
Jaime: Welcome to Eventual Millionaire. I'm Jaime Masters. And today on the show, we have my very good friend, Trivinia Barber. Now, she runs Priority VA. You can check it out at www.priorityva.com and also www.trivinia.com, which is the best URL ever. She's got a podcast called The Diary of a Doer. I'm so excited you came on the show today.

Trivinia: Oh, my God. I'm happy to be here. It's been a long time.

Jaime: I feel like I've known you forever and now, it's finally like oh, you can come on the show. This is absolutely amazing. Your business has grown like crazy. So, tell everybody what it actually does.

Trivinia: Yeah. So, we own a virtual staffing company. So, we help place executives with virtual executive administrative support so that they can get out of the weeds and do, honestly, what they were created to do. And so, we've been in existence about 6.5 years now and grown rapidly and serving a ton of people. It's a lot of fun.

Jaime: I love it and I recommend you to my people just so you know. So, what I want to know after many, many years of getting into the weeds with entrepreneurs, you must have the secret sauce or whatever you want to call it of how to actually get things off of their plates, off of the executive's plates, CEO's or entrepreneurs so that way, they can actually feel like they can let go of something. Because I feel like that's one of the issues, in general, with entrepreneurs is not only finding the people to actually do the work but being good at giving it to them and letting go of what they have.

So, tell us some tips on what you have on some of those.

Trivinia: A few things. I think we first have to decide what we actually want to delegate. And that's one of the hardest things people tell me all of the time. I was actually just on a call with a client of ours earlier this morning. And he's just like I just still feel like I suck at the delegation thing. And so, we ran him through this exercise. And it's super simple. It's almost so simple that people dismiss it. But I just call it the four buckets. And I just want people to write down four columns and I want them to talk about all of the things that they're currently doing that they don't want to do. For me, this is like finance stuff.

I hate it. I want to gauge my eyes out. So, that was easy for me to outsource. And then, I talk about the things that you don't know

how to do. I don't know how to change a carburetor in my car so I'm going to outsource that. I also don't know how or don't care how to place Facebook pixels on my website. I don't want to know how to do that. And so, those are, again, easier things to outsource. And then, you get into the stuff that you don't have time to do. This is typically stuff you actually kind of like to do, you know how to do but it always ends up on the back burner.

For me, this is social media stuff. I'm good at it. I know how to do it. I actually kind of enjoy engaging in stuff online but it's always last on my list. And then, the final column is the stuff that only you can do. So, this is this podcast. I can actually have my team pitch you to be on your podcast. I can have them send the emails, schedule the appoints, and do all of that stuff but I've got to show up and deliver a show for you. So, I think that if you'll just go through that list, it will help you to start to get the wheels turning of the types of things that you can decide to delegate. The second piece of this, go ahead.

Jaime: No, no, please go.

Trivia: The second piece of this is you've got to document it. So, we all have our own idiosyncrasies or preferences of how we want something done. So, we've got to document at least a little bit. You've got to just do the process. Super simple. Use a screen sharing program, record your screen while you're doing the process whether it's paying a bill, writing a blog post, whatever those types of things are so that someone can start to understand how you process things. I have really picky things about how I want my calendar managed.

So, I recorded myself entering things into my calendar for my team so that they can do it the way that I want it done. And then, the next piece is actually delegating it. We actually have to let someone else do the thing. And then, you have to detach from the outcome because there are going to be mistakes. There is going to be spilled milk. Someone is not going to enter the time zone in correctly. And so, when that happens then, you have to revisit what happened, revise the process and then, relaunch that idea or that system or that thing. I always like to ask people do we have a process problem or a people problem.

And most of the time, it's a process problem. So, that's kind of the framework that we work with.

Jaime: Okay. We're going to dive into that quite a bit because I completely agree on the people and the process. And when you're in the weeds, it's hard to know which one it is, if they need more training or if they don't, especially on the process side, especially if the entrepreneur is not great with process or is super nitpicky like I am also. So, when we're breaking down the part of the process, you're like okay, there was a mistake. Because like you said, mistakes happen no matter how amazing and crazy and perfect you are, there are mistakes.

So, when that mistake happens, what do you guys do? Do you go oh, there's a big mistake? Do you wait until the team meeting to talk about it? How big of mistakes? What do you do when it comes to that stuff?

