upcoach
BUSINESS GROWTH PROGRAMS

5 STEPS: SYSTEMISE YOUR BUSINESS TO GROW

## STEP 1: MAKE A LIST OF YOUR MOST RECURRING TASKS

Before systemizing your business, take a 30,000-foot look at all your daily and weekly tasks and obligations. Here's how to do that:

- First, create a new Google Doc and write down every activity or effort you're responsible for.
- Then, write how long it takes to complete each task (if you don't know, estimate for now).
- Next, organize your list by duration (e.g. 30-minutes, 60-minutes, etc.).
- Finally, go through each point and ask yourself, "Can I delegate this task?"

If for example, content marketing is an integral part of your marketing strategy and you're responsible for writing content, you might write down: research blog posts, write blog posts, upload blog posts to WordPress, and more.

In doing so, you might realise, though important, uploading a blog post to WordPress isn't a productive use of your time, and therefore can be handed down to another colleague. Once you have a list of tasks you can delegate, you're ready for step two.

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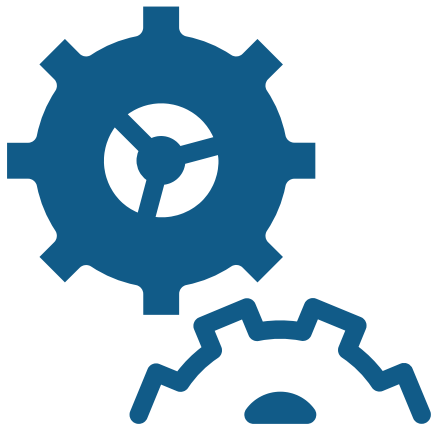
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STEP 2: DECIDE ON A DIRECTORY STRUCTURE

Ideally, before documenting each of your processes, you need a well-organized hierarchy of folders in Google Drive.

If we return to our previous example of documenting how to publish a blog post, your folder hierarchy might look like this:
Systems > SOPs > Content Marketing > How to Publish a Blog Post in WordPress

Here's an example of how to organize the above task in our own Drive:

My Drive > Systems > SOPs > Content Marketing > **How to Publish a Blog Post** ▾

If you get this right from the beginning, you'll have a solid foundation to build on and never have to worry about disorganisation (a problem most businesses have when omitting this part of the process).
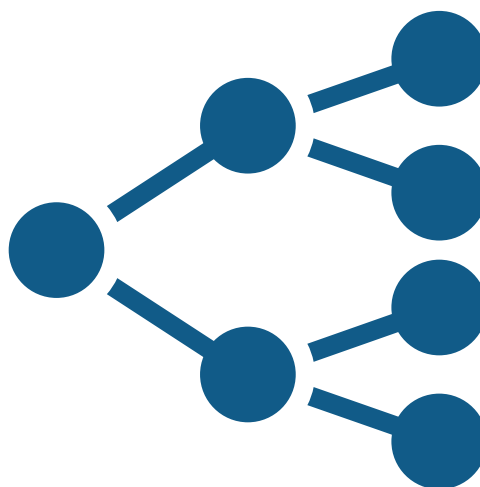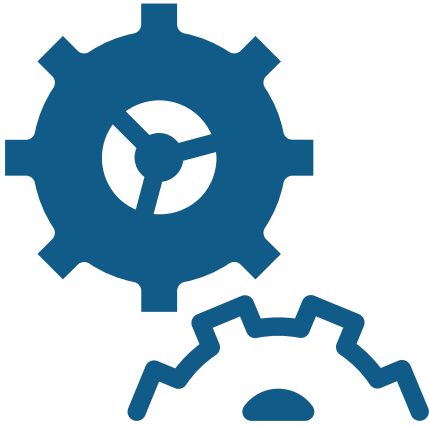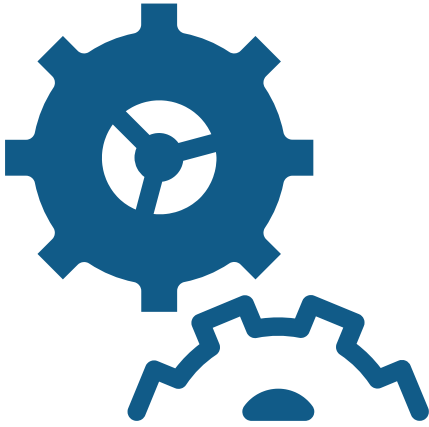
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STEP 3: DOCUMENT YOUR PROCESSES

Once you've identified which tasks you can delegate and you've chosen an organisational hierarchy, you're ready to begin documenting your processes. This is arguably the most time-consuming part of the process, but it's relative compared to how much time you'll save in the future when onboarding new employees.

