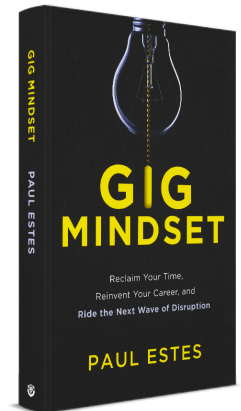


# Gig Mindset

Reclaim Your Time, Reinvent Your Career,  
and Ride the Next Wave of Disruption

by **Paul Estes**



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## THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

We're all standing in quicksand and we feel stuck. We don't feel secure at work. Technology advances too fast for us to keep up with the constant disruption. We worry about staying relevant, staying necessary, and making the space to actually have a life, too. We think there must be a better way forward. Nowadays, we're not just buying strangers' clothes; we're riding in strangers' cars, sleeping in strangers' houses, and hiring strangers for every job imaginable. The changing landscape of the workplace affects us all. This Gig Economy brought a structural change. In *Gig Mindset*, author Paul Estes shows how to adapt to those changes.

A new mindset allows you to grow and evolve with the world instead of being left behind. Right now, you have a choice to make. Are you going to wait for the world to make you irrelevant, or are you going to evolve and survive? The framework presented in *Gig Mindset* will allow you to get started, continue forward, and build a process of reinvention. You will find the space to properly balance your work and home life.

## IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How engaging freelancers to augment your time expands your capabilities.
- The simple four-step method to success in this new mindset.
- What to focus on when you identify tasks for freelancers.
- Why you should give up some control through delegation.
- What questions to ponder after projects are complete in order to evolve.

## Resetting to the Gig Mindset

We're living in a freelance revolution. The internet is a marketplace where old problems are workshopped, solutions are proposed, and businesses rise to fill the void. If there is something you need done, there is someone out there ready to help. The benefit of using a freelancer is obvious. Having a temporary expert in a specific field provides flexibility, while bringing in knowledge and skills you might not have internally. Instead of running through every task yourself, you have space to focus on what's important to you. Imagine what you could do with an extra half-hour of space every day. Think about those hours adding up. Whole days of freedom for you to tackle the projects that piled up for so long.

This is the essence of the Gig Mindset. Take any task, break it down into steps, and find the experts you need to handle each part. It's not just about providing service to customers. It's a restructuring of how we connect to get things done. This will impact our personal lives as well as change the way we work. The sooner you recognize that, the sooner you can change your mindset for the future.

We're all stuck in a Busy Trap. We have no extra time for our families or ourselves, no time to reskill or grow. The problem with the Busy Trap is that it becomes impossible to find the time to perform a simple task that may only take a half-hour or so, such as booking a trip to visit family. You think of your to-do list as something you can manage, that no one else would ever be able to help with. Once you open your eyes to this new mindset, the truth is easy to see. There are people out there, at your fingertips, ready to assist. Any task, any project, any need can be solved by engaging with talented freelancers.

## The T.I.D.E. Model

Everyone has a list of tasks they want to do, if only we had the time and space to do them. Turning a task from something you will get to "one day" into a project you will start "today" takes a flip of a switch. You can have the mentality that tasks will get done, and they don't necessarily have to be done by you. Engaging freelancers on simple tasks opens up space in your life to focus on your list. Making time to actually take action on those tasks takes a little more, though. You need a process. The simple four-step method to success in this new mindset is The T.I.D.E Model. Taskify, Identify, Delegate, and Evolve.

## Taskify

Taskification can be big or small. In theory, it's all very simple. You have an idea, a goal, a mission. You break it down into digestible steps and specified tasks and get to work. Pick something you want to learn, or something you need to learn, and task out a freelancer to find you the answers. Taskification is also about recognizing your abilities and your limitations. If your work needs great design but you are not a designer, engage expert and talented freelancers that are designers. Taskification can be easy if you're goal oriented and break down the steps.

As an example, let's break down a simple task: a thought leadership article. Let's say you are at a conference listening to a speaker when a topic piques your interest. Go to the presenter and ask if they have twenty minutes to sit and talk. Record the conversation on your phone. Send the recording to a site for transcription and set a task for additional research with a virtual assistant to build out some more detail based on the conversation. Form the goal and flow of the article to set expectations. Once all the information is together, send it to a writer who knows your tone and voice. Have another freelancer pull images together than can complement the story. Post the finished product to LinkedIn to connect with a network of professionals. Less than an hour of work and you have a completed article, fully researched, on LinkedIn. That's how easy taskification can be.

### GO-DOS: Taskify

This is the first step to understand the power of the T.I.D.E. Model and will ensure you are set up for success moving forward. Now that you are thinking about working with freelance experts around the world, let's get started with a project that you want to tackle.

1. Define a successful outcome. Imagine the finished project, understand your goals, and write them down in a simple paragraph.
2. Determine who the stakeholders are and/or who the primary audience is for this work.
3. Figure out what the individual deliverables are for the project. These are components that have specific time-lines and scope and can be assigned to a freelancer.
4. Write down what needs to be done/delivered including scope and description.
5. Assign priorities of high, medium, and low to each component.

6. Set a realistic timeline and write a simple draft for the project. This document will be shared with freelancers to get feedback and set expectations.
7. Ask for your freelancers' thoughts and best practices as you go along.