Trivia: So, I have two non-negotiables. And this is another thing I think everyone needs to decide and have that kind of come to Jesus moment for themselves. What are your non-negotiables? You're like this something that doesn't happen and this is a fireable offense. Whatever those are. For me, we don't screw with people's money. That's a non-negotiable for me. And the second and really the only other non-negotiable I have is that we reply to every single email within 24 hours. So, beyond those two things, everything else -- **[inaudible]** **[00:05:17]** is figure outable.

We can work within those things but we just don't mess with people's money and we make sure that we at least respond to somebody. We might not have the exact solution but we are going to acknowledge someone's existence within 24 hours. So, you have to figure out what those are for you. And so, for you it might be that a calendar appointment is never entered without a link to the thing that you also need to review in it.

Jaime: I like that one. That one is one of mine. I'm like I need to know where it is. Tell me where things are.

Trivia: Exactly. And for some people that is a break it proposition. If it's not in there, it's like –

Jaime: Oh, because that's what you mean by non-negotiable, you're fired?

Trivia: Yeah.

Jaime: Oh, I wouldn't fire somebody for that. That sounds really mean.

Trivinia: Right. But for some people, I've worked with people before and it was like they had to have every single document that they worked on in Arial with 14 point font. And if it wasn't that was a problem.

Jaime: This makes me feel better about myself. Thank you. I appreciate it because I feel like I'm nitpicky. And but I call myself particular because I feel like that's a little bit less horrible sounding. And I think most entrepreneurs, my clients, I'm sure yours are also. And it's like oh, you really have to do it just like that, huh. Okay. And getting somebody else to understand your world seems like it takes a while. So, how many non-negotiables should we have? Are there gray areas on how many we should have and are there extra ones that aren't non-negotiables?

Trivinia: Yeah. I think if you have a list of like 52 things that if you're not done right, you're going to fire somebody then, yes. I think that's overbearing and you're taking things a little bit too far. So, again, my list is two things. Everything else we can work around. So, when someone doesn't meet that expectation, how we do it is we're trying to figure out are we developing someone or are we disciplining someone.

Jaime: I like that.

Trivinia: Most of us go right to discipline. You didn't do this right. I need you go do this right. I need you to fix this. So, I think if we would just pause, take a second, and develop somebody, here's why. I think we miss out on this, too. We don't tell people why it's important to us. And so, for me, I'm just going to use the calendar because I think this is something that everyone should be outsourcing the management of their calendar. And so, if something is entered on my calendar incorrectly, I screen shot it, send it to my team, and say this is really confusing. Guys, this is real world and we're not perfect. I literally had this on Monday.

So, my team was flying in for a team retreat that we were having and there was an appointment on my calendar that I was supposed to go pick up someone from the airport. But the flight number was wrong and the time was wrong in the airport. Not her fault. The airline switched the flight and it kind of messed it up. But she had sort of forgot to go and update that. So, I'm like am I picking her up at 1:00 or is it 3:00? What time am I picking her up? So, I screen shot it and I'm like you've just got to understand. It's on a Monday afternoon and I'm trying to plan my life. And I've got to figure out what's going on.

So, did I discipline her? No. But I helped her understand why it was important for it to be right because I have kids I have to pick up at 3:00. So, I also can't be picking you up at the airport at 3:00. Does that help?

Jaime: Yes, definitely.

Trivia: So, right to the discipline of oh, you're a failure and you can't calendar right. But it's like no, this is why it's important so they know for next time.

Jaime: Well, I think that's the interpretation that the person has when we go straight to discipline mode. And is there a nuance of how you do it? Because I feel like, especially when we talk about the sandwich that you want to say something nice and then, something not so nice and then, something nice, right.

Trivia: I don't do that. I don't do that. And I'm a little bit of a black sheep, I think, when it comes to the way that I lead my team. I tell my team all of the time you don't get a parade for showing up to work. that doesn't happen for me. I believe that if you do a little bit extra than is required of you then, yes, I will shoot confetti out of my mouth. Fine, we can do that. So, for me, if there is ever that issue, I don't sandwich it with like you did this thing great and you did this thing wrong. I'm like hey, I've got an issue. We need to talk about this calendar and think. Not a big deal because it's really not.

