
Jaime Masters: Welcome to eventual millionaire. I am Jaime Masters and today on the show – I'm already laughing. This is already a good sign. I have Sol Orwel from SJO.com. He's a CEO, entrepreneur, and amazing and has made me laugh because apparently, he's an old curmudgeon. Thank you so much for coming on the show today.

Sol Orwell First of all, it's not apparent. I am most definitely an old curmudgeon. With that said, it is absolutely my pleasure to be here.

Jaime Masters: So, you are amazing. I will tell everybody that so that way you have a lot of pressure before we start this. But you are a serial entrepreneur. So, sort of go as quick as you can over how awesome the businesses that you've had are so that way we understand your credibility. Because, you're one of those guys that talk business because you've done business.

Sol Orwell Yes. So, just one thing I wanted to note before. I never wanted to be an entrepreneur. I was always about being free, having my freedom, and entrepreneurship was basically my avenue to do that. And the way I got into entrepreneurship was I was solving my own problems.

This is a common refrain, but I think a lot of entrepreneurs, especially when they're starting, they kind of misplace that. So, to get into the business I did, originally, I emigrated here in 1997. I was incredibly shy, incredibly out of place. I grew up in Saudi Arabia and Japan. The US, especially because I came to Houston, everything blew my mind.

So, online games were my refuge. That's where gravitated towards. So, my first successful business was in virtual currency in these online games. So, if you've played World of Warcraft, EverQuest, these are the kind of games I got involved in. And, I realized there was an opportunity there. I realized it was too slow and that's how I got into that.

At our peak we were doing a couple hundred thousand visitors a day. We even bought out the short form domain names for all these games so Matrix Online we had an MXO.com. We actually owned a Diablo2.com because Blizzard had a trademark on II, but not the actual 2. So that was the original big one.

Subsequently, I moved into a new neighborhood in Toronto. And it was the first **colander** that had been built there and it was still under construction, actually, when I moved in or they were still

finishing it out. And this was 2003 or 2004 and it was before Google Maps existed or right when it came out. Yelp was just brand-new, and I had no clue what the businesses were in my neighborhood.

So, I actually went out, took an old school digital camera. I took a picture of every business in my neighborhood and uploaded it into a website online. And I remember we had 69 businesses, 75 pictures, and 300 tags or something. That started blowing up and that's how we got in the local search.

So, the guys from Yelp and all that, I dealt with them way, way, way back then. Subsequently, they were both doing well and the reason I mentioned the freedom part was I essentially retired. So, I lived in the States. So, I lived in Argentina. I gave control to my number two and told him to run, it paid him better than I paid myself because I had what I wanted – freedom.

And, it sounds great just doing the nomad life, especially back in the day, but it kind of sucks because I think, especially if you're an entrepreneur you have that mindset that you want to build something, or you want to create something. And, I actually look back at those years with – not in a good way. More just like a wasted opportunity. I'm glad I did it because it formed who I am, but I missed out on a lot of things.

Jaime Masters: How old were you?

Sol Orwell I was in my mid-20s at this age. So, it was 2005 to 2009, so I was 23 to 27 or 28.

Jaime Masters: And you think you missed out. Interesting. Because most people are like, "That's the time that you do that stuff."

Sol Orwell There's the time, but I would say that there's a time of a year to do it. Not five years. There's definitely – you should go and explore and appreciate stuff. I mean, we got really into it. Like I used to be religious, so it's not like I was doing anything debauchurous. I was just being a nerd and I was always a nerd and I'm even more of a nerd. But moving on. We're going to ignore this part.

Jaime Masters: No, no, I'm a geek. I want to stay there forever, but my people don't, so therefore I won't.

Sol Orwell Well, I'm a crazy nerd. There are stories on the Internet. Anyway,

in 2009 I came back to Toronto. I gained a lot of weight. I lost a significant amount of weight. To put in my one little random brag, I was just in the latest issue of people magazine. I am one of the before/after's in it which is hilarious.

But I realized that some companies were ripping us off – that they were misrepresenting science. So, if you hear something – like glutamine for example, sold as it will increase muscle mass by 300 percent. If you think about it, 300 percent is a lot of mass. And so, with another guy I created a company called examine.com. We basically looked at the scientific research around supplements and now nutrition.

So, where almost seven years old. We have over 2 ½ million visitors a month. We've been in every single mainstream magazine and newspaper you can imagine. I have somehow used that to become a digital advisor to Mr. Arnold Schwarzenegger, which has been very interesting. And so those are my three businesses.

So, a few years ago – sorry, that's a very long intro. Through random happenstance, I got into Forbes, Tim Ferris shared it and said, "This man is living the four-hour work week." I had an influx of people asking me to mentor them or help them. I don't do any coaching. I don't do any consulting. No client work. But I realized most people teaching entrepreneurship have never really gone through it because most entrepreneurs are busy. So, I started talking about entrepreneurship and productivity and kind of how I make it work. And here we are.

Jaime Masters: I wish I was timing that intro that. Would've been great. So, I so appreciate all of this though because it tells us A. what sucked and was good, but also B. you actually know your stuff. I was going to swear, but your stuff.

