself, Stress, Time, Energy & Money

You've watched others grow their business to success, but you're not getting ahead. In fact, you've lost business and yet you still don't take any steps to change. Why did you start your business? You started your business because you:

- Have a great idea you want to share with the world.
- Want to have more control over how you work.
- Want more work life balance.
- Want to make more money, etc.

Whatever the reason is, you didn't start a business to be a failure. You started a business to be a **SUCCESS**, but you find success alluding you.

It's time for a little tough love. Get **SYSTEMIZED** like yesterday! You like winning, don't you? Well, you're the only one who to make this happen. The only one to make the changes you need for your business. Don't put it off anymore. Do it **NOW!!** With my guidance in this book, you will get organized, structured, and focused. You will be **SYSTEMIZED** and able to move your business forward. Why get **SYSTEMIZED**? Systems are regularly repeated patterns. By using them you will **WOW** your clients, your employees, your vendors, and yourself.

Today, more and more entrepreneurs are breaking ground with bright new ideas. They're innovative and intuitive with brilliant concepts, but they lack one major asset: systems. This book will teach you in easy steps, how to create systems for your business to allow you to be more

organized, more structured, and more focused on what you do best. You will learn how to create flexible, repeatable and easy to put into play sustainable systems. Then you're able to focus on what's important to you – **Your Business**.

This book is written for you, to help guide you, to help you be more successful in your business. You don't have to read this book from front to back – why you ask? You may only need help in one area, then jump to the particular area you're interested in to see what tips and guidance are there. Read it back to front, from the middle outwards; it doesn't really matter which way you read it, as long as you read it. Are you ready? Get set, let's begin. Together we will move through the process of taking your brilliant creation into the world.

Why listen to me? I'm the Premier International Business Strategy and Efficiency Expert, Award Winning and International Bestselling Author, Global Speaker and Thought Leader. I'm the Founder and CEO of FutureWave Group Inc., a consulting company that designs and implements business transformation solutions for organizations including Fortune Top 50 corporations, multi-nationals, mid-sized businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs. I lead the day-to-day responsibilities, including client consultations, managing projects, and everything in between. Over the last 20 years, I've worked with organizations such as EDS, IBM, Blue Cross, Anheuser Busch, Enbridge Gas, various Canadian Federal and Provincial Ministries, RBC, CIBC, York University, Dow Jones, ADP, Funddata, Debi/Davidge, and General Motors to name a few. I have two degrees. One degree is in Information Technology with a minor in Professional and Technical Writing. The second degree is in Electronics Engineering Technology – Control Systems.

This makes me well qualified to help you bring **CALM** to your business. Are you ready for this adventure? Yes. Alright then, let's get started.

Business Chaos Analysis™

Please select the boxes below when the questions are applicable to you. It's my passion to help you find the **CALM** in your Chaos by creating easy, sustainable systems so your business works for you. Let's have a conversation to see how we can bring **CALM** to your business. Go to BreakTheChaos.com to start the journey and in a few minutes, you'll be directed to my calendar to select a date and time for you.

Framework

- Do you know where to start or what to focus on to create your business?
- Do you make constant changes in your business, but they're not bringing you the desired results?
- Are you repeating the same activities over and over because you don't have a business plan?
- Do you reinvent the wheel each time you execute an activity?
- Do you have the structure or the system to support you, so you will focus on your great ideas?

Change

- Do you find you're scattered as you jump from one great idea to the next?
- Do you want control of your business direction, but don't know how to achieve it?
- Are you reactive, not proactive, always chasing the fires to put out?
- Do you see everything as an emergency?
- Are you doing everything yourself as you don't know how to delegate?

Time

- Are you overwhelmed despite achieving some business growth and success?
- Do you find you don't have enough hours in the day?
- Do you find you don't have work-life balance as you're spending all your time on your business?
- Do you find you don't undertake additional business to enhance your business or excite you?
- Are you doing activities that don't belong to your business?

Environment

- Are you aware of the ongoing changes in your competition?
- Are you aware of the competitive products and/or services in the marketplace?
- Have you stopped marketing or advertising because of a lack of funds?
- Are your products and/or services outdated?
- Do you have a chaotic work environment?

Clients

- Is your business plagued with losing your existing clients?
- Are you attracting the wrong clients for you?
- Are you creating work for your clients that isn't complete or has errors?
- Do you know and clearly communicate what your business is selling?
- Do you ask for and listen to client feedback?