We're not curing cancer and we're not creating oxygen. And so, I think that the things that most of us work on, if it's not right the first time and we can develop that person into creating a process so that's all we did with this calendar thing is before you get on your flight if you're coming here or on Sunday evening, double check my calendar and just make sure all of the details are right. So, now we just added a little check and balance for that process and then, it's less of a big deal. Now, if that happens two more times and three more times, now we don't have a process problem, we have a people problem.

Jaime: Okay. Let's talk about that one. How perfect. So, you're like okay, now we're going to check in on Sundays. Awesome. And we don't advocate to totally for get about that. And you want to make sure that they're actually doing it on Sundays as best as you can. But then, let's say it happens two or three more times and you know that they know but there are also mistakes. What do you do?

Trivia: I think everyone is going to make mistakes. And here's where we have to ask ourselves do we expect perfection. I was in a mastermind one time and I was teaching about working with executive assistants. And there was this guy that had like a \$50 million business. It was a really high end business. And he said, "My assistant is great 80 percent of the time. But that 20 percent, it drives me crazy." And I just stopped and I was like are you great 100 percent of the time? Really? Because if you are, can I hire you because this is amazing?

So, I think that we expect perfection from somebody else. We want grace when it's us but we want to give the rest –

Jaime: But I just made a mistake because this and the other thing. I have a lot going on right now just so you know.

Trivia: And so, I love that you even said that because we need to pause and ask our team that, too. And so, this kind of leads me into, I think, things that I believe that every founder needs to do to have a really dynamic relationship with their executive assistant. And I think that we have to do four things. We have to encourage our EA's. We have to talk to them and actually get to know their language of appreciation or their love language, if you're kind of in the a [inaudible] [00:11:18] Mullen camp. But we have to know how they appreciate or how they understand appreciation and then, encourage them in the way they need to be encouraged.

So, if you just send a random Starbuck's gift card because you're like thanks for doing that thing but they're a words of affirmation person, that's going to be really important for them that you communicate in the way that they do. So, you've got to encourage them. You've got to equip them, which I think is equally important. So, whether this is paying for them to be in a mastermind or sending them to the class or doing whatever those types of things are, kind of equip them to do their job. And then, one of the most important things is that you actually have to empower them, Jaime, to do it.

I think that I like to call it being a helicopter CEO but we hover. And we say that we want our team to do the thing but then, we're going behind them and making sure that they've actually done the thing. So, we have to actually empower them to do what they were created to do because if you have your team go through that list of the things that they don't know how to do, they don't want to do, they don't have time to do, and only they can do, they've got a

zone of genius, too, just like you do. And so, we've got to empower them to work within that. And then, the final piece of that is engage.

You've got to engage with your team. And so, if you're noticing that your teammate is having some challenges, maybe making more mistakes, being a little bit more spacey, it's like hey, is everything going okay. And that is as simple as how was your weekend, you guys. It can literally be that simple to just say I had a fight with my kid. Or I got in a fender bender this weekend. Everything is fine. But now, I have a \$2,000.00 deductible I wasn't expecting. And then, we can sort of start to figure out maybe why things are going on. But if we abdicate relationship, we don't get to find out maybe how we can make things better with our team.

Jaime: Where is that line though between vulnerability and being more connected and knowing what's going on with them and not? Because I've got clients too, and me, too. I love people. I want to be friends with everybody. And where is that line of oh, I just told you so much about myself and now, you're not seeing me as a boss?

Trivinia: So, I tend to tell my team and I'm pretty blunt, I guess, I don't care what my team had for lunch this morning or this afternoon. I don't care. But I do care that you're maybe struggling in some area of your life. That maybe your kid ditched school today and you're a little bit frustrated by that. I do care about that. I do care that your grandma is dying and they say she has three months to live. I care about those things. And so, I think we have to measure how much we share. I don't care if you had great sex with your husband last night. I don't care about that.

But if you're fighting with your husband constantly and you need to take a minute and it's really important for you to be off on Friday at 5:00 so you can start to reinitiate date night to build your relationship, I care about that. So, do you see how it's – if it's going to affect your work performance, I need to know about it.

Jaime: How do they start to understand? Because I know there are a lot of employees that I've had, too, where they're like I feel like I'm not supposed to share anything. How do you get them to open up then?

