

YOU'VE WRITTEN YOUR LAST RESUME

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HOW TO THRIVE IN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS

and make yourself impossible to replace with AI.

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It should be obvious to everyone that the economy is in trouble. You send out hundreds of resumes and don't even get one call. Thousands of jobs are listed but no one ever seems to get hired for them. Do these jobs even exist? If you're going to make money in this economy you're going to need to do things a little bit differently.

The old way is you find a company that has a job posting. You polish your resume for hours, hoping to stand out among the hundreds of other applicants, you submit it, and then you wait... for nothing. Chances are the job was fake, posted as a ruse to get Covid relief money from the government, or the job was already promised to the manager's cousin. Or you're the only person who didn't put outrageous lies on their resume to inflate their attractiveness. It's not fair.

To make matters even worse, a lot of jobs can be replaced by an AI now! But you know what an AI can't do? Hang pictures, clean out gutters, change the oil on a car, or any other job that requires HANDS. To date, AI still doesn't have hands. This book can make you bulletproof against being replaced by AI.

You can get off this pointless resume hamster wheel any time you like. Most people are never even aware of the opportunities that are all around them. If you are like most people, you've been shown only one path – do well in high school, get into college, do well in college, use your degree and good grades to get a good job after college.

THE PROBLEM

This system is a trap. It places you under the control of huge organizations for your entire life, and they don't have your best interests in mind. They exist simply to continue to exist. It's not their job to make your life come out right.

They spend more time getting you to jump through hoops (obeying) than they do teaching you what's important. They decide what the rules are for "doing well" in school, when that might not have anything to do with the real world. So you learn how to follow a program, not how to succeed outside the program. Then you go begging to a huge corporation for a job, hoping to stand out from the thousand other applicants just like you.

This is a huge con game to promote public schools and sell expensive college degrees. The worst part is that the process is so dictated to you that you never cultivate the skills to take charge of your own life without someone telling you what your next step is. That's actually punished inside the system. This robs you of your power of self-direction. Entrepreneurship is an evil in the system.

There is only one person in the world whose job it is to make you successful:

It's YOU.

Well, it's time to escape the trap. I'm going to show you one way to do it.

I'll tell you how to keep yourself earning money when everyone else is waiting for that hiring manager's call that will never come.

THE SOLUTION

I'm not selling you anything. I'm not talking about some internet side hustle where you have to spend ten thousand dollars a month advertising drop shipping products on Facebook. I don't have a course to join, this free book is it.

Not everyone wants to be a spandex-wearing influencer filming themselves drinking cocktails on TikTok. This is a simple, understandable way to make enough money to live well on, get your head above water and see a way out of the rat race. There are no hidden facts left out, this is a real thing you can immediately understand and doesn't take a massive advertising budget to succeed. You don't need a website or a sales funnel. This is what I did and I'm not special or a genius.

Cut out the middle man.

Be your own boss.

When you work for a company, you are at the end of the line to get money from the customer. The customer pays your company, and then the company pays all its expenses, one of which is you. To make a profit, all companies try to keep their expenses down, how do you think that will work out for you? Not good.

Obviously the company is taking most of the money before they give a little to you. But what if there were no middle man between you and the money? What if you dealt directly with the customer and no one skimmed off a percentage of the money before it got to you? That's what I'm talking about. No matter what you think, you can do it. It's actually pretty easy.

So what do you choose to do?

There are people everywhere who are busy and need things done for them that they can't do themselves or just don't have the time for, and they are so grateful when you can take these tasks off their hands. There is a job you can do for someone else, no matter your skill level or situation, and the pay is whatever you negotiate with the client! There's no middle man dictating your hourly pay and working hours, you work that out with your client. It's YOUR CHOICE.

