

EYE-OPENER ACTION MAP

Your Eye-Opener Score Told You the Problem — This Tells You What to Do About It

You took the Succession Readiness Eye-Opener. You got your scores. And if you are reading this, at least some of those scores made you uncomfortable. Good. Discomfort is the starting point — but it is not a plan.

This Action Map takes the five areas the Eye-Opener measures and gives you specific, prioritised actions for each one. Not theory. Not frameworks. Actions you can take this week, this month, and this quarter to start closing the gaps the Eye-Opener exposed.

How to use this: Go to the section that matches where the Eye-Opener flagged your biggest weakness. Start there. Do not try to fix everything at once — that is how founders burn out on succession planning and abandon it entirely. Pick your worst area, execute the three actions, then move to the next.

Each section references specific chapters of Don't Exit Wrong for the deeper context behind the actions.

AREA 1: FOUNDER DEPENDENCY **Priority: CRITICAL**

If the Eye-Opener flagged that daily operations stall without your direct involvement

#	ACTION
1	Identify the three decisions you make most frequently each week. Write down the criteria you use. Delegate those decisions to a specific person with those criteria as a written guide.
2	Pick one operational area where you are the sole decision-maker. Appoint a deputy and give them full authority for 30 days. Do not intervene unless the business is at physical risk.
3	Document every process that exists only in your head — start with the ones that would cause the most damage if you were unavailable for a month.

DEW Reference: Chapters 2–3 | Start within 7 days

AREA 2: CUSTOMER CONCENTRATION Priority: HIGH

If the Eye-Opener revealed that key customer relationships depend on you personally

#	ACTION
1	List every customer who contacts you directly rather than going through the company. Assign a relationship transition plan for each — introduce a co-lead within 60 days.
2	Schedule a joint meeting with your largest customer and the person who will eventually own that relationship. You are there to transfer trust, not to run the meeting.
3	Stop attending routine customer meetings for accounts that have a designated relationship owner. If the customer insists on speaking with you, that is a red flag — not a compliment.

DEW Reference: Chapter 4 | Start within 14 days

AREA 3: LEADERSHIP PIPELINE Priority: HIGH

If the Eye-Opener showed gaps in your management team's readiness to lead without you

#	ACTION
1	Identify two people in your company who could credibly lead a department-level meeting with an external stakeholder. If you cannot name two, that is your first problem to solve.
2	Give your strongest internal candidate a real project with real consequences — not a training exercise. Let them fail if they are going to fail. Better now than during your succession.
3	Have a direct conversation with your top three leaders about their career trajectory and your succession timeline. If this conversation feels uncomfortable, you are already behind.

DEW Reference: Chapters 3, 5 | Start within 21 days

AREA 4: FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY Priority: MEDIUM

If the Eye-Opener indicated that financial decision-making is centralised around you

#	ACTION
1	Ensure at least two people besides you can read and interpret the company's monthly financials — revenue, margin, cash flow, and debt position.
2	Set spending authority levels in writing. Define who can approve what, up to what amount, without your signature. Most founders vastly underestimate how much this single change frees.
3	Get a professional business valuation if you have not had one in the last three years. You cannot plan an exit if you do not know what you are exiting from.

DEW Reference: Chapter 6 | Start within 30 days



AREA 5: SUCCESSION PLANNING **Priority: FOUNDATIONAL**

If the Eye-Opener confirmed that you have no written succession plan or exit timeline

#	ACTION
1	Write a one-page document that answers: Who takes over if I cannot work tomorrow? Who takes over if I choose to leave in two years? Who takes over if I want to sell? If you cannot answer all three, your plan does not exist.
2	Share your draft succession plan with at least two trusted people — ideally one inside the company and one outside (advisor, board member, or peer). Plans that live only in your head are not plans.
3	Set a target date for your transition — even if it is five years from now. A date creates urgency, structure, and accountability. Without it, succession planning is always "something I will get to later."

DEW Reference: Chapters 1, 7–9 | Start immediately

THE 90-DAY RULE

If you have not started meaningful action on your weakest Eye-Opener area within 90 days of reading these results, the probability that you will ever address it drops dramatically. I have seen this pattern in hundreds of founders. The ones who act within 90 days build momentum. The ones who wait "until the time is right" are still waiting five years later — and their businesses are worth less because of it.

Pick one area. Start this week. The rest follows.