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**James:** James Schramko here, welcome to SuperFastBusiness.com. Today, we're going into the realm of mindset, so I've invited a special guest, Paul Hoffman, to come along and talk about that. Hey, Paul.

**Paul:** Hey, James. How are you doing, buddy?

**James:** Good. We've had the opportunity to catch up many times. We've been hanging out in Santa Monica, and in other countries, among other places. And you're somewhat an expert in designing your own life, which you have a phrase, I think you call it "sculpting."

**Paul:** I do. That's very good, you remembered.

### **Uncovering Your David**

**James:** Well, I really think it borrows heavily from the statue of David metaphor...

**Paul:** Absolutely.

**James:** ...where the statue's buried somewhere in that block of marble, and with a few little bit of sculpting, a bit of chisel work and some craftsmanship you can find that perfect statue of David inside the block of marble. And we've been fortunate enough to discuss ideas around this back and forth, and it parallels in many ways some of the things that happened when I went from having a job to becoming an independent business owner. It's just deciding that I want to go for that statue and to make it. Now, in the process of doing that, I think a lot goes on mindset-wise, and I think it'd be great if we could cover a few of the main obstacles that

hold people back from creating their own statue, from being the perfect sculptor, so to speak. Is that cool if we cover some of this stuff?

**Paul:** Absolutely, man.

### **The Three Biggest Obstacles To Success**

**James:** Now, I know you have a website called the [SuccessCreationInstitute.com](#), where our listeners could check out more information, but what I'd like to do is cherry-pick a couple of ideas. I know you've got so much stuff, but let's just go for three. I'm going to ask you... I'm going to put you on the spot here, what do you think are the three biggest obstacles are for people sculpting their perfect life?

**Paul:** Procrastination, waiting for the right time to do something, which is different from procrastination and the third one, is getting bogged down in distractions.

**James:** The second one sounds like a perfectionist.

**Paul:** It's absolutely perfectionists. We all have brilliant, genius ideas, we all have this big vision that we want to do. We all have that sweet spot in our life. You know, the one thing that we want to do, whether or not we're doing it at the present moment doesn't really matter. The truth of the matter is that we have that vision, and it's kind of like the whole sculpting your life thing that we talked about which we can get into in a little bit, but what happens is that most people won't take an action until they feel, I'm just going to say it, that they're "ready for it." And "ready" might mean: Do I have enough money? Do I know the right people? I need to learn a little bit more, whatever the excuse is for the excuse. And so what I teach people in the work that I do is the first thing that you need to do is you just need to jump into it.

### **Either-Or**

**Paul:** There's a principle that I have, and you and I have talked about this before, it's called the "Either-Or Principle". And it's basically either you're going to do it or you're not. It's not rocket science. And so, rather than wait for the perfect time for something to be so that you can do it, the truth of the matter is you've just got to go in and do it. Because most of the time you're going to make a mistake anyway, and you're going to learn by the mistake, and the greatest inventions in the world were made by mistakes. I mean, I remember the story I read about the guy that invented Velcro, which you know, turned out to be a pretty big product for the 3M company, if you will. And he basically was walking his dog, in some kind of a heavily-forested area, and noticed that there were burrs on his dog when he got home. And he picked them off,

and he realized, wait a minute, this is a great concept for something else. And so, if you would just kind of get out of your own way and give yourself permission to just take the leap of faith and do things, then you'll find one of two things will happen, James. Either it's going to be the right thing for you, or it's not. And again, it's that either-or kind of thing.

**James:** Still kind of like my expression of "if not now, when?"

**Paul:** Exactly.

**James:** And we kind of know the answer, like, it's never going to happen.

**Paul:** Right. If you keep saying, "Well if not now, when?" or "I'll just wait," it'll never happen, because what will happen is, and this brings mindset into it, what'll happen is, you'll begin to make up things as to why either you don't deserve to do it, or you shouldn't do it, or who do you think you are, or even, some people in your environment, and of course I would encourage people to get rid of these people, will tell you, who do you think you are to even try to do it. You know what I mean?

**James:** Well, what if someone's going to do something like they're going to go on a talent show as a singer and they can't sing, and someone says, "Hey, you know, listen, Paul, you can't sing. Maybe you should reconsider that application." Like, aren't some people trying to save us from a terrible mistake?

**Paul:** That might be one way to look at it. But the truth of the matter is, who is it a mistake to? It's their perception, right?

**James:** Exactly.

### **Don't Give Up Your Power**

**Paul:** So then, what that means to me is, again, one of the things you should never do is give your power up to somebody else. I mean, it's a great example that you brought that up, because you know, that whole singing example happened in my life. Now I've been very fortunate to be... I'm a songwriter. I mean, I'm a self-taught songwriter. I didn't know how to play the piano, I didn't know any of that stuff until I was in my late 20s. I was in the jingle business, and I wrote a very famous jingle, which is, (sings: Have you driven a Ford lately?), which is in the advertising hall of fame. I taught myself how to play, and at one time, after I wrote that jingle, I wanted to sing it. I wanted to sing it. And everybody said, "Hey, you can't sing it." So we hired this other, this amazing singer to sing it. And she sang it great, don't get me wrong, but one day we were doing a commercial for the... they had a car back then called

the Escort. And I said, “You know what? I’m going to sing the solo on this commercial.” And I stopped listening to everybody telling me I couldn’t do it. And I didn’t get caught up in the fact that there might be some wrong notes, or it might be a little edgy or whatever it might be, but I just went for it. And the truth of the matter is, it was a huge success. And some of our greatest singers in the world, you know, they can’t really sing.