Trivinia: Yeah. I think it just begins at the very beginning of the relationship with the onboarding piece. I like to ask my team how they like to be managed. So, that's really important is to get that baseline. Do

you want me to communicate stuff in writing to you? Do you want me to come to you immediately if I'm frustrated or pissed off at you? Do you need heaps of praise? So, I like to have that conversation. And then, I just tend to lead with like I'm going to tell you what's going on in my life. Do you want me to ask what's going on in yours? Or would you rather keep this pretty thick boundary?

And most people say I want a relationship. And then, I just kind of tend to gauge. I've got a person on my team right now, she's super, super withdrawn. She does not engage with me about stuff. But when stuff was going on in her life that was affecting her performance, she was like I just need to take a mental health day. And I was like anything else that I could help you with. Do you need some support? And then, she spilled the beans of here is what I was struggling with. And it's just not assuming that they don't want to share. You just have to give them an open door to do that. That whole open door policy, I think, is an actual real thing.

Jaime: Yeah. And the time and space to be able to feel like it's okay and not like that you're going to look at them differently or anything like that. I loved what you said about thick boundaries. Because it's funny, we talk about boundaries a lot in life in general. But that concept of thick versus thin, that's just very interesting because I feel like quite a few people have very thin boundaries. Oh, I mentioned it just for a second and then, backed away because it's hard to draw that line. What do you do or do you have tips on making better boundaries?

Trivinia: I think you need to lean in and have that conversation incredibly transparently. So, I have told my team – actually, it's so funny. We're doing a team retreat while we're doing this podcast episode. And one of the things that we were talking about was working hours. And we said we do not want our team working before 7:00 a.m. and I don't want them working after 7:00 p.m. Why? Because I need them at their best, honestly. I need them at their best. But I don't want them to feel like they're on all of the time. So, we have a window of 9:00 to 4:00 that I want to pretty much gauge that I'm going to be able to get you from 9:00 to 4:00.

But I want you to have the flexibility of working before or after because that is the whole goal of flex scheduling. So, we just set that boundary of let's not be working at 1:00 a.m. Can we just not do that? Because then, we're at a capacity issue and that's a different conversation that we need to have. So, that kind of set

that boundary for my team of a container of if we start pushing you're working past 7:00 multiple nights a week then, we need to have a conversation.

Jaime: Thank you. Because the overall hustle – don't get me wrong. I love having employees that are I was going to say aggressive but aggressive doesn't sound really right but excited.

Trivia: All in.

Jaime: Excited.

Trivia: All in, right.

Jaime: Yeah.

Trivia: We want people all in. But I don't want them all in at the expense of their family or at the expense of their mental health. And so, we as a leader have to create that container for them to play in. It's just like children and I don't mean to downplay or disrespect people. But everyone wants a box to play in. Just give me the boundary of what I can do and how I can go and I will crush it within that space.

Jaime: I'm going to go send this to one of my clients after this. It's going to be great because when you get stuck in the weeds and it's just sort of like – there are too many decision points that need to be made. And it's tough for people to start going that I have to fix. And I'll just do it like this. And that I have to fix and I just do it like this. It's usually not complicated as all heck. It's just all interwoven and hard to pull apart, right.

Trivia: Exactly, yes.

Jaime: I love this. I know you really work with executive admins. And I feel like most people need this so, so badly. I would not be okay without mine. But how do you feel when you were just talking about the executive admin sort of has their zone of genius and you want them to live in it. What happens if their zone of genius starts to grow? Or not grow. The level of work that you have for them, they need an assistant. How do you move them around and manage them?

Trivia: That is the best case scenario, guys, because most executive assistants, not all, but most of them want an ascension path. They

want a path for growth, too. And guys, think about it. In most of the cases of our businesses, we're entrepreneurial. And you'll be hard pressed to find somebody who doesn't also sort of get that entrepreneurial spirit. And so, if we can create an intrapreneur within our organization and give them places to grow, you want that. I was actually just coaching somebody else a couple of weeks ago. And she was like no, I need somebody who is going to be super happy in that role forever.

And I was like then, you're going to end up having somebody who is just checking boxes. And do you really want somebody who is just checking boxes? And that was sort of a paradigm shift for her to realize of like here is what you do when you find that person on your team who is growing beyond their role and where they need more support. One of my old clients did this to me and it was the best thing she ever did. She said what thing are you doing – if you could get rid of one thing in my business that you're doing and outsource it, what would it be? And I was like oh, the podcast. I hate doing your podcast.