Sol Orwell Yeah, I've experienced it.

Jaime Masters: So good. So, this is a perfect segue because this is what I want to talk about. I want sort of the 80/20 – and I know this is what everybody talks about, but I want yours. Because I feel like – no offense – everybody talks about 80/20 or the best of the best, priority-wise, but they haven't lived it. They're like, "Oh I read on Tim Ferris's thing that we should do it like this," and in my head, I'm like, "That's dumb. You shouldn't be doing those things."

So, what are some of those hacks that actually work in business,

whether it be productivity or networking or whatever?

Sol Orwell

Sure. So, disclaimer: one of my favorite phrases is, “Only hacks use hacks.” So, I need to throw that out before we get into this. So, the honest truth is, honestly, it goes back to the basic problem of what problem are you solving? I see a lot of people call themselves entrepreneurs, but they are freelancers, I’d say, or consultants. That’s fine. There’s nothing wrong with it, but you need to have a central problem to solve.

Secondly, I think people try to go too large. You look at examine.com today. We’ve got a team of like 20. Like I said, pretty much every week something comes up that one of our guys are quoted and you look at it and you’re like, “Whoa, these guys are huge.” But when we started we were only bodybuilding supplements. We had five or seven supplements that we covered.

Then we expanded to fitness supplements. Then into health supplements. Then into all supplements. Then into nutrition. And so forth and so forth. So, the biggest thing that I always tell people is solve a very specific niche, solve that problem. And then you can expand. And people are always like, “I don’t know how big my niche is.” I always say, “Listen. if there is a market for anime dragon porn on the Internet, there is a market for whatever problem it is you are solving.”

So, going back to the 80/20, honestly, that’s my biggest thing. And stemming from that is if you’re solving a problem, you’ve got to talk to people on the phone. You’ve got to ask people what problem they need to solve. My buddy John **Lomenello**, he had this great quote that says, “I never said he licked my face.” So, if you were to read that in an email, you’d be like, “Okay that’s fine.” But, depending on the words you emphasize, if I said, “I never said he licked my face,” versus, “I never said he licked my face,” obviously, someone licked your face versus it was something else that got licked.

And that’s where it’s really important to have this conversation with your customers because they’ll tell you the language. They’ll tell you it’s actually frustrating them. And then when you solve it, and you just knock it out of the park. As a real-life example I’ve done multiple sales pages, obviously for different products, and the more attention –one of the metrics of how good our sales page is the questions we get on live chat that have any kind of correspondence to what’s on the sales page. And we found that the

better job we've done listing the customers, the tighter our sales page gets and the fewer questions we get from our customers - they go in straight buy.

So, if it was an 80/20 I would say talk to the customers, figure out the actual problem, and solve a very, very specific problem. Like if somebody says they are having feet pain don't solve for feet pain. Solve for – maybe it's overweight people. Maybe it's specifically runners. Maybe it's cold weather runners who need a very specific kind of solution to fix everything. So, that would be my approach to getting into these.

Jaime Masters: So many deep diving questions into those two things, right? So, talking on the phone, I highly recommend it. Also, most people hate it to the nth degree.

Sol Orwell I'll admit it sucks. I do not enjoy it. I try to pawn it off to my employees now, but when you start you've got a do it yourself.

Jaime Masters: Okay, so you hate it, but you still did it. Thank you for saying that because other people need to hear that.

Sol Orwell I may sound – my voice – I don't know. In my head it sounds baritone a bit. I may sound confident, but I am – I like need to re-energize. I totally empathize with the introverted lifestyle. So, this is not fun. If I may – sorry, I just interjected there. One easy way to kind of get around it is just go to a conference. You don't need to get them on the phone, but if you are meeting somebody in your industry, you can be like, "Hey man, I'm thinking about this," people will give you feedback, will give you their thoughts, and because it's in an open setting, you have a few minutes and you can balance and you don't have to feel bad about, "How do I get off the phone?" So, that's my hack there for customer feedback.

Jaime Masters: So, wait, if you are an introvert – you just said you would rather walk up to people at a conference than not? Or are you already engaging in conversation and, therefore, that makes it better?

Sol Orwell I think it's because you have the mindset, "I am at a conference. I have to talk to people." There's alcohol, possibly. You've got a cocktail. You have food, so you can always be like, "Oh that looks delicious," and you talk about whatever and be like, "Oh, look, hors d'oeuvres." It gives an easy out.

When you're on a phone call your kind of like, "How long do we

go?? Do we ramble on how do I close it up?” Whereas a conference or event people are there to meet other people, so they are even more open to helping you out. Whereas on a phone call people aren’t as much.

So that’s why I prefer it. I can psych myself up doing an hour or two and be like, “Whew. I’ve got all the data I need. Let’s get the hell out.”

Jaime Masters:

I love it. Because otherwise people also – like your heart starts beating as soon as you start doing the phone calls and stuff and you’re like, “Oh,” and then you sound like an idiot at the beginning. Yeah, I used to have to do cold calls all the time. It sucks.