Money

- Have you mixed your business money in with your personal money?
- Does your business have a budget?
- Do you have a business budget, but you don't stick to it?
- Did your business expenses increase, but you haven't raised your prices?
- Have you got the cash flow to sustain your business cycle?

Technology

- Do you understand technology and how it improves your business?
- Do you know how to use Social Media for marketing your business?
- Do you understand Social Media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Instagram?
- Do you have a website, but terms like SEO or mobile friendly confuse you?
- Do you know how to reach a virtual audience and have virtual conversations like Skype or Google Hangout?

What Does Business Failure Look Like?

It's important you understand what business failure is to avoid going down this road. Business failure is getting stuck in a rut, going around and around in circles, not able to move forward, not generating enough revenue to take care of your expenses, and not having any profit. There are many reasons for business failure: lack of funding or money, changes in the economic marketplace, ineffective business management, poor employee behaviour, and high employee turnover, to name just a few. Ineffective business management is often seen in poor planning or a lack of know-how to recognize what's required to operate a prosperous business.

Your business fails when you don't understand and know your marketplace and who your target clients are. It's important to know who your competition is and what your clients are buying. You need to arm yourself with as much information about your competition and your clients regularly to position yourself in the most advantageous light. You need to be flexible to changes in either your competition or your clients.

Just because you have a bright shiny idea doesn't mean you will have a highly profitable business. You want to choose products and/or services to achieve growth. Your cash register must ring. It takes more than a great idea and your passion to make your business a success.

Much like an airplane, start-up businesses are born from a bright idea. Women, particularly, have what many perceive as flighty ideas. Ideas which have great energy and momentum. These ideas are needed just like the jet fuel a 747 jet needs to take flight; self-sufficient entrepreneurs have a million ideas. Not only do they have great ideas, they spend countless dollars to learn about different ways to create businesses. They attend endless classes in programs presented by industry gurus. There comes a point in time, however, when a condition called "Failure to Launch" inflicts the plan, dismantles the dreams, and causes a good business idea to become a retired business idea; one that is never born.

Many times, a business is launched and it enjoys a nice take-off, starts making money, but then a shift occurs. Like the economy crashes as in

the 2008 US Real Estate Crash, or technology changes as it does often. Either one of these variables, when injected into a business model, causes **Chaos** of the mind and break down in the business. This is what happens when a business has failed to create flexible strategies to keep up with potential shifts in the marketplace. When creating the concept of systemized **CALM** from an event of **Chaos**, it's important to account for those "unknown" variables" by developing a futuristic "What If" situation to mitigate "Failure to Land." Landing in this context means longevity and stability.

Let's look at some common things I've seen time and time again in my clients' businesses to see what might cause your business to fail.

Do you know and clearly communicate what your business is selling? What is the value you provide to your clients? Is there enough cash flow to sustain your business cycle? You must keep the cash register ringing. Do you know of ways to increase the business income, reduce the expenses or get funding from grants, loans, partners or investors?

Are you aware of changes in the competition, or products in the marketplace, or new technologies to help you? How dependent are you on your clients? Don't put all your eggs in one basket. How well do you interact with your clients? Do you ask for and listen to client feedback? Do you say **NO**? Do you focus on delivering results that are over-the-top of what your clients expected? Do you give them the **WOW** factor? I will explain the **WOW** factor throughout the book.

Have you stopped marketing or advertising because of a lack of funds? This makes it more challenging to find more clients. What are some alternative strategies to use? Ask your clients how they found you each time you take on a new client. This gives you a targeted list to focus your marketing efforts on.

What are your social media strategies? Some places to direct your social media marketing efforts to are Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Periscope, etc. Getting feedback from your clients goes a long way in teaching you how to provide not just great service, but a service which gives them a **WOW** experience.

Is your inventory stale? Has your inventory been on the shelf too long? Is your inventory out of date with what your clients want? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then lower your prices and sell your inventory at a discount to make room for products your clients do want. Do you survey your clients to find out what are the latest trends they're interested in? The responses provide you with market research.

How often are your employees leaving and you're having to replace them with new hires? Are you not paying them enough? Are they not passionately involved with the work they're doing? Is the work they're doing is too easy and they're bored? Employees like **WOW** experiences too.

Did your business expenses increase, but you haven't raised your prices? Guess what this does, it eats into your profitability which doesn't give you the funding to make your business grow and prosper. What are you doing to fix this? Look at increasing your prices, finding cheaper vendors, or different products to offer your clients.