It drives me crazy. I do it because I'm kind of the send me, I'll go girl. It's my job. I'll do whatever. And that gave me so much freedom. As soon as we pulled away that podcast from me, it gave me freedom to start creating content and start doing other things for her that I was actually really good at doing. And so, asking the question of your team if you could outsource one thing, what would it be. And then, help find a path for that because it might not be right now. We don't have the revenue to hire a podcast editor. But you know as a leader that you can help create a path for them.

And then, when they're getting up on Sunday evening to do that podcast editing, they're not like I hate this. They're like I've got three more months of doing this and then, I'm done.

Jaime:

Yeah. And then, they're actually excited about what they're doing, too. I heard an amazing quote from Jay Papasan who wrote the book *The One Thing* and I think he actually got it from Gary Keller from Keller Williams. But he said, "Don't hire an executive assistant. Hire an assistant executive." And I remember hearing that. This was many years ago. I was like that's brilliant. And then, when I work with clients then, they're like but they're so great here. And what's difficult is they're so great there and I want them to do everything. Because having a right hand that's amazing is kind of hard to find.

How do you, besides hiring your people because, by the way, what she does is help match people up with executive admins that are amazing. But for those people that might not go this route or might need a part time, how would you suggest they hire a really great executive assistant?

Trivinia: This is the one thing that I think everyone needs to understand. And this can be for any role. It can literally be for a graphic designer if you want to. I don't care. It's that important to me. Most people get stuck in the trap of hiring for interest, availability, and affordability. So, the cheapest person who can start tomorrow who is remotely interested in the thing you do because we are all trying to save money and all of that stuff. I would love to have people throw that in the trash and instead, hire based on passion. The passion that someone has for what they're doing in your business.

Purpose, someone who absolutely sees themselves in their role in your life, in your business, and they're super uber passionate about what you do, not just what they do. And then, proficiency. Someone who can actually do the thing that you need them to do. If we would just switch those three things, passion, purpose, and proficiency, instead of interest, availability and affordability, you guys would be way more ahead of the game at finding someone incredible. So, we have a whole gauntlet process that we put people through as far as testing their skills and their character, their proficiency in all of those things.

And I think that's really important. But I think that Level 1, let's just stop hiring the first person that says yes.

Jaime: How fast do you fire? Because you've done this for so long. And you're so good at going good, not good, good. How do you know specifically how to fire somebody or when to fire somebody?

Trivinia: So, again, is it a people problem or a process problem? And if you know that the processes are in line, they're tight, and they're ready to go and mistakes keep getting made and you have tried to develop and you're moving into discipline and you're even not seeing movement after you've disciplined someone, it's time to go. Now, as far as a timeline goes, I love the idea of hire slow, fire fast with this one exception. A lot of us in this entrepreneurial space, guys, we're sort of dipping our toe in the delegation water. We're scared. We don't know. And the instant somebody does something wrong, we're like see, never mind, it didn't work.

I'll just do it myself. And that is you playing martyr. And I don't want people to do that. So, I want them to have that gut check of am I just scared. Am I scared they're not going to do it my way? Am I scared I'm wasting my money? You've got to have that real gut check conversation. And if you've had that and you still feel this isn't the right fit for me. They can be a great person and a really crappy assistant. So, is it the right person in the right role doing the right thing? Three things we work on at Priority VA, people, process, and projects. That's all that we do.

And so, you've got to make sure you have the right people doing the right processes, working on the right projects in your business. And if that's not the case, you're wasting a lot of money by keeping them on board.

Jaime: Do you have to ever coach your clients on how to be better managers? Especially entrepreneurs aren't very good at it, typically, because they haven't been trained.

Trivinia: Yeah. All of the time. It was a call that I was on earlier this morning just having a conversation with a client. He's like, "I think she's just trying to rip tasks from me." And I said, "Okay, great. Let's talk about your calendar. How often do you meet?" and he's like, "Well, we sometimes have meetings on Mondays but I get a little busy." And I'm like, "That's the one meeting you don't cancel." So, Step 1, actually show up and engage and be present on the meeting so that you can help your assistant. It's three questions. What are you working on this week? What did you do last week?

And what are the impediments to progress. Guys, it's not that hard. We're making it so complicated. So, yeah, we don't know how to manage. And a lot of us don't even care to learn how to manage and our results show in our business by the revolving door of people coming in and out.