Okay, so going back to the niche thing too because I think this is really, really important. It’s easy for somebody on the outside to see and I tell people all the time to go smaller. They don’t like that, like you said. So, help me with the objection that I get all the time, which is, “How do I pick it? How do I know what that niche that will work better is?” So that piece or, “I’m afraid later I won’t be able to expand more. I would much rather go more broad.”

Jaime Masters:

So, let’s talk about the second one. That’s just ridiculous. I hate to be rude like that. Like, sometimes you just need to be honest and be like, “That makes no sense.” You look at something like Apple who’s making computers and now they make phones and their latest it is earphones. You look at Microsoft and they were originally making – even MS DOS is a whole different story. Talk about nerdiness. But now they have hardware. They’ve got all this kind of stuff. It’s ridiculous. No one cares.

You can always rebrand. I had a buddy – I have many friends of mine actually that took one brand-name, did very well, but then changed their brand name because they wanted to expand. So, there’s nothing holding you that other than this weird sense that you can’t expand once you start. In terms of how do you pick a niche? I’m a big fan of solving my own problem. I am the niche.

So, in the case of examine.com and supplementation I was a niche of I’ve lost weight, wait a minute, I don’t trust supplements. Or wait a minute; I want to learn more about supplements in this very specific bodybuilding seen. Like does creatine actually work?

You may have heard of creatine, especially people who have been

around for a while. Mark McGuire kind of got busted for it a decade ago. Oh, it's been a while. A while ago. And, I always thought creatine was a steroid or some kind of really nasty thing. When really, it was just something found in meat and they've extracted it. So, I wouldn't – this is where you talk to the customers. But I would honestly just be like, "I am the niche. I will find like-minded individuals and expand from that."

In terms of the other kind of related thing I've heard is that, "Oh, I don't know if there's a lot of money." Listen. E-commerce – retail, sorry, e-commerce in the United States of America was roughly \$400 billion in 2016. You don't need even .001 percent of that to be making bank. So, I'm sure you can niche it down. Nigga, this is retail e-commerce. Not services, not consulting. God knows how much money is being made online.

So, there's a lot of money out there on the Internet, and this is, again, just the US only. We're not talking about Canada, UK, Australia or anything. You can find money and whatever niche you decide to go after.

Jaime Masters: So, if we're solving that one niche. So, let's say I think I know what my – well, I know what my problem is, and I think I know what the niche is that I want to pick, and I want to go talk to other people that are like-minded.

Sol Orwell 100 percent.

Jaime Masters: How do we find those? Especially if it's something that's a super slice subset of what is. So, I like only this type of whatever it is.

Sol Orwell So, the niche is obviously your friends, related events. One underrated spot is Meetup.com. Meetup has a meet up for any kind of imaginable thing you can pick. You will find like-minded individuals in that area. The other interesting one, and this is one of my favorite examples is you can spend just a little bit of money in finding out.

So, there is a company called kettle and fire. They are a bone broth company. And I think they are mid seven if they haven't already hit eight figures. They are at whole foods and Kroger and blah, blah, blah, but how did they start? **Justin Mayers** was like, "Hm, I like bone broth. I think other people would like it to." He spent \$50.00 on ads on Bing.

Jaime Masters: Justin Mayers?

Sol Orwell Mayers, yeah.

Jaime Masters: I know him. Yeah, okay, great. I didn't even now –

Sol Orwell This is his story right. So, he spent \$50.00 on ads for Bing. He bought adds to this simple landing page and said, “Hey, we’ve got this fresh bone broth would you,” and \$50.00 or \$30.00 or whatever it was, and that’s all you get. So, he spent \$50.00, he generated \$500.00 in sales. He had no product ready. And the page wasn’t beautiful at all. It was just, “Hey, this is what I’m selling. Would you like to buy?” You click yes. It goes straight to PayPal, you put in your information, and that was it. There was no credit card. There was nothing.

And I think he generated like \$500.00 in sales or something like that and he emailed all of his customers back and said, “Hey listen, we are out of stock,” a.k.a. we’ve never actually made any stock, “It will be 2 to 3 months before we are ready, and we’ll give you a 15 percent discount or we can give you a refund right now.” And half the customers took the 50 percent discount. So even off of his original ad spend if he generated \$500.00, he still ended up with \$250.00 spending only \$50.00. So, you can test out in that way.

The other one that’s really underrated is Google Surveys. So, especially if you go to YouTube you see those FAQ kind of style or Q&A kind of ads that you have to fill out. So, Google Survey will let you do a leading question and then a follow-up series of questions. So, it’s another easy way. Or, it can be, let’s say you’re looking for bone broth. You’re like, “Are you interested in bone broth?” if they say no, who cares. Move on.

If they say yes then you go, “Do you care if it’s fresh? do you care if it’s been pre-frozen? What do you care about? You care about sodium? Blah, blah, blah,” done. Now, you’ve got to spend like \$50.00, and for entrepreneurs there are two sides of it. I am not of the burn your bridges side. Do your side hustle. Spend five hours a week, 10 hours a week on the side, build it up and then dive into it. So, spending \$50.00 on this simple kind of add or survey, which anyone can figure out, you can spend that much money while you have your job or while you are figuring it out and that will kind of help you figure out what your niche can really, really be about.