Let go of the idea that all aspects of each project have to be done by you.

## Identify

Once you begin engaging in the Gig Mindset, you will see the various tasks that need to spread out. If you need to create a winning presentation, you will find freelancers with exactly the skills needed to build it. There are researchers who specialize in the topic, designers with portfolios of brilliant presentations, and speechwriters able to take your notes and turn them into a cohesive argument. That's the key to identification. You are more than capable of designing your own presentation, but is that the best use of your time? It is easy to get obsessed with the tasks and forget the outcome. To live the Gig Mindset, you need to be outcome oriented.

When you first taskify, and your goal is broken down into smaller chunks, it can be overwhelming. So the next step is to identify the work that can be done by you, your team, or your network of freelancers. If it's difficult, don't feel bad. This is where a lot of people struggle. It is about the willingness to give up control, to exercise a little trust.

There are endless reasons not to do something, or to hold on to the old ways, but you have to recognize your greatest limitation: time. The idea that you can personally take on every project for your business is just not possible. What could your time be better spent doing? If you have great ideas and visions for the future, don't bog yourself down with small tasks. Identify what can be spread out. Identify what to do, delay, drop, or delegate.

## GO-DOS: Identify

Let go of the idea that all aspects of each project have to be done by you. Here are a few questions to ask yourself as you learn to collaborate with experts from around the world.

1. What are your strengths? It's important to really identify work where you can really have an impact.
2. What do you have fun doing? You should enjoy your work. Think about when you feel focused and are enjoying various parts of projects.
3. On the other hand, what drains your energy and motivation?
4. What do you avoid doing or keep putting off?
5. Who can you bring in to complement your capabilities? If you had the power to assemble a dream team to help you get this project across the line, what skills would fill the gaps?
6. What is your work style when you work remotely? Would you rather have someone do work while you sleep or be in the same time zone so you can collaborate in real time?
7. What information can you provide a freelancer that would ensure successful completion of the task? This will be critical when delegating work.

## Delegate

The most important rule to learn about delegation is that you need to be willing to give up control. You need to trust others to collaborate on your vision and move toward a united goal. In order to truly engage with what is possible in this new economy, you have to let others run with your ideas. This is a skill you'll need to practice. Every time you sit down and start a new task, you'll get better. Delegation means stepping back from the driver's seat and trusting your freelancer to follow directions and ask questions if they get stuck. Delegation is to assign responsibility or authority.

Responsibility is easy. When you hire someone full time, you are giving them responsibility. It's part of their job description. When you delegate to someone, you are assigning them authority. They can make decisions based on your instructions and your intent. You are trusting them to make the right choices in pursuit of a shared goal. For so many people, this is the hardest part when starting to work this way. They

struggle with how to communicate their expectations, to articulate those tasks that are so innate to themselves.

Delegation requires building expectations, setting timelines, and really engaging with these experts with an open and curious mind throughout the process. Giving up control is hard, but it gets easier as you build your trusted network of freelancers.

### GO-DOS: Delegate

This is where the rubber meets the road and is often the hardest part of implementing the T.I.D.E. Model. Below are some questions that you will want to ask yourself as you get ready to engage with a freelancer.

1. What are your project deliverables? Are they thought out and written down?
2. What are your schedules and deadlines?
3. What does your project look like when it is done well?
4. Describe how this project fits into your overall goals or strategy. Get everyone on the same page and provide context.
5. Provide (and ask for) constructive feedback throughout the process.

## Evolve

The increasing pace of technology means adapting and adopting are the only options. It is critical to reskill. The Gig Mindset isn't about getting busier. It's about decreasing your workload while simultaneously increasing your output exponentially. You can reclaim more control by giving up some of

that busy work. Reclaim your time by evolving. Evolution is about changing what you are, slowly and methodically.

### GO-DOS: Evolve

This can be the most exciting part of your journey into the Gig Mindset. It can radically transform the way you live and work. With each project, you learn new things about yourself, get pushed outside of your comfort zone, and become open to change. Here are a few thoughts to reflect on after you have completed a few projects.

1. What are three to five items that were really challenging as you worked through the T.I.D.E. Model? What could you do better in the future?
2. What are other areas in your life or work where you could engage with freelancers to help you scale your efforts at home, work, or on passion projects?
3. What are some new habits that could help you as you think about evolving?
4. Reach out to friends, coworkers, and others to share your experience. Building a support network and sharing best practices is a critical step in evolving your mindset.

The Gig Mindset is not based on just a belief that it works. It is based on the experience of the lives that have been transformed by living it. Hundreds of companies and millions of freelancers work this way every day. This model can be successful across a number of disciplines. All it needs is you and your effort. Change starts with action. Reclaim your time. Reinvent your career. Embrace the Gig Mindset and change your life.



Paul Estes is an unstoppable advocate for the gig economy who is dedicated to creating opportunity for everyone, reskilling by doing, and bringing diversity to our work. After twenty years of driving innovation in Big Tech, Paul transitioned into working as an independent, remote freelancer. He shares his insights from main stages as a keynote speaker and offers his thoughts and advice through articles on LinkedIn. By engaging with freelancers, Paul gets exponentially more done at work and has more time for his wife and two daughters.

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