Jaime: Okay. So, let's dive deeper into that because whenever I sit down with somebody, I'm like let's assess where we're at right now. And it's a hard thing to know when I'm hearing one perspective on all of the people that are having a problem in the company or whatever. And I'm like that sounds very like it surrounds only you or whatever. So, putting on a path to learning how to do management, 1) how can somebody that's an entrepreneur not want to go down that skill set and learn that piece? Do you think that they'd still be successful if not?

Trivia: I think they're less successful. I have seen incredibly successful leaders, business owners be crappy leaders. You can be a successful business owner and be a terrible manager or terrible leader. So, if that's the case, and I've coached clients on this before, too. If that is not your jam and you don't care to learn then, you need to hire somebody else. Hire a chief of staff. Hire a CEO. Hire someone that's going to fill that role because otherwise, your organization is never going to grow to its fullest potential. But I think the next thing that we need to do, Jaime, is know thy self. If we would just be really honest with who we are and where we struggle.

I had a coaching client once and I actually told her I wasn't going to work with her. I was like I'm just not really interested in doing this. You interrupt me all of the time. You blame your team for everything. I'm like you're just not really even interested in growing. And so, I'm like maybe I can recommend someone else for you or whatever. And she just started crying. And she's like I really just want to pick my 9-year-old daughter up from school and spend the evening with her instead of worrying about all of these things. And I was like okay, now we're getting somewhere. Talk to me.

And so, if we'll just get really honest instead of projecting everything on everyone else and say what part do I play in this, what areas do I need to grow. Even me, I help coach and develop teams for a living. And I still have a lot of areas to grow as a leader. Thank God I don't have an actual office because I throw pens and stuff if I'm frustrated. So, there are areas of growth that I have to do, too.

Jaime: I love your honesty. I think that's amazing. You're like I need everybody else to have honesty but don't worry, I've got it, too. It's hard to know sometimes when you're in it. When you were talking about blame, it's interesting because even if I hear someone blaming, sometimes, they don't even realize that they're in it at the time. So, when you're talking about how they have training, do you have any resources for training? I don't know that there is any amazing, magical book on this. It's a long process. But do you have any tips or anything?

Trivia: Yeah. The book is going to be coming this year.

Jaime: Well, then we'll have you back on. Okay.

Trivia: Exactly. So, as far as training goes, I think a lot of it is just that mentorship and the modeling and how we coach our executive assistants to show up because here is the cool thing. If you have a strong executive assistant, they're going to guide you. And a lot of our entrepreneurs that we work with, they come to me and they're just like I just want someone to tell me what to do. So, just tell me how to show up and tell me how to behave. And then, I believe that we have to have strong enough people in front of us that are going to call us on our crap when we are struggling. I think the worst thing that any of us can do for ourselves is surround ourselves with a bunch of yes people.

So, we need to have someone around us who is going to be like, actually, Trivia, you said you wanted to do X, Y, and Z. So, why are you flipping that story now? And I'm like oh, crap. I did say I wanted to do that, right. And so, it's just having that someone who is going to hold up a mirror to you just like you would a coach. I tease but our executive assistants are comedians and therapists and hostage negotiators. They really play a pivotal role. And that's why I think the hire is the most important one that you can make.

Jaime: And what's so interesting, like you said, is that executive admin is such a robust role, especially if you do want one that is going to manage up. And I think we go, oh, it's just a VA and we don't care. But, literally, because entrepreneurs are strong willed people. I can raise my hand to that one. I told my right hand to slap me. She won't but I told her to slap me when this happens because I sometimes just go in this whole thing. And I'll be like I didn't even realize I was doing it. Sorry. I love you. I apologize. I didn't realize.

And not even realizing what I said three weeks before. Oh, Jaime, do you remember how you said that before? Nope. I do not remember saying that.

Trivia: One of the interesting and sort of fun ways that we've brought in allowing my team to push back is we use personality tests. And one of our favorite sort of personality tests right now is the Enneagram. And Enneagram is fun. And I'm an eight on the Enneagram, which is considered the challenger. And so, my team now, when I'm getting a little too loud or in their face or being a little abrasive, which I can totally be, they'll be like, "Oh, your eight is showing." And so, it's a way for them to sort of be like ouch, Trivia, that hurt without them being like you hurt my feelings because I don't react to that.