Jaime Masters: Awesome because I knew Justin when he was doing it a totally

different product. So apparently that one did not – last time I chatted with him. It was a long time ago. Some things work, and some things don't.

Sol Orwell 100 percent. And Kettle and Fire has blown up for them. They just sponsored Tim's podcast and what not. It's done really, really, really well.

Jaime Masters: Well and what's crazy is that that system that you just talked about was in the Four-Hour Workweek years and years and years ago and you are still saying that it's still relevant today, which is really impressive.

Sol Orwell Absolutely 100 percent.

Jaime Masters: So, what most people will come back though is they'll go, "Well, I don't know how to do ads, and I don't know how to do Google Surveys and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah."

Sol Orwell Google Survey is so easy. If you cannot figure out Google Survey, you need off the Internet. The Internet is not your place. You don't have to create anything. You literally just fill out your questions and your answers and that's it. In terms of the other part, "I don't know how to do this," I will admit that it can be a little bit confusing, but you are not hitting it out of the park. You are not trying to make it the best ever.

You just sign up with something like leadpages.net which you just put a little bit of text and a button. The button they will let you add the PayPal button that's like two, three, four, maybe five hours of figuring it out. Same thing with Big Ads. Maybe it's not the easiest thing the world. But what's the premise? You are spending a little bit of money. You want to target queue that somebody might be searching, send it to that page you made at the lead pages. So, I understand that but, and this is where my curmudgeonly side comes out. In 1999, we didn't even have WordPress. We were working with Perl and CGI-bin and permissions and that kind of stuff.

Jaime Masters: I programmed my own blog. Okay? So, using nucleus and crap like that, people.

Sol Orwell So, you can – will yeah when I started there was no PayPal. At least in Canada there was no PayPal. We had to do merchant accounts and all that kind of stuff. So, you can figure it out. I have

faith in your intelligence and your will to make it happen.

Jaime Masters: Go with that. That was good. Good job. I'll pat you on the back for that one. So, as we're going through, so let's say they have a company. It's starting to do well. There are maybe two employees-ish and they are trying to go grow, but they also are not good at this yet because they're sort of brand-new. I don't know what segment. You can pick an example, if you want. How do we manage resources? So how do we go, "Oh, I need to care a lot about sales and marketing. There are only two of us. And we need systems and we need to start a growth path, but we don't know what we don't know and were not necessarily very good." What would you do if you were them? And feel free to pick a company

Sol Orwell So, I am – I've always bootstrapped. I mean, I've written op-eds in newspaper about why I don't take PC money. I've had a lot of PCs come after me. I am of the viewpoint – I'm sorry that sounded very egotistical.

Jaime Masters: No, no, it sounded good. It sounded like you're running away and they're chasing you.

Sol Orwell So, many. Especially now with private equity coming up. Oh my God, we're just slapping them away. But I'm a very – I am oriented toward slow growth. Maybe it's that immigrant mentality, but I am not – I'm a bit risk-averse. So, for me it's more developed the product and take existing customers and what can we sell to them further?

So, my growth, if I was in that position, would be more towards generating new products for our customers and ensuring that those products are hitting their desires in a very simplistic way. If you have a high-end model of anything you're making, if over 20 percent of your customers are buying it, it may be time to develop something even more high-end.

So, that's kind of my POV on it. I can understand being more aggressive. I think strategic documents are important. I think they never ever ever pan out, especially if you do a three-year document. Like, the past 18 months it's almost you are just throwing darts at a blank wall. But I think it's important because taking that moment of hindsight and reflection will force you to figure out what's important to you, depending on your business. And then you'll be able to allocate resources a bit more intelligently, or a bit more in line with what your goals are.

Because people, especially in entrepreneurship you always have fires going on. There's always something happening. Right now, we just launched our first product in over three years for examine.com and the team is running around, but it's important as a leader for you to be able to step away from it and set aside time and be like, "what's important to us? Where we going to grow? In a tangential or relevant to this, I always set aside at least three or four hours a week for reading which is there's no Internet, I have no laptop open and I'm just reading. And I find it's super important because it gives me that downtime to figure out what's important to me, what's important to my business, and how do we approach it best.

Jaime Masters: Interesting. Okay. So, on the reading side of things, that's consuming content though. Do you think it gives you the downtime to start strategizing your output?

Sol Orwell Sorry, when I say reading I meant more that I block aside time to read and do something with it. Because we read stuff all the time, but we just read and that's it. And you read and you're like, "Oh my God, this is genius. He actually totally used the word 'imagine' went talking about customers because it puts them into the mindset of visualizing stuff," and move onto the next thing. "On my God, that's also brilliant."

So, when I say reading, sorry, I meant was like read a couple of things, but start – I love paper and pen. Start writing things down of how you're going to implement them. Start actually putting them into a to do list or Asana or **Trell** or whatever you are using so you actually have the time to mull it over and make it happen.

I think there's a reason especially today that we have the phrase "shower thoughts." Because there's so a few times left that we are not digitally being stimulated. Being on the throne is no longer a moment of peace anymore. Now you've got your phone or your laptop or whatever. And I'm not saying I'm above it myself. I'm not saying that at all.

Jaime Masters: Your laptop. Wow.