Do you have something around your house that you hate doing? Everyone else does, too. Cleaning? Doing dishes? Decluttering your elderly mom's house? You'll like it a lot more when you're getting paid fifty or more dollars an hour for it. If you have any practical skills at all, or are willing to learn very simple things, you can keep yourself busy and earning money working for people who are actually happy to have you helping them. Not some cranky boss at a job that you hate. Once you get a taste for this, you'll never want another nine-to-five job ever again.

Let me give you an example: I used to be the assistant manager for a huge campground. It was a stressful, annoying job where I made \$16.50 an hour working for the State of New York. My weekly take home pay was about \$495. I finally got fed up with the hassle and low pay and moved to a larger metro area in a southern state. My first job installing IKEA closets for someone paid \$800 for a day's work. Nearly double my weekly pay for a single day's stress-free work, I did a good job and the client was very happy. And I undercharged him! He would have been happy if I had charged him double! He just wanted it done. That was an aha moment for me. I had imagined a better income and better life, but that made it real for me. You can do this, too.

Here are some things that people gladly pay for:

- Lawn Service/Landscaping
- Pressure Washing

- Gutter cleaning
- Window Washing
- Trash Removal
- Hanging Artwork
- Hanging Curtains
- Install baby gates
- Painting
- House Cleaning/Laundry/Organizing
- Install Closets
- Interior Design
- Install Ceiling Fans/Lights
- Assembling RTA Furniture
- Moving/Packing Help
- Child Care
- Mobile Car Detailing
- Pet Walking/Care
- House Sitting
- Fitness Equipment Assembly
- Install Shelving
- Mount TVs
- Construction Site Cleanup
- Building Child's Playsets
- Minor Plumbing Repairs
- Installing/Removing Christmas Lights
- Window Screen Replacement
- Supplying & Caring for Office Plants
- Tutoring
- Personal Chef
- Decluttering
- And the list goes on...

Most of these tasks require very few tools and minimal experience. It's very easy to learn how to wash windows well, for example, and you can stay very busy doing only that. It's dirt simple, once you know how, and everyone with a house needs their windows washed once in a while. There are plenty of examples like this, you just need to find the thing that suits your skill set and take the leap.

If you decide you want to take the next step in life and become self-employed, here is what I've learned from my years as a former corporate drone turned handyman.

Start slow.

So you've decided to be self-employed. Great! Once you get a little taste of freedom, you'll never go back. I'm going to tell you what I've learned from my mistakes and successes in starting my own handyman business. This isn't meant to be an exhaustive list of literally everything you need to do for every type of business, but more like rules of thumb for things you might not realize when you're starting out. Hopefully it will inspire you to try something, to break out of your rut and help you get started faster and avoid spending unnecessary money doing it.

For some people, being self-employed can mean making a lot more money per hour than you are used to making, so you can quit your 9-5 and set your own hours and income. Maybe you just want to have the joy of self-expression making music or selling arts and crafts on Etsy while you work your regular job. Maybe you'll use the extra money to invest in some activity that will be even more lucrative in the future. Notice that I didn't assume that this was the thing you are going to do for the rest of your life. This is important. Always plan to grow. Part of this book will deal with expectations and mindset. One of the big things I noticed about my business was how different my actual business became compared to how I had imagined it would be before I really got busy. This isn't a bad thing, necessarily. Like a ninja, you've got to expect the unexpected! If up pops a new opportunity that you hadn't anticipated, that's great, maybe you'll do better than you thought, but in a totally unexpected line of work. This is sort of what happened to me and I don't regret it at all. The more money and freedom you have, the more your outlook will change. You'll see! In the beginning of your journey, you might hope for an extra \$1,000 a month to play with, but after you find yourself doing much better than that you'll see a whole new set of opportunities that you wouldn't have seen before. This is why I will advise against huge, elaborate plans or spending tons of money on advertising and a new vehicle or tools before you know how your business will play out. Start small, get a feel for your business and grow at your own pace. Things rarely go exactly as you plan, so expect a detour.

So let's get started.