But if they'll call and say you're being an eight then, I'm like okay, tone it down a little bit, Trivinia. Calm down.

Jaime: That language makes a huge difference though, right.

Trivinia: Yeah.

Jaime: And giving them permission to be able to do that. I know I interviewed somebody else that was talking about company values. And she had a billion dollar family owned company. And when we were looking at the values, she allows her employees to call her out when she's not living true to the values. I'm like that is impressive. That is very impressive to be able to take that much on in front of other people. So, the fact that somebody can call you, "Hey, you're being an eight right now," in front of a bunch of other people is wonderful, especially with the language that you know you're receptive to.

How did you figure out what that language was for you or your clients?

Trivinia: So, I'm not receptive to tears. I'm just not. And so, if they needed to reach me – so if I see tears, I tend to sort of kind of just be like stop being a baby. I tend to kind of do that.

Jaime: I'm not that way. I'm like oh, let me help you. Yeah. I'm a two with a three wink. I am not that at all. That's so funny.

Trivinia: You're a two. Okay. So, this is actually really interesting. So, one of the people on my team, she also owns another corporation. And she was texting with one of her assistants today telling her – she's like I'm mad. I'm like you're mad? So, she reads me the text that she had with her team. And it was like I'm kind of frustrated. We didn't get the supplies. And she's like I hope you're feeling better. And I was like I did not get mad from that text at all. And so, we have to be able to tell our team how to communicate with us. But we also have to be really honest about how we communicate with them.

So, my team knows if I'm short and I use periods in stuff, I'm probably frustrated. And so, it's just being really honest about how you are, guys. And we have to stop projecting that we have it all together and we're amazing, especially with your executive assistant. They should know all of the head trash that you tell yourself. They should know all of that stuff so that they can learn

to be a better mind reader, to support you better, and to kind of be a step ahead of you before that head trash starts.

Jaime: One of the most amazing gifts of having a right hand that I have ADD and all sorts of stuff. And to have the systems and processes that I have overcome my ADD was like – now, the funny thing is my daughter has it, too. And I'm like you have to make enough money to pay an executive admin to help you with this just so you know long term because I am not going to do that for you. And you need to pay someone to do it. But it's true. All of the things that I am deficient in, I have something else to make up for it. So, that way, I can actually seem capable, in general. I have other gifts and I think that's the piece.

We're trying to fit the puzzle pieces so it works.

Trivinia: And so, I love that you kind of bring up the idea of puzzle pieces because I was working with a coach one time and we were trying to figure out like are we going to have a tagline? Or how am I going to answer when people say like what do you do? And we had come up with I clone entrepreneurs. And I thought oh, that's sexy and it's cool and it's whatever. And I used it for like two years. And then, I decided that is the dumbest thing that I could ever tell people because you do not need a clone of yourself because then, you just have the exact same problems that you have.

And so, we need someone who is going to be complementary to the challenges that you have and proficient in the areas that you're deficient. So, I love that puzzle piece analogy.

Jaime: And what I think is so funny about what you just said is that the entrepreneur thinks they need to clone themselves. Everyone is like can we just create a cloning device. I will work on that next. Yes, I know. But in reality, no, you don't even want – no way, no how. I think that's huge. So, when you're looking at setting up someone for success at the very beginning because I think that this is a critical piece, too, especially if there are too many bumps in the road at the beginning then, we have negative thoughts about how it's going to go anyway. So, let's say we're like oh, we know they're an A or going to be an A player.

How do we set them up for success in the onboarding process?

Trivinia: So, I think one of the things we have to get off the bat is, obviously, how do you like to be managed. Let's have that

conversation right off the bat. We have to have weekly meetings. Guys, I cannot stress it enough. Weekly meetings, face to face, have that weekly recap. We have our team sign a weekly recap email also so that you start the week strong and then, you end the week strong so that there is just no closed loops. There are no open loops of like did she do that or was that done or where does that stand.

So, the communication piece, I think, is incredibly important. Clear, consistent, and often. I think sometimes, executives will sort of put off their EA because their EA is chasing them to get the information and stuff. And so, it's the first meeting you cancel. It's the one you're like I'll get back to them later or whatever.

Jaime: Small details. It's down there, yeah.