What is your health like? Do you get emotional because you're overwhelmed? Do you overreact to every little thing that happens in your business? It's important to get enough sleep, food, exercise, and spiritual space or you become too tired or have headaches or get fatigued mentally. Have you set personal and professional boundaries in your business? Are you unable to grow your business to the next level as you're worn out with doing everything?

You have to maintain a variety of activities to successfully run a business. When you don't plan, organize, control, direct or communicate, you run the risk of failure. You need to know exactly where your business is at any given moment. As you start to grow, you must plan to change. Failure to anticipate change is inviting your business to fail. If you keep on doing the same thing, you will keep on getting the same results. A strategic map will tell you where your business was yesterday, where your business is today, and where your business is going tomorrow. Are you up for the challenge?

You will fail at some things you do in your business, but when you know your business like a captain does his ship, then you will adjust and

change as the business climate changes. Failure leads to growth and ultimately success.

Understanding the State of Business Chaos

What is Chaos?

The Oxford Dictionaries describe the meaning for **Chaos** as “complete disorder and confusion.” The word originated in the 15th century (denoting a gaping void or chasm, later formless primordial matter): via French and Latin from the Greek *khaos*, vast chasm, void.

*“It’s a lack of clarity that creates chaos and frustration.
Those emotions are poison to any living goal.”*
Steve Maraboli, *Life, the Truth, and Being Free*

Chaos is defined in many ways, but in business it’s defined as a slow, painful death. You know, the death that happens when **Chaos** overtakes normalcy and keeps a business in a constant, spiralling state of stuck.

Allowing **Chaos** to take up residence in your business brings failure when you don’t have a way to manage the **Chaos** and to create a structured, focused, systemized order. In today’s business world, as a busy entrepreneur, you find yourself in a total state of overwhelm, creating confusion, mayhem, and disorder in your business. This state of **Chaos** contributes to you feeling you’re not in control, you’re being swallowed up in a vortex and you’re isolated from your great idea.

“Chaos is a name for any order that produces confusion in our minds.”
George Santayana, *Dominations and Powers*

This book provides you with ideas to assist you in creating sustainable solutions for your business. Many new or growing entrepreneurs feel totally lost in a sea of confusion and critically disjointed **Chaos**. **Chaos** puts you into a state of disharmony and disconnection from your business venture. To be successful, you cannot jump on the bandwagon of every impulse that comes to mind.

Create CALM From Chaos™ is written to assist you with creating the bridge to connect a bright idea to a moneymaking business. This model

is centred on organized management, implementing systems, and the importance of compartmentalizing ideas into profit generating activities critical in today's market. We're in a knowledge revolution today and there is no getting around this fact. Rapid amounts of change occur constantly in today's world, providing new technologies, along with new ways of thinking and being. To stay on top of this change, you and your team must learn to bend and adjust quickly, allowing you to manoeuvre your business through the sea of volatility.

You need to learn the signs of **Chaos** in your business so you adapt and change as required. Losing clients, employees, or vendors; health problems; not enough time in the day; no time for yourself or your loved ones; overspending; not enough money; etc. These are signs you're in a **State of Chaos**.

Having **Chaos** in your mind puts limits on your ability to focus and to clearly process information. Neuroscientists at Princeton University have discovered **Chaos** competes for your brain's attention, resulting in less focus and more stress.

This **Chaos** isn't just physical, it's also digital and mental. Your to-do list, your email, Twitter, Facebook, and texting all create **Chaos**. Constant interruptions overwhelm your brain and it doesn't work, it doesn't filter, it doesn't process, and you become overwhelmed.

When you stay in this state of **Chaos** for any length of time, it starts to adversely affect your life, your health, your relationships, your career or your business. Therefore, it's extremely important for you to learn ways to master your chaos, to **Create CALM From Chaos™**.

What Does Business Success Look Like?

It's important to understand what business success is so you recognize when you're on the right path. Success is defined differently for everyone. In business, there are a few signposts to tell you when you're on the successful road. Your business makes money, it's profitable and growing, or it's the feelings of satisfaction and pride from the problems you solved, or the clients you served.

Success is peace of mind because you've done your absolute best. Success is knowing the core values of your business are in alignment with the core values you live by. Success is knowing you're passionate about what you do and it's highly enjoyable so it becomes play for you. Success is because you don't quit, you pick yourself up, you change yourself and your business, and you do it with enthusiasm. Fully immersing yourself in your business brings you great joy and personal satisfaction.