Obviously you will want to choose a service that you either know how to do already or can learn easily. It doesn't have to be complicated or difficult, it just needs to be something that other people need done and are willing to pay for. Washing windows is a good example. If you are a homeowner with a large home, a high stress job and children, you probably value your free time with your kids more than you value saving some money on having your windows washed. Plus, there's a learning curve to getting the job just right and nobody wants to sacrifice a valuable weekend learning it. People hate feeling stupid. Especially rich people! So that's where you come in. With very minimal tools and practice, you can take this task off someone's hands and make a few hundred dollars in a day. Most modern windows tilt inward for cleaning, so in many cases you might not even need to get up on a ladder.

You can see what things people want done by joining the job sites like Thumbtack and Angi to see the most commonly requested tasks, then learn to do them. You can even pose as a homeowner to see what kinds of prices the other contractors are bidding to do the job.

Once you settle on a service that you feel will be valuable to others, you will need a few pointers to avoid doing the wrong things at first. Here are the basic rules that guide me:

Dos and Dont's

Don't:

Don't Spend a lot of money on advertising.

Print ads or mailers cost a lot of money and they usually don't get you enough business to justify the cost. Also, it takes several occasions of the customer seeing your print ad before it enters their mind to actually call you, even if they need that service.

Advertising makes sense for big companies like roofing companies, whose jobs bring in lots of revenue and who have lots of employees to field calls and carry out the work, but if you are a one-man (or woman) show you can only be in one place at a time, so having lots of phone calls coming through your cell phone all day long is the distraction from your job that you don't need. Most of those calls will be time wasters with dumb questions or jobs that you don't want, and it will be very inconvenient trying to take those calls when you're up on a ladder or laying with your head under a sink.

Getting a lot of calls might make you feel successful and busy, but if the calls aren't turning into paying business clients, they're a waste of your time.

As a sole proprietor with no office staff, your time is a precious resource, so manage it well. Ideally, you want to put yourself in front of people who have actively started searching for help.

You want them searching for you, not the other way around.

There are ways to get business targeted at exactly your particular service and I'll talk about that later on. It's Thumbtack or Angie's List (now called Angie).

Don't buy a new vehicle. And don't go hog wild buying a bunch of expensive new tools, either. Having huge monthly expenses to cover is a trap.

The thrill of having a shiny new truck wears off a lot more quickly than the payments do and it forces you to take jobs you don't want at times you don't want to do them. One of the reasons you are becoming self-employed is to be more free, not less free, and debt is a trap.

DEBT IS A TRAP

Be more free, not less free.

If you take only one thing away from reading this book, it should be that you need to be in control of your life. YOU, not a client, not a loan company, not a boss, not a bill collector, not the government. Only YOU should control your life.

If all you have is a bicycle and a hammer, just take jobs that can be done with a bicycle and a hammer. Do those jobs like The World's Best Bicycling Hammerer, then work up to something more. Buy a screwdriver and a saw, then take jobs you can do with a bicycle, a hammer, a screwdriver and a saw. That's an exaggeration, of course, but you get the idea.

If you ABSOLUTELY MUST buy a vehicle, make it the most economical one you can still do the job with, pay cash if you can. NO ONE is impressed by your vehicle! If you do a great job they just don't care. They want the job done well, that's it! Do that, and you could drive the world's ugliest car and no one will notice. Don't use a new vehicle just to make yourself feel better about things, it doesn't work. I have a buddy who makes \$120/hour working out of a \$300 pickup truck. He paid more for the cap on the back of the truck than he did for the truck. He loves that truck. He's much happier than he would be with a \$1,200 truck payment and he does what he wants, when he wants. You shouldn't be trying to impress anyone with a flashy truck, including yourself. That puts other people in control of your life and how you behave. Don't make grandiose plans that you have no idea how to support.