Trivia: But if you can make that a priority, they're there to help you. And they just want to keep their ball moving down the field, too. And so, clear, consistent, and often communication, I think, is really important. And then, the mentorship piece is helping them understand who is responsible for the thing. Who is going to handle the onboarding? Is it you specifically? Or do you have someone else on your team that is going to train them to use the software that they're going to use or whatever? And then, who do they go to when they have questions? Is it always you? And if it's you, how do you like the questions?

Do you want to be pinged in Slack 72 times a day? Because I don't. I don't want any of that. And so, for us, it's let's get on a phone call and knock it out. Don't send me an email with five paragraphs because I need bulleted communication. So, you have to be able to have that kind of conversation, the onboarding thing. And then, give them a play. We like to say what are the top priorities the first 100 days. What are two or three projects that in the first 100 days, these things have to be completed for me to say this is a success. And then, what does success actually look like?

What are they going to be judged on? What's going to piss you off? If you behave this way, it's going to piss me off. If you behave in this way, you are going to be my hero. And then, here is what I'm going to actually measure the success of this relationship. So, for me, if I don't have to go in my inbox, if I have zero inbox, not inbox zero, it's different, I want zero inbox. And if I'm having to get in my email and answer things because you're not or because you're not handling things quickly enough then, that is not success

for me. So, create that plan and be really honest and realistic about what your expectations are.

And then, what sort of KPI's are you going to measure for that successful role? Is it how many days that you have off a month? Is that a KPI that's going to be measurable for what success looks like in the role? So, be really honest about that, too.

Jaime: I think the zero inbox thing, everybody is going wait, you can have zero inbox. I'm confused. I'll have to talk to Trivinia later. But a quick question on the communication plan. Do you have a template or anything like that? I feel like it gets sticky for people to be like oh, we do this then, here. But there are so many different versions of it. What does yours actually look like?

Trivinia: Yeah. So, we do six levels of delegation. I'm a huge fan of Dan Sullivan. And this is good when you're first starting out. Again, super honest. Cobblers' kids have no shoes sort of thing sometimes. As we've gotten deeper in my relationship with my EA, I don't need six levels of delegation as much anymore because pretty much everything is a Level 5 or Level 6. Just don't come back to me with dumb questions because yes, I think there are dumb questions.

Jaime: You're being an eight right now, Trivinia.

Trivinia: I am being an eight. So, six levels of delegation is, I think, a great starting point. So, it says here are all of the tools that you're going to need to complete this thing. Come back to me if this. Here is how much you can spend. These are the touchpoints that I want to have with you. And that helps start to train your executive assistant for I can go this far on my own. Again, I hate to use the kid analogy but it's just the best one, especially for those us that are parents. When you take your kid to the park and you're like you can go this far but don't go past the swings, that's exactly what you're doing with your EA.

And then, you guys get in a cadence. And then, the next time you and your kid go to the park, you don't have to tell them where their boundary is. They know. So, that's how we like to do it.

Jaime: So, we're going to have to wait until your book comes out before we can – because I'm going through and I'm like have 100 more questions and it's almost time to be done. Okay, darn. So, next time when your book is done, we'll bring you back on so you can

definitely let us know more because I feel like entrepreneurs just get so stuck in the weeds because it's not their zone of genius. And so, they're grasping for help like please, someone. And then, there are a million books or a million potentials. And then, that's overwhelming and it's tough to do anything. So, anybody listening, just take one thing.

And on that note, actually, the last question is what is one action item listeners can take this week to help move them forward towards their goal of \$1 million?

Trivinia: Yeah. I think the first thing that you need to do is you need to do that four column exercise that I told you about. If you would do just that, I think that that is going to help you. And I like to say kind of an avatar jumps off of the paper. You start to see is this more technical. Is it more admin? Is it finance related? Just that exercise is going to help you get clear on what your next step needs to be.

Jaime: I love this. And even if you've done it before, you have to do it again over and over and over.

Trivinia: At least quarterly. At least make it a quarterly exercise for sure.

Jaime: I love this. Thank you so much for coming on today. Where do we find out more about getting a VA and finding your podcast and all of that fun stuff?

Trivinia: So, if you need executive administrative support, go to www.priorityva.com. If you want to listen to the podcast, go to www.trivinia.com. And you can follow me on all of the socials @trivinia.

Jaime: Awesome. Thank you so much for coming on today, especially during your team meeting. I so appreciate it.

Trivinia: My pleasure.

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Duration: 40 minutes