



LUXE BUSINESS BACKEND™ · FOUNDER FIRE CODES™

THE FOUNDER FIRES **PLAYBOOK**

Five ready-made playbooks for the business problems that keep hijacking your day.

PROPRIETARY & CONFIDENTIAL

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WELCOME

READ THIS FIRST

The fires in this book are not new to you. That's the point of the book.

A new problem deserves a fresh think. But the five problems in these pages are not new problems. They land on your desk every week, wearing slightly different outfits — a different client, a different team member, a different Tuesday. You've solved each of them dozens of times. And they keep coming back, because solving a fire and preventing a fire are two different jobs, and you've only ever had time for the first one.

WHY THE SAME FIRES KEEP FINDING YOU

A recurring fire is never random. Random problems don't repeat. When the same category of mess shows up on your desk month after month, that mess has a structure — and the structure runs through you.

At Luxe Business Backend™ we call that a dependency: a spot where the business only works because it routes through the founder. There are nine distinct types, and each one produces its own signature fire. Your team checking with you before every decision is one type. You being the only person who knows where anything lives is a different type. Work stalling until you push it, work coming back to you for fixes, work dying in the gap between two people — different types again, each with its own cause and its own cure.

So every recurring fire is really a dependency with a costume on. The interruption you see is the costume. The wiring underneath is the fire. This book deals with both.

A note on who this is written for, because the plays assume it: you're established. You have a team — even a small one — real revenue, and real operations. The fires in these pages are fires precisely because there are people around you ready to catch what you've been holding. If it's still just you, hold on to this book. Its day is coming.

WHAT A PLAYBOOK IS

Each of the five playbooks in this book has two halves.

The Response Plan puts the fire out. It's the set of moves that gets you relief this week — specific actions, word-for-word scripts, small structures you can stand up in an afternoon. It is designed for a person with a full calendar, because that's who you are.

The Prevention Plan rewires the wall so the fire stops starting. It replaces you with structure: decision thresholds, written standards, one source of truth, owners, triggers, rhythms. This half takes longer — a couple of weeks of deliberate installation — and it's the half that actually changes your life.

Most founders only ever run response plans. That's why they're still firefighting at year seven. You bought this book because you're done being the extinguisher.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Don't read it cover to cover and then do nothing. Do this instead:

- 1. Pick the fire burning hottest.** Skim the five openers. One of them will make your jaw tighten. Start there. Not with the easiest one — the hottest one.
- 2. Run the Response Plan this week.** Every response plan fits inside a normal working week. Block ninety minutes, run the steps, send the scripts.
- 3. Install the Prevention Plan over the next two weeks.** One structure at a time. Assign an owner to each piece as you build it, or you've just built yourself more furniture to maintain.
- 4. Then pick the next fire.** One at a time. A founder working five fires at once finishes zero.

WHAT “QUICKLY CUSTOMIZE” LOOKS LIKE

Every playbook ends with a Make It Yours section: fill-in prompts with blanks for your numbers, your names, your thresholds. Each set is built as roughly twenty minutes of work. The plays are ready-made; the blanks are where your business goes. A threshold with your real dollar amount in it gets followed. A generic one gets ignored. Twenty minutes is the price of the difference.

You've been putting out the same five fires for years. This is the last lap where you're the one holding the extinguisher.

FOUNDER FIRE CODES™

THE FIVE FIRES AT A GLANCE

01 The Approval Pileup

Finished work queues for your sign-off; the team checks with you before moving.

02 The Information Black Hole

You are the only search engine the company has.

03 The Delegation Boomerang

You hand work off. It comes back, or it stalls until you push.

04 The Rework Loop

The team does the work; you review, fix, and catch what they missed.

05 The Broken Handoff

Work dies in the seams between people, and you're the human router.

FIRE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHAT'S ACTUALLY BURNING	FASTEST RELIEF
01 · The Approval Pileup	Decisions and finished work wait in a queue with your name on it	Direction & Decision Dependency	One decision memo with real thresholds, sent this week
02 · The Information Black Hole	"How do I..." and "where does X live" all day, every day	Knowledge Dependency	Your top ten answers, extracted out loud in two sittings
03 · The Delegation Boomerang	Delegated work returns to you or stalls until you push it	Execution & Delivery Dependency	One stalled project restarted without your push

FIRE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHAT'S ACTUALLY BURNING	FASTEST RELIEF
04 · The Rework Loop	Every deliverable passes through your red pen before it ships	Quality & Risk Dependency	One written standard with real examples of great and unacceptable
05 · The Broken Handoff	You relay updates and reconnect people so work doesn't fall in the gaps	Coordination Dependency	One weekly rhythm meeting on the calendar that you don't run

THE ANATOMY OF EVERY PLAYBOOK

All five playbooks run the same six-part anatomy, so once you've worked one, you know how to work them all. **The Scene** shows you the fire in daily life, so you can confirm you're holding the right playbook. **What's Actually Burning** names the dependency underneath and explains why the common fix keeps failing you. **The Response Plan** puts the fire out this week. **The Prevention Plan** rewires it so it stops coming back. **Make It Yours** is twenty minutes of blanks that turn the play into your play. And **Proof It's Out** gives you the observable signs it worked — because “it feels better” is not a measurement, and you deserve receipts.

WHEN THE FIRE IS OUT

Five fires, one wiring diagram. You've seen it by now: every one of these traced back to something living in your head that never made it into structure.

So picture the week where these five stop landing on you. The morning queue is short, and what's in it genuinely needs you. Questions go to the library. Projects carry their own momentum. Work ships against written standards without your red pen. Information moves between your people on rhythms that run whether or not you're watching. That week has hours in it — real, connected, thinking-sized hours. And what fills them is the work that was always supposed to be yours: where the business goes next, what the offer becomes, which opportunities deserve you. The CEO seat, occupied by an actual CEO instead of a very expensive firefighter.

There's a second-order change that sneaks up on founders who do this work: the team gets better. Same people, visibly better — because decision rights, written standards, complete handoffs, and owned rhythms are what your capable people needed to show you what they had. More than one founder has run these plays and then quietly wondered how much of the “talent problem” was structure the whole time.

You'll also notice the five fires were never really five. Decision thresholds showed up inside the boomerang playbook. Written standards showed up inside the handoff work. The library fed the delegation packages, and the rhythms carried all of it. That's because every one of these fires burns on the same fuel — things that live in your head instead of in structure — so every playbook you run makes the next one easier. The first fire is the hardest. The fifth one, you'll put out with moves you already own.

Now the honest part, because you'd smell it if I skipped it. A response plan calms the week — run any one of these and you will feel relief fast. But prevention structures only hold when they're installed properly: ownership actually assigned to named people, boundaries actually communicated and enforced past the first awkward week, the team actually rolled in so the structure is theirs and not another founder document they're politely ignoring. A decision memo nobody defends, a library nobody tends, a rhythm meeting that quietly dies in month two — those aren't failed ideas. They're right structures, installed halfway. Halfway installed is how fires relight.

That installation work — sequencing it, assigning it, making it stick — is its own job, and it deserves its own guide. The Fire Fighter Installation Guide exists for exactly that job, whenever you're ready for it.

For now: pick the hottest fire. Run the play this week. Your team is more ready for this than you think — most of them have been waiting years for you to hand them the real thing instead of the task.

Go put it out.

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