Avoid the government. Stay away from professions that require excessive or expensive licensing, like running a child's day care center or a food service, like a restaurant or food truck. The up front costs and red tape to get into these businesses is huge and, although the government will expect you to spend all that money to adhere to their laws, no one is guaranteeing that you will succeed. One health inspector can walk in and shut you down in a minute. The government will take your money whether you're making money or losing money, so give them as little opportunity as possible. Keep the government out of your pocketbook. Check your state's licensing authority to see what's required for different work. The regulatory agencies mean well and they think their rules are there to protect the public, but for you this is just another obstacle to your success and puts someone else in control of your life. Take, for instance, electricians. It's a dangerous profession requiring lots of school and practical knowledge and mistakes can lead to disaster. Most electricians starting out have to work for a big company as apprentices making a wage and it takes years to become proficient. The government of their state will always require them to undergo licensing exams and pay for the privilege. A lot of these guys are also unhappy with their pay scale as the company makes a profit and they just make a wage.

Now consider the person who sells and installs custom curtains. All they might need is a local business certificate and an eye for design and they're ready to go. It obviously helps if you know something about curtains and sewing. One of my clients wanted curtains for his

master bedroom and the quote was \$16,000! It is a nice home and some of the curtains are quite large, but as ridiculous as that sounds it was the going rate for that kind of work in that area and a competent craftsman could have made extremely good money doing that job.

And if you screw up a set of curtains you aren't going to burn down the client's house like a botched electrical job might. You just redo them and make the client happy. As far as I know there are no state board licensing exams to make curtains and you can't go to jail or get fined for choosing the wrong shade of green. You don't want anyone to intrude on your relationship with your client, especially a nosy bureaucrat. Stick to jobs with the least amount of nosy government intrusion.

Avoid middle men. The closer you are to the paying customer, the more money you make. Middle men always take a cut that was meant for you, so deal directly with the client. Don't let someone else schedule work for you or manage the payments for you. They're just middle men.

Don't underprice your work. People perceive your value based upon the price you charge. Assuming that you will be professional and do a good job (not all contractors do) a client has very few ways to judge your value if they don't know you yet, so pricing yourself too low in order to look more attractive to a client is likely to have the opposite effect. For example, if you walked into a Mercedes Benz dealership and all the cars were priced normally but one was priced far lower than the expected price, your first reaction would be to think, "What's wrong with this one?" and start looking for signs it was a lemon. Don't do this to yourself.

Don't be late! Being on time is the most basic standard of business behavior throughout the entire civilized world. There are no excuses for being late. Not oversleeping, not culture, not traffic. Plan your route out ahead of time and start early if traffic might be a problem, it's your responsibility to know your territory and its complexities. You would get upset if a flight is delayed or your food arrives an hour later than you expect in a restaurant, right? Nobody else likes it either. So don't be the reason someone has to say to themselves, "what is going on with this idiot?" The unifying force throughout all of modern civilization is the ability to predict and plan your time, and every single individual in the modern world relies on this fact, whether they know it or not. If you do get delayed, TELL YOUR CUSTOMER! They will appreciate knowing.

A good way to avoid getting behind schedule is don't overschedule your time. Don't set up three jobs for the day if one of those jobs could turn into something much longer than you planned for. Unless you are 100% sure that a job will take a certain amount of time, you can bet that something will throw your timing off if you had planned to get to another job later. That task you thought would take an hour might turn into three hours through some unforeseen surprise. Contractors have a very bad reputation as never showing up at the time, or even the day that they promised, and it makes us all look bad! Don't make promises that you can't keep, BE ON TIME, EVERY TIME. And always plan for a customer to throw more

work at you as soon as you get there. It's a common thing, and that's a good thing. More work equals more money. It means they like you.

Don't hire an employee. (Unless it benefits you immediately and it's absolutely necessary.) With hiring employees comes regulation, extra expense and complication. Hiring an employee means that you will now be subject to more regulations and taxes, and the wild card of employee behavior. Will they show up on time or at all? Will they drive drunk and wreck your vehicle? Will they fake getting hurt and sue you? From my experience I can tell you that it's a pretty rare employee who does the job as well as you want them to. It's much better to be in complete control of the job by doing it yourself when you're first starting out. The exception to that rule would be if you can sub contract an experienced pro to do the job for less money than the client is paying you. Then, congratulations, you're the middle man now.