Sol Orwell Hey man sports articles are long. But it lets you have that moment. Even 10 seconds of peace will make your brain go so much further if you can put aside the time. Not if. You have to put aside the time. As a leader, no matter what, unless the house is literally on

fire, you have to put that time aside.

Jaime Masters: See one of the things I give clients is Aqua Notes because they are shower notepads, so you can always have –

Sol Orwell Absolutely. They're so amazing.

Jaime Masters: And I will plan on taking a shower when I need to actually strategize so that way –

Sol Orwell I'm bad at that. That's pretty genius. I kind of like that idea. I'm gonna start implementing that.

Jaime Masters: I have children, I have to come up with different "hacks." Leave me alone. But that's actually where I was going to go with it when you were talking about how do we actually take the time to get on top of everything instead of having everything sort of be thrown at you all the time. So, to me, you talk about output a lot, too. Instead of consumption, input, output is extremely important. How do you pay more attention to output?

Sol Orwell So, just to slightly rewind, back on input my phone has no social media on it other than What's App. If you want to consider that to be social media. I don't have Facebook. I don't have Twitter. I don't have anything on it. My home screen is not even filled. I don't do apps on the phone, basically. I have a tiny iPhone SE. It's a 4-inch screen. Drives me crazy. I don't want to use it.

And so, what I've done in terms of input to create output is for example, my Facebook is – I have three screens and I have Chrome on one side, I have Firefox on one, and I have Internet Explorer on the other. It's just how I operate. And only chrome has Firefox on it. So, if I close Chrome – I apologize. Only Chrome has Facebook login do it. So, if I close Chrome, Facebook no longer exists.

So, if I'm working on Firefox and I'm writing and I close Chrome, it's gone. Even if I go to Facebook.com, it's not going to be logged in, so I'm not going to see anything. So, the other part of that too is as you get more experienced, you realize that fires are not really fires. You also realize that if your employees can't get ahold of you, they tend to be able to figure it out on their own. Even if you have a couple – especially if you've given them the authority to, they will make it happen. They might freak out the first few times and be like, "Oh my God, I don't know what to do. Where's the

boss?” And then they’re like, “okay, I could do this. If the boss is not available, I have to step up.”

So that is how I have set up so that output is easier for me. Now in terms of output, I am very prodigious in writing down everything. So, I always carry around notebooks with me. If I’m walking and I have a thought – I walk a lot. That’s my other way to disconnecting. If I’m walking I use a voice recorder app all the time. So, in any given week, I will take anywhere from five to 30 random notes of things that pop up in my head.

So, I’ll be walking, and I’ll see an interaction. So, today, for example, I saw this car had parked into an alleyway and was kind of blocking it. And this other car came in and he was just losing his mind with honking, right? And they were opening the door slowly and I’m like, “Yeah, why is that guy being so slow?” because he was a really, really old man getting out of it.” And I was thinking in my mind, “Oh, you who was honking so hardly, I bet you’re embarrassed now.” And then he just kept on honking.

So, it was like a story can be about oblivious – the story can be about don’t be so reactive. Give it 10 seconds and you’ll realize maybe that’s why they were taking it so slow. So, I’m always recording the stuff into a notebook or into a voice recorder and then you use something like rev.com to transcribe anything you say. So that is then in text and then I can manipulate it around however I want. So, that’s kind of how I’ve set up my output by is by limiting my inputs in the first place.

Jaime Masters: Okay. I love that. Another deeper question on this. What you do – so I do voice recording too. Do you use the regular voice recording app on –?

Sol Orwell Yeah, I just do the regular one. I’m sure there are more advanced ones, but this is part of my ethos of staying away from apps is that I don’t have to – I have a process. I record it. I download it. I throw it into rev.com. They transcribe it for me. Voilà, I’ve got it all in front of me. I’m sure there are apps that transcribe and what not. But going back to my laziness and then the other thing is if you’re using another app you sign up. They’ve got your email address. Are they going to email you? They’re not going to email you. I just try to keep it as simple stupid as worldly possible.

Jaime Masters: So rev.com, awesome. A lot of people recommended that. We’ve use them before. And written notes. Do you take pictures and send

that? That's what I do for my system. I take pictures and I send it to them, but then where do you put it? Tell me the whole process.

Sol Orwell I like – so I have a few documents of thoughts. So, I have a major document on – you never know what that's like – things to write about. And then as I start writing about them, I stick them into Grammarly and create its own document there and I just kind of start running through it. So, my actual notebook to the digital world, I manually do it because I find – there's been a lot of research done about how working in different mediums work your brain in different ways. So, I find that the act of writing from that notebook into a digital document, it does a world of difference in keeping my synapses firing.

Jaime Masters: Really interesting. I have other people do it because – and then they can't read my handwriting because my handwriting is horrible.

Sol Orwell Half the time I can't read my own handwriting and it's one of those things that –

Jaime Masters: That's what you've got there.

Sol Orwell It's one of those things that you have to do it immediately. And I love crossing it out. It's so satisfying. You have to do it in 48 hours or 72 hours. Because you start kind of losing a bit of the context. I hate it when I'm just looking and that I am just rubbing my head and I'm like, "Dude what the hell? Past Sol, what's wrong with you? Why did you make future Sol struggle so hard?"