Like before, create a new Google Doc and outline how the given task is completed, step-by-step, in as much detail as possible.

The curse of knowledge prevents us from remembering what it was like to be a beginner, so it's crucial you put yourself in the shoes of someone who's never performed the task before. With each step, include a screenshot using a tool like Awesome Screenshot, and if need be, annotated to highlight key areas of importance
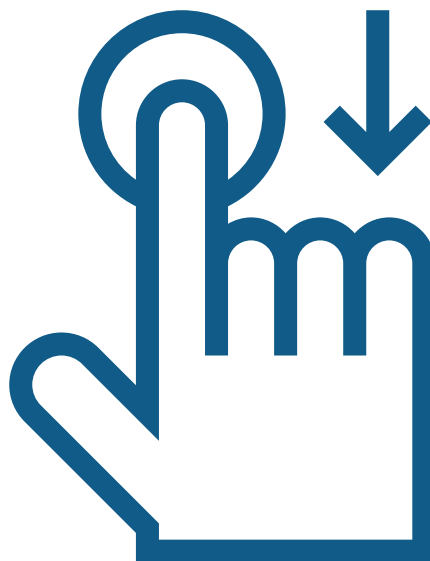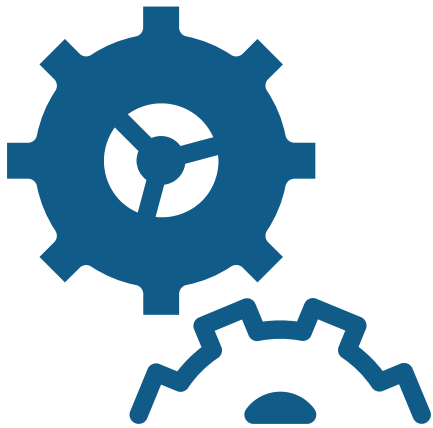
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STEP 4: ASK A COLLEAGUE TO PERFORM A TASK

Once you have a documented process, it's time to test its effectiveness. If you're delegating the task (rather than automating it), ask the person who will be performing the task to go through it.

Here's the important part, If they have any questions, it means the SOP wasn't thorough enough and needs further explanation. Rather than explain to them, go back to the SOP, make any necessary improvements and ask them to try again.

You're not being aloof here; you're ensuring your SOP is airtight and devoid of any guesswork. Maybe a screenshot needs further clarification or maybe another step needs to be added. Whatever it is, go back and make the necessary changes. After making a change, it's useful to add a comment and assign the person so they're updated on the changes you've made.

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STEP 5: CONTINUE TO IMPROVE OVER TIME

Your SOPs will never be right-first-time but that's OK—they're not meant to be. Once you have a good working draft of a procedure, the heavy lifting is over. All that's required, thereon, is to incrementally improve each SOP. Over time, employees will notice room for improvement and "work the system" until each draft is better than the one that preceded it.

For example, if you have a 48-step process for one procedure, an employee might discover there's a way to shave off a few steps by automating or eliminating them entirely, thus, increasing their own efficiency. What was once a system for saving you time, becomes a system your employees can profit from, too. Giving employees permission to make suggestions for improvements using "Suggesting" in Google Docs provides them with the flexibility to make changes while giving you final approval over whether it's necessary.

YOU CAN'T SCALE IF YOU DON'T SYSTEMIZE

Systemization is an essential part of any business, regardless of age, size, or industry. Without having documented processes in place, your business activities and obligations will remain in the mind of the individual who knows how to do it—you. But with them, you can oversee the operations of your business (with or without you being there) and more importantly, grow your company in a predictable and repeatable way.