Don't quit your day job (just yet). If you do have a job, it makes sense to keep it as a backup until your side job can support you. At first, schedule your work around your free time from your "real job", then look at your average income per week compared to the job, and make your choice to stay or go. You are your own financial advisor in this situation, so be cool and rational about the decision, not emotional. It's great to be excited about the new endeavor, but in the real world, work can go from busy to slow and back again for unknown reasons. Prepare accordingly.

Don't spend money you don't need to spend. Once you have money rolling in, it's tempting to start going crazy. Eating out at restaurants or treating yourself to that expensive pair of shoes 'just this once, to celebrate' turns into a very expensive habit and soon you will be no farther ahead financially than you were before.

People tend to live up to the standard of their income, and that keeps so many people poor. Live below your income!

You must discipline yourself to save money and gain the advantage in life that earning more money gets you - the ability to have power over your situation, not the pleasure of buying more stuff.

You should have a set, long term goal in mind for your future, a real number that you write down and refer to when planning. If you want to have \$100,000 in cash saved by the end of two years, write it down and work toward it. Make a big chart on the wall. Vague ideas of making more money are not as effective in keeping you on track and disciplined as a real number you can watch growing. The business saying by Peter F. Drucker is, "What gets measured, gets improved." Keep an eye on your money, both income and expenses. Be strict with yourself now, it will pay off later if you have a few slow months or an injury, or if a new opportunity pops up that you can exploit because it takes a bit of cash to pull off. Always be watching for opportunities. Always keep growing.

Don't try to cheat the IRS. Treat the IRS like a gang of the most ruthless, heartless thugs in the world, because that's what they are! If they think you owe them \$500 they will hunt you down and put you in prison or have a cop shoot you. They will spend \$100,000 of tax money (your money) to get \$1,000 out of you. It's not about the money with them, it's about control, and they are deadly serious. Don't mess with the IRS! File your taxes and pay them! Get used to filing quarterly if you're doing enough business.

Don't get discouraged if things don't progress as quickly as you imagined them. It's great to dream, that's what motivates you and gives you hope, but you also have to realize that this is all new to you and you don't yet have a real grasp of everything yet, so your expectations might be way off. Just be patient and keep trying. Keep looking for opportunities.

Don't hit on your clients.

Are you there to do a job, or are you there to get a new booty call? Make up your mind, it can't be both and still be professional. If you're serious about building a business, be professional and separate your work life from your social life.

DOING THE JOB

Do's:

Do a good job. Obviously. Choose a type of service that you can actually do and do it well. If you go to a client's home and can't perform the job, you're killing your business from the start. You want the client to be so happy with the result that they recommend you to their friends. If your attitude is to just get some cash from every person you meet, then you've got the wrong attitude. You should be building a book of repeat customers. If you want to be a con artist then this book is a bad instruction manual for you, just stop reading now and go panhandle at an intersection. Every client should want to hire you back, it costs a lot less in advertising to have them calling you instead of you hunting for new customers to disappoint every week.

Arrive prepared. Make sure you have the tools and knowledge you need to get the job done. I've had clients tell me that their previous contractors had shown up with no tools at all and asked if they had any tools in the house. Seriously, don't be that person. Sometimes it's inevitable, though. Sometimes the client will be vague or inarticulate about what they need done, and that's not your fault that you don't know what they expect. Sometimes they will be evasive on purpose in a misguided attempt to get a lower price based on an inaccurate description of the job. Question them as thoroughly as possible so you know what you're getting into. Price the job according to what you have to do, not what the client thinks you will do. It's also pretty common to require a deposit for materials for a job that requires them, so you don't have to come out of pocket to get started.