Jaime Masters: Okay, that's my exact question because that's so – I have these which aren't necessarily all – this one's not empty. Okay, but I write so much down because I am obsessed with paper and I have a weirdo system, but it doesn't – this one is not as effective as I would like it to be because it's huge, No. 1, and it's not a 48-hour thing.

Sol Orwell I try – at most every Friday – basically, I work on Fridays but really, I don't really work on Fridays because that's when I meet people. Fridays are when I read, Fridays are when I write, and Fridays are when I deal with this. So, I know every Friday, that at most, I guess it will be six days old, but I don't really do anything on Saturdays and Sundays, so it will be four days old. So, it's still fresh in my mind. And I always have a major –

So, often times it will be like I was talking to somebody. So, I was talking with Daniel right here, and this says Daniel. So, that will help jog my memory of what the hell was I thinking about? And so that's kind of my way is like I make sure it doesn't stick around too long in my head. It's going to be put into some kind of digital format.

Jaime Masters: Yes. And you probably come to this process over a lot because I was carrying that big book for a long time. We just created our own Eventual Millionaire ones that are – because everything has lines on it and I hate lines because I draw stuff. So, we created our own. But it's an ever-evolving process of what I actually like versus what I don't. It's annoying.

Sol Orwell 100 percent. I like the small ones just because they fit into my pocket so easily that I don't have to lug anything around. Females may have a slight advantage with purses. They can take larger ones.

Jaime Masters: I'm a lady yeah.

Sol Orwell I don't have a giant – what are the giant bags called again? Handbags?

Jaime Masters: I don't know. I don't have any. I have a laptop bag. Is that bad? I love that were talking about the nuances of whether you have pockets or whether you have a purse or whether you have –

Sol Orwell It's super important, especially if it gets folded when it's your pocket like you see this is kind of not straight and gets folded so you always want to put it in the same direction. Otherwise it becomes way – anyway, we can get into that.

Jaime Masters: We talk about the best most important things in life on this podcast. I love it. Awesome. And I literally could probably go way, way too deep into things. I want to start wrapping up. Before I ask the last question I always ask, though, I want to ask a productivity – no, I'm not going to call it a hack. I am going to say what is your best productivity tip? Because everybody has no time, supposedly, even though times a created thing and all that fun stuff. But give us just one. Just one thing.

Sol Orwell I've found that personally, including me, and I wasn't like this originally. It was forced almost on me by other people. The most productive people in general, obviously there's always caveats,

that I know have an organized calendar. Number one thing. I have friends who don't use a calendar and it blows my mind. If you are in a relationship and he or she is doing something, they've got their own stuff, you've got your own stuff, calendar is how you know if they are busy or if they are available. A calendar is how you know when you got this happening or that happening.

So that is by far my number one recommendation is put everything in a calendar. And not just meetings, but writing. Work. All that kind of stuff. So, I mentioned that we have our first product launch in three years. So, I set aside an hour today earlier, it was in my calendar, of email VIPs with a copy of our fitness guide, which is what we launched. So, I email them, and I was like, "Hey, this is what we launched." And I knew I had an hour.

So, I knew I had set aside time. So, I wasn't rushed. And the one nice thing is when you know this is what you're doing you're not being distracted by what incoming emails are coming or whatever. And I'm kind of cheating, now that I have this too, I have a second thing. Disable notifications. Don't have your Facebook open. Don't have those – you know, like Twitter, Facebook, all these are the ones let you do in-browser notifications now? Disable all that kind of stuff.

If you're using Slack which is fine. Disable Slack notifications or turn them off or put it to away. That is so big for your mental relief of not being distracted. And so, the calendar gives you focus and lack of notifications helps you focus on everything else.

Jaime Masters:

And everybody does that right now, especially delete social media off your phone. So, I have a follow-up. I know I said I didn't, but I totally do. So, on Fridays when you're like, "This is this day," how do you actually hold yourself accountable to that? Because sometimes it's like, "Oh, then this popped up and it's another thing on Friday," or it's this, or it's that. How do you make sure that what happens on Friday stays on Friday?

Sol Orwell

So, a couple of things. 1. my team knows to leave me alone on Fridays. Secondly, I do my weekly team meetings on Friday. So, like I know on Friday work out at 12:00 p.m. because I have my team a meeting at 2:00 p.m., which will go to let's say 3:00 p.m., so I've got that time blocked away.

Subsequently, people want to meet and talk all the time and I push everybody on Friday. I'm like, "Listen, I just don't do," unless you

are flying into town. Maybe then, yeah okay, that's an exception. But in general, I'm always like Friday, Friday, Friday. So, my Fridays almost naturally fill up in that way. So, I might have a 30-minute break between two people and I basically push all my reading to Friday so I'm excited to read.

In terms of my priorities in my head I'm like, "Okay, I could answer this email, but it won't matter." I'm really big on will it matter? And will it matter if I respond today versus on Tuesday? No, it won't, so why not read this interesting article that I've been waiting for? And as an example of an interesting article – I'm not even talking about business stuff. I read a fascinating article on BuzzFeed of all places about how Titanic the movie got made.