How do you measure the success of your business? Are you mindful of your goals and targets, ensuring they are aligned with the values and purpose of your business? Have you got plans written down for your business? Do you have a blueprint of your business vision; what your business goals and drivers are? Without a roadmap, you cannot drive from Point A to Point B. The same is true in your business.

When you first start your business, your business plan is small. Revisit your business plan at least once a year. Make it a living, growing document that tracks how you change your business. To be successful, you need to understand all aspects of your business. Make sure you delegate the tasks others are able to do, leaving you with the tasks only you're able to do to make your cash register ring.

Some Examples of Business Success

Profit - Most people believe business profit is one of the best ways to measure your business success. Here are some other good ways to measure business success:

- When you're making money after your expenses are paid.
- When you have money to reinvest in your business.
- When your money and your business are continually growing.

Clients - The number of new clients you bring in shows how you successfully communicate with your target market. Happy clients will be repeat clients and they will provide great referrals for you. Make sure you provide your clients with a **WOW** experience right from the first time they interact with you and your business. Always remember, the client is the most important. Without your clients, you have no business. Make sure you have great client service.

Employees - Give your employees a work environment that fosters their professional growth, applauds their achievements, and makes them feel valued for their efforts. A happy, satisfied employee is more likely to bend over backwards for you, your business, your clients, and your vendors. Remember, your employees need **WOW** experiences too.

Vendors - Paying your vendors ahead of time or on time is one of the best ways to have happy vendors. Be open about what you need and what your business goals are. Develop the relationship. Work towards a mutual benefit. Build on candidness, honesty, and integrity. Choose vendors you believe share your visions and your values. The quality of your products and/or service depends on the quality of your vendors.

You - The most important person to keep happy, engaged, and valued is yourself. You set an example for your business, your clients, your employees, and your vendors. That's why it's important for you to do reality checks regularly to make sure your business is on the right track and, if not, make the required changes.

Understanding the State of Business Calm

On the opposite end of **Chaos** is **CALM**. **CALM** in your business is peaceful, quiet, and without worry. The state of being organized and prepared for business transactions, from organizing finances to creating a marketing plan that flows with the changing times. While having a structured, focused, systemized business may be painful for the entrepreneur who is flying with ideas, it helps increase your business profits in the long run. When **CALM** is achieved, or at least moved to the top of the line, a business will flow smoother.

What is Calm?

The Oxford Dictionaries describe the meaning for **CALM** as “tranquil and quiet.” The word originated from Late Middle English: via one of the Romance languages from the Greek *kauma* 'heat (of the day)'.

CALM is defined in many ways, but in business it's defined as a smoothly functioning growing organization. You know, the state that happens when **CALM** is present every day in your business. You have a

plan, you're focused, and you're consistent in the delivery of your products and/or services, yet flexible enough to manage change. This means your clients feel understood. Your clients know you're taking care of them. They not only keep coming back, but they also refer you to other clients.

As the captain of your ship, you know your priorities for the direction you're taking your business in. Your processes are stable, your clients are happy, your employees are engaged, your vendors deliver great products on time and, best of all, the cash register is ringing. Trust, integrity, focus, discipline, and perseverance are part of your value system. You're organized, you keep detailed records to know exactly where your business is at all times, you're learning from your competition, you've analysed the pros and cons of the calculated risks to grow your business, and you're open to new ideas and ways for your business to run.

*“When adversity strikes, that's when you have to be the most calm.
Take a step back, stay strong, stay grounded and press on.”*

LL Cool J

When you invest in your business, your clients, your employees, and your vendors, you're also investing in yourself. You're accessible, you have a great reputation, you're an expert in your field, and you market the benefits of having your products and/or services. You know your target market and what's important to them. You stay in touch, you over deliver and ahead of time, you say thank you, you answer emails and phone calls, and you do it all with a smile.

This is a great place to be. You have mastered **Chaos**. You've created Business **CALM** from your Business **Chaos**. If this is **You**, congratulations!!! However, with this book, you will learn something new, a fresh perspective you didn't have before. If this is **Not You**, don't worry, you're going to move forward. The 1st step was in buying this book, in believing I'm able to help you, which I can. I've helped many organizations over the years and I want to help **YOU** to have financial abundance, personal freedom, and significant success while providing **WOW** experiences for your clients, your employees, and your vendors.

Let's take a look at some of the changes to lead you on a path to

financial abundance, personal freedom and significant success. In the next chapter, we will look at **Change** and how it affects you, your business, your clients, your employees, and your vendors. I provide tips and tools I've used successfully with my clients, my employees and my vendors to **Create CALM From Chaos™**.