Be on time. If you make an appointment for 9:00, make sure you're there at 9:00 O'clock. Now that everyone has a phone with Google Maps on it, there's absolutely no reason to be late. Check the route to where you're going. See how long it takes to get there. Consider the time of day because it will take longer at rush hour. Leave earlier than you think you have to. In my area, I would make appointments with people for ten in the morning, and when I showed up at one minute before ten they acted really surprised and confused. Contractors are just expected to be late. Break the mold and be the one who stands out in a good way. Be remembered for good reasons.

Be well groomed. Good clothes and hygiene go a long way. When you show up at a client's door for the first time, they will form an opinion of you in about three seconds. It's subconscious and they can't help it. Cut your hair neatly. Dress in decent, clean clothes with a collared shirt, don't smell like weed or BO. Smelling like clean laundry, soap and cologne is much better than smelling like you haven't showered in a week and you just smoked a joint to cover up your armpit smell. I'm not exaggerating, I've met those guys.

You can get inexpensive polo shirts at Walmart or Target and it really makes a difference. Same with work pants and footwear.

Treat your client and their home with respect. In addition to being on time, clean, and fully prepared, don't be noticeably high or drunk in your customer's house. It looks unprofessional and it is. Some of my friends are the finest carpenters in the world, and they never work without being high, but they are well known, almost famous in their local areas and have a reputation for God-level work. You do not!

You are still starting out and have to earn the right to be anything less than perfectly professional at all times. When you achieve local celebrity for your work, then you can do what you want. The key word is EARN, not deserve. You are EARNING a reputation, make it a good one. Get that concept into your professional attitude and you can't lose.

Be flexible in what work you will accept / Be on the lookout for new opportunities. In the beginning of my business, I was convinced that I would stick strictly to doing only IKEA furniture assembly and kitchen installs. After all, that was my business plan and I had to stick to the plan, right? Maybe. This went OK for a while and I was doing well, although it was tough to keep a consistent flow of business. A lot of my clients, almost all of them, in fact, asked me if I could do other jobs around the house. At first I didn't take the work, but after a while I did, and two years down the road I ended up doing mostly handyman work and it's a good thing, too! What I was unaware of was that a national company called TaskRabbit had formed to do ALL IKEA installs, and that they had almost completely locked up the national IKEA installation business. In fact, IKEA bought TaskRabbit and controls most of their installs in-house now, completely cutting me out of the IKEA install business. TaskRabbit installers make about one quarter of what I made as a private contractor. If I had been too rigid with sticking only to IKEA installs, I would be out of business! Instead, I have a group of stable clients that keep me very busy with no advertising. And I can still pick up the

occasional IKEA kitchen install from people who are shopping around or don't like the Task Rabbit reviews.

Here are some 'maybe do's' that you can decide for yourself if it's right or not.

Get professional insurance and any business licenses that are absolutely required in your area. There's no sense in allowing a bureaucrat to fine you \$500 because you didn't pay a \$100 licensing fee. Eventually you will encounter a corporate client that requires you to show insurance to work for them. Same with some condo associations. It's your choice whether you want to pay this expense, I've found that it reassures people to know that you're legit enough to have proof of \$100,000 of insurance readily available. Mine costs me about \$800 per year and I make it back in a day. No big deal.

Same goes with offering different methods of payment. Give customers the opportunity to pay with any form of payment that is convenient for them. This makes you look very professional. I use the Quickbooks Self-Employed app that emails invoices with a link to pay online with a credit card. If you're going to use this method you need a business bank account and your Quickbooks account must be connected to it. This allows you to keep good records and pay your taxes. I also accept checks, Venmo, Zelle and cash. Make it convenient for your client to pay you in their preferred way. Link all these payment methods to your business bank account and that way you can keep track of everything with your Quickbooks account.

Getting Business:

I mentioned before that advertising is expensive and not very targeted.

The best position to be in is to have people actively seeking you out because they've already decided to spend money on this job. They're already convinced and looking. That's where the lead services enter the picture.