And the story was basically like James Cameron was obsessed over the smallest details. He had Titanic experts come in and they couldn't find anything wrong with his entire recreation. And then the question internally – and this is kind of how it parlayed.

And I'd also recently read about how The Wire was originally not something HBO wanted to work with, but they were so meticulous with all the details and part of what made The Wire so amazing was all this attention to detail. So, that became a lesson to my team being like, "Hey listen, these details matter. No one notices but any major hit that you notice has got these precise details."

So, Apple no matter how much we love to make fun of them, in general, they are very, very detail oriented. So, there is a real-life example of an article that I was excited to read that had nothing to do with my business, but there's always lessons you can delve from it. And that's kind of how it keeps me focused. When, like, that's a big thing to tell the team, "We need to stay focused." And it's not just, "We need to stay focused. We need to be perfect." It's like, "Here's a real-life example. Here's another real-life example." Everyone loves either the wire or the Titanic. If you love the Titanic, you may not like The Wire and that's okay. And vice versa. So that's kind of how I keep it shipshape.

Jaime Masters: And you saved that article that you wanted to read and planned on reading it on Friday?

Sol Orwell I have an Evernote document and I just fill it with what I want to read. People use Pocket is another one. There are a few other ones, but again with my non-app point of view, I just stick everything in Evernote and it's all there for me to read whenever I need to read

it.

Jaime Masters: That's good, so you don't get distracted during the regular part of the week because that happens.

Sol Orwell Exactly everything is pushed away. Like I do have a bad propensity to keep tabs open, but I have a pretty decent job at taking anything I want to read, I'll take at least four to five minutes and throw it into Evernote. I'm like I want to read it, throw it in there. I want to read it, throw it in there, done.

Jaime Masters: And that way 30 minutes is not a big deal on Fridays. Because I was going, "How do you read if," you are an important person so I'm sure networking fills up really, really quick on your Friday. So, I was going, "When you actually read?" In the little teeny subset. Okay. Which makes sense.

Sol Orwell Or actually know what? Honestly, depends on my mood. I will set aside two hours and be like, "I'm just going to read." And it might even just be a book. Honestly, it might be, "You know, I don't feel like straining my brain. I want to read a fantasy book." Inevitably what's going to happen is the more – the deeper you get into this cold and especially I think good entrepreneurship, part of it, is good storytelling. Finding meaning from something like allegories, metaphors, similes, they're huge, I think, in being a good leader and being a good entrepreneur. Inevitably, anything you read, you can turn it or twist it or however you want to say, convert it into something that is applicable into life, into business or productivity, all that jazz.

Jaime Masters: Which makes perfect sense for you, writing your blog so that way it's not just the same recycled stuff of the five tips of the things.

Sol Orwell Exactly.

Jaime Masters: Okay, so you get your inspiration that way. Okay. I love it. I'll ask about your fiction book off-line because I have questions on that because you're a geek. So, I'm sure our tastes will be similar.

Sol Orwell For sure. For sure, absolutely.

Jaime Masters: So, I have to ask the last question, even though I totally asked 17 other ones just previously. What's one action listeners can take this week to help move them forward towards their goal of \$1 million?

Sol Orwell

Okay, so this is going to be a little bit nebulous and people might hear this and they might shake their head, and I promise you this will reap benefits you cannot even possibly imagine. One of the best habits I've developed for myself is anytime I've come across anything interesting, I send a note to the writer and I thank them. And I will often try to raise another issue they might not have thought of. That's it.

And, the reason this is super important is everyone talks about network, and this is going to sound egotistical the people come to me. So, I did – I do these charity food offs. And I did the first one less than a year ago, in 2017 in January. We raised \$1,400.00 Canadian. Huge. Same number of tickets, I did one in New York two months ago and raised over \$30,000.00 there. And there was X superstar and Y superstar and I'm not going to name drop because this is to gauche, but people – I had all these people email me or message me and probably 50 plus being like, "How did you get X person there and how did you get Y person there?"

And they think I'm some kind of networking genius or whatever. No. It was never about that. I've done the work and if I come across something nice, if I genuinely email them and say, "Hey, I like this stuff," no matter how famous you are – like I know Mark Manson. He has the number one nonfiction selling book of 2017. Number one on Amazon. That's not a small number. Even he, relative how to how much angry emails he gets, does not get that many people saying, "Hey, I like your stuff."

And not just saying, "I like your stuff," but build on it. Build on – hey, and to show that you actually read it. Don't just be like, "Hey I like your stuff." Like for example, back to the BuzzFeed Titanic article. I would just say, "Hey man, I really liked your article." I'd be like, "Hey, I really liked it. I thought the part about how obsessed Cameron was with detail was very fascinating. The Wire was similar."

And I have now applied the same ethos. I used this story as an example to my own employees to be like, "Hey, this is important so you're not just trying to suck up to them. You are showing you are a real human being." And I'll say that as the recipient now of nonstop people trying to be my friend or whatever and I swear I'm not trying to be egotistical about this. You identify who you want to respond to and there's people who haven't just read your story and know that you like stories, cookies or whatever.