- [Thumbtack.com](https://www.thumbtack.com). One inexpensive way to get work is through the Thumbtack Pro app. It's what I used exclusively in my first three years of business and it worked very well. Three great features of Thumbtack are that you can pick and choose which jobs to bid on, you can filter for location, and you only pay for the bid if the customer contacts you. This is much better and cheaper than paying thousands of dollars to reach people who don't want your service.

There are two different ways you can use Thumbtack, depending on your business plan. You can allow the Thumbtack algorithm to pick leads for you according to a monthly budget spend, or you can pick and choose which jobs to bid on manually. Each method has its pluses and minuses.

Budget method: The name is misleading, this is the more expensive method. You agree to allow Thumbtack to choose jobs that suit your business and bid on them automatically. If

your business is a straightforward service that never varies, you can probably do well with the budget method. You decide how much money you want to spend a month to buy leads, and Thumbtack will send you leads in your chosen service. Sometimes they will get it right and sometimes they won't. You can manage your monthly lead spend up or down depending on your results.

Here is the real up side to this method: You show up in customer searches. The valuable ability to appear in customer searches, especially if you have a high review rating will get you a lot of attention. If the customers contact you themselves, you don't pay for that lead.

The down side of this method is that the Thumbtack algorithm can send you leads that you might never choose to bid on depending on the location or amount of revenue potential. It's a less efficient way to spend your bidding dollars, but you spend less of your time combing through leads to find the right one than if you use the manual method.

One example is if you assemble furniture for people in their home. Let's say you have a choice between bidding on two leads. One lead is for a twenty-minute job assembling a footstool, making very little money and the job is an hour away. You don't want this job, it's a waste of your time. The other lead is to assemble an entire closet full of wardrobes in your own neighborhood for a payday that is triple your current weekly paycheck. If they both cost \$35 to bid on, which would you choose?

Obviously the big closet job. But Thumbtack's algorithm treats them the same and will put both of them in your leads list and will charge you for both. You won't even make enough money building the footstool to cover the cost of the lead price. It's a worthless lead, unless that's the only thing you know how to do. Will this work for you? Only you can decide. If you don't want this, use the manual method.

Manual method: This is what I used. If you decline to be placed on a monthly budget spend, Thumbtack hides you from customer searches. The HUGE downside to this method is that it greatly reduces your visibility, you don't appear in customer searches, and you have to actively seek out every customer you wish to bid to. The page in your profile that normally shows your leads will be empty, but there will be a tab next to it labeled 'Opportunities' that will show all the customer requests that meet your search criteria but haven't been shown your profile.

Each customer request shows their general location, the type of service that they chose from a menu, and their specific request in their own words, which are often incoherent and not helpful. You can click a button to see the cost of the bid and then decide whether the job is worth bidding on. Sometimes the customers on this list have already contacted other contractors, but you can still gain business this way if you are professional and have good reviews. This method gives you a lot more control over the bids you buy, and you can tailor your work schedule very closely to your desired location and income.

The key is that you have greater control over your spending and the specific jobs you bid on. You can tailor your business to just the right jobs in just the right neighborhoods.

Other ways to get business might be to pay other contractors to send you leads from their clients. For instance, if you are a window washer, you could try asking a curtain contractor to mention your name when they are in the home estimating the job. "Gee, your windows could use a good cleaning, I know a guy." They hand the client your card and if you get the business, you cut them in for the first time you do the job. Everyone is happy.

You can subcontract to bigger contractors. Construction companies sometimes hire crews to clean up a construction site so their highly skilled craftsmen don't have to waste their time doing it.

Real Estate Brokers hire house cleaners and stagers to set up houses before an open house. Everyone has a job they don't want to do themselves. Nobody who drives a Mercedes wants to scrub a floor on a Saturday night. They want to pay you to do it.

Be creative, there are all kinds of resources on the internet about guerilla marketing. Youtube has a steady stream of people to advise you on how to get business.

If you want to explore other methods, you can join TaskRabbit to get work just like anyone else, and Angie's List has changed to just Angi now. I have no experience with either, so maybe you can give them a try and see how it works out. I was under the impression that TaskRabbit dictated what the jobs paid, so, if that's true, in my opinion that's a step in the wrong direction if you want to negotiate your own price for your work, but it's one way you could get your feet wet. TaskRabbit is just another middle man. I've heard of people getting work from ads on Facebook Marketplace, Craigslist and the Nextdoor app. Just be sure to advertise to the neighborhoods where your target customers live. Be very selective who you work for. Once you get work, here are the things that will make you look like a professional and keep the clients that you get.

Keeping clients and building a business.

Some basic facts;

- You want money.
- It is very difficult to get money from people who don't have money.

This should be obvious to everyone, but it isn't. So you need to target the wealthy as clients, or at least target people who are well off enough so they aren't living paycheck-to-paycheck on a budget. They aren't so much worried about the cost of things as they are concerned with their time, so don't waste their time. They also want things done their way, as everyone does, and they expect to get it. But that is exactly your job, giving your clients exactly what they want. So, find the right clients, do a great job so they don't have to think about it, and

they will keep you working. Then they will tell their friends and eventually you'll have all the business you need. Everyone wants to be able to say, "I've got a guy...". If you're really good, some of them will even keep you secret from their friends because they don't want to share you with anyone. By that time, you'll be well known anyway.

EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON YOUR ATTITUDE AND QUALITY OF WORK.

If you want to be in an area with lots of opportunity, it's usually good to live in a city. That's what cities are for, they put all the money and action in one place.

My strategy was to find the cheapest place to live in the most affluent city near me. This will keep your costs down while increasing your odds of greater business opportunities. If you live in a rural or economically depressed area, you're going to have a lot fewer opportunities than you would in a populated area.

You could try cultivating some sort of online business, but that is not my area of expertise, so I can't give you any advice. Just remember that the internet is forever, and your kids will see EVERYTHING some day.

If you can manage it, go where the action is. Move to a city where people can't do anything for themselves or they're just too busy. Then they will hire you to do it for them.

Once you've gotten your feet under you and know what you're doing, you might think about going after government contracts. The US Government pays great money for very simple things. The trick is that you need to jump through some hoops to become a government contractor. There are a few websites to show you how to get government contracts. This violates my philosophy of keeping the government out of your business, but if you don't mind the extra hassle it can be a real gravy train working for the Feds. Wasting your tax money is their full time job! Might as well get some of it back.

Some thoughts on pricing:

There are two ways to price a job, either an hourly rate for your labor, or price for a result. The most experienced professionals price a job based on the results they will provide for the client, because the value of their work isn't based upon their simple labor, it's contained in the vast skill and knowledge that they possess to make a difficult thing happen. If you are first starting out, it might make more sense to get paid hourly if you aren't sure how long a task will take you, or cost you to complete. You will have to decide for yourself, according to the service you provide, how to price your work.

Tools:

Yes, I've said previously that you shouldn't go hog wild spending money, but you will need at least basic tools for any job. You've got to have tools. There's no reason to pay full retail for tools, so here are some ways to get what you need cheaply.

- Harbor Freight. Harbor freight sells inexpensive tools that will serve you just as well as the pricey name brand tools unless you are a hard core contractor using them ten hours a day for years.
- Pawn shops. You can find great tools in pawn shops, just don't expect the batteries of the cordless tools to be great.
- Facebook Marketplace. Always my first choice to find something I want, especially if it would be expensive when bought retail.

If none of these work, there's always Home Depot, Lowes, Grainger, or whatever you've got in your area.

If you've gotten this far you probably have already made up your mind to do something.

I'm not any kind of guru, I'm just a normal guy with a particular experience to share. I hope this has helped to show you that opportunities are everywhere, you just need to look outside the bubble that you're in.

YOU ALWAYS MISS THE SHOTS YOU DON'T TAKE.

You can do it!