Because of an oddball reference that they've actually read what you've written, and they'll respond and the beauty in tying all this back up is – and I'm not big on quotes, but Steve Jobs had a quote where he doesn't know how the dots will connect, but they'll eventually connect. Something like that. I've totally butchered it.

But the point is you don't know how this network of years will eventually help and network is super, super powerful. It will unlock everything. Remember, I'm sure you remember this, but people don't know. I posted on Facebook that I don't like anyone that's got the word "millionaire" in their brand. I want nothing to do with it. Everyone agreed, but I had a dozen plus people being like, "Exception, and you know who." The exception is obvious, but that's the point. Right? That speaks so much volume on how much networking can happen where people will vouch for you without even – and half the people didn't tag you. They didn't say anything about. They didn't. You wouldn't have known. They decided because they had to say it because they were like, "Hey, wait a minute. I agree with you, but there's an exception."

Jaime Masters: That line gave me chills because to have somebody that's a big deal, and you're a big deal, say that it's a bad thing and I was like, "Alright," and then I had a bazillion friends go, "But, wait, except for Jaime," and that is like, "Oh."

Sol Orwell So powerful and beyond even anyone who is reading the thread they'd be like – to know so many people read the comments, they'd be like, "Wait a minute. I've got to check out this person. Right? Without you necessarily having to pitch anything or having even to say, "You need to read this person."

It goes back to that one actionable thing. It's like if you show appreciation for output that someone is generating – it can be a video, it can be a new space. It can be someone local and maybe if the someone is like Oprah, she might not be able to get to it and maybe you need to aim a little bit lower. But any writer, journalist or anything that's written anything of interest – 100 percent actionable. Super easy. Takes all of five minutes. Say thank you and they'll notice the thank you. It will show them that you actually read their stuff or listen or whatever and you will be friends build friends all over the world.

Jaime Masters: Please everybody that's listening actually do this even if it's just once, so you can see. Because one of the reasons why did what you are exactly saying is because I lived in the middle of nowhere in

Maine and had no friends. So, I was like hey, you're amazing. Will you be my friend?

Sol Orwell And enough people share your introversion and you obviously – I mean the general. If you feel uncomfortable and that you feel awkward, you can write this email quickly. It doesn't have to be a masterpiece, but you can write this email. And it goes into the void. Some people don't answer because they didn't get it there. EA got it. They don't care. That's fine. That's okay, but the ones that will respond, respond so positively that you've now basically made a friend right there.

Jaime Masters: I love this. Everybody take five minutes and go do it right now or put it in your calendar for later for when you want to do it later.

Sol Orwell Actually spend some time to show appreciation. That's like other things. You start like setting aside time. There's nothing nicer than someone nice random emailing you and like someone that you know and being like, "Man, I just think you're really cool," and you're like, "This is awesome. I will take this." There's no expectation. Don't ask nothing. Just like, "Hey, I was thinking about you and I think you're pretty cool. I read something you wrote, and I like this," and you're like, "Thank you. I will take that."

Jaime Masters: Thank you. You made my day. I love you already which is interesting because we never actually met but everybody make sure you check out his site. Tell us more about where we can find you. Even though apparently you have no social media presence on your phone.

Sol Orwell My website is SJO.com. It is not my initials as most people think it is. It's just where I have entrepreneurship and productivity and that kind of stuff. I'm on Facebook and Twitter. I don't have a fan page. I just have my own Facebook profile page. I will say ever so occasionally I will say something that warrants merit. But in general, I just pontificate endlessly because it's my Facebook profile to do whatever I want. But those are the best ways to get hold of me. I'm pretty responsive via email, or Twitter, or Facebook, but I do have a large inflow, so I may be slightly delayed in responding. But otherwise I love having conversations with people.

Jaime Masters: Well and I love your stuff because you can tell you care and what you put out there matters. Even if it's just a thought. Like, it really

comes across, just so you know.

Sol Orwell Thank you. I highly recommend – I keep rambling, sorry. I highly recommend to everybody, even if you're not an entrepreneur, to put your thoughts out there. It can be on Facebook. It can be on Medium. It can be on something really professional, but there's something incredibly powerful about trying to take the jangled list of thoughts of your brain and trying to give it some of the coherence and putting it out there.

Just by having – you know, like how you become better when you teach if you can teach it to a fifth grader whatever. That's one of the rules. It's the same thing if you can put it together in an organized fashion. Hugely great for your brain. All right, I'm done. I apologize. I just keep going.

Jaime Masters: No, I actually really appreciate that last piece a lot because I don't put enough out there. I talk all the time to people and clients and I definitely don't put enough out there on purpose. Thank you so much for coming on the show today. I know it took a long time to get you on, but I so appreciate knowing and seeing you face-to-face and hopefully you'll come back on the show sometime.

Sol Orwell Maybe if you're lucky, we'll see.

Jaime Masters: He's a big deal. Did you not get that? Thanks so much for coming out. That's how I end it. No, he's awesome. Okay, well, good. Have a wonderful day. Thank you for coming out. I appreciate it.

Sol Orwell It was absolutely my pleasure

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Duration: 45 minutes