**James:** I think that Britain’s You’ve Got Talent, that Paul guy, he didn’t have a good run with Pavarotti at some point, but he came back.

**Paul:** Exactly. So again, the whole thing is, is like, you know, James, listen, you were very successful in the business world. And then one day you decided to go into the superfast thing that you’re doing now, and I bet, and I could be wrong, but I bet that when you made that decision, you had some fear about that.

**James:** Well, it’s like you were saying before. There were people around me, concerned for me, they were saying, listen, you’re spending a lot of time on that computer, and not making any money. Like, you’re sure you know what you’re doing there? And then I remember at one point, someone pretty close to me said, “If you keep working this hard, you’ll probably kill yourself.”

**Paul:** “You’ll probably kill yourself?” Yeah. They were trying to feed all this negative information into your consciousness, based on their perception of what they thought you should be doing. And I’m not saying that’s right or wrong, because I’m not here to judge. But the truth of the matter is, the only way anybody’s going to get to the next level is, listen, I was in the jingle business for many, many years. Highly successful, writing songs for advertising. And then one day I met a gentleman in the personal development world, his name was T. Harv Eker. And he was the catalyst for me to start going out and speaking about how you can change your mindset and create whatever it is that you want in my life. I didn’t speak. I mean, I was never a speaker, and I didn’t even know what personal development was. But I took a leap of faith, and you know what? I fell on my face a few times, but the truth of the matter is, I was passionate about it. I believed in myself. And to begin with, if you don’t believe in your ability to create whatever it is that you want in your life, you’re never going to do it, because your mind is always going to follow the thoughts that you think about either yourself, or what you want to do in your life, or whatever it might be. And the truth of the matter is, you have the ability to control your thinking. And unless you know how to do that, or unless you believe that you can do that,

then what's going to happen is you're going to be doing the same thing over and over again, and I think that's the definition of insanity, right?

**James:** Right. So a lot of people don't think that they actually have control over their own thoughts.

**Paul:** Well, because you know, they're so caught up in "Do I look right?" "Is this the right way to do it?" I mean, they're so caught up in wanting to look good. Look good. And again, I'm not trying to fault you, but human nature is to want to look good. Or they're trying to impress somebody.

**James:** So basically, you're saying that, don't give the power to other people to do your thinking for you. You can have your independent thought and decide what's best for you.

**Paul:** Absolutely.

### **Just Take Action**

**James:** Beautiful. So that's how you handle the waiting for the perfect action and stop being a perfectionist. You just take an imperfect action and get going and accept that some things aren't going to work out just right, but you can modify them as you go. Something like that?

**Paul:** Just get out of your own way. Don't get into the results. Just get into the action. Right?

**James:** As long as they're the right actions.

**Paul:** Of course. And sometimes they won't be.

**James:** Well, I see a lot of people say, "Take action. Take action," but I often think, well, if I'm in the desert, and there's a watering hole north, and I walk south, I'm taking action but it's not going to help me at all. It'll make things worse.

**Paul:** But sooner or later, you're going to know, right? That it's the wrong action, right?

**James:** Well, basically, if you don't know whether it's north or south, I guess you just have to take a bet on it. But if you can find out where the watering hole is, and then take action, that's good. So the action would be, first, discover watering hole. I guess we're talking about planning versus implementing. And maybe some people like have planned it in so much detail, they know where the watering hole is, they know what it's made out of, they know how deep it is, they know what sort of bucket it has, the type of chain and the winch, they're still not walking. And they've got way too much information already; they could have just, as soon as they know that it's north, start walking and then hone in on it.

**Paul:** Right. And you know, it's interesting, again, I think you and I have the same take on things. For me, it's like, even if I'm going in the wrong direction, the whole concept of being able to course correct as you're going... Now when you started your business, I'm sure it didn't take off overnight. Right? I mean, it might have taken a little bit of time, but you had to make some corrections and some choices, and you learned certain things and so forth, right?

**James:** Business is dynamic, as is everything in the universe, right down to the atom in your desk, it's vibrating back and forth, so yes.

**Paul:** Right. So you went through the process, and you learned how to be aware. You learned how to be aware; you were present with everything that was going on, so you knew what you needed to do to get to your desired destination, right?

**James:** Well, sometimes I didn't know how I was going to get there, and what I...

### **Having Your Why**

**Paul:** I didn't say you needed to know how to get there, but you knew... You know, you've heard the expression, "As long as you know why, the how's going to take care of itself"?

**James:** Yeah, I think so, and I think Simon Sinek's made that popular.

**Paul:** Yeah, exactly.

**James:** For me, I just knew that I needed to not be in the environment that I was in, so it was a bit of an away from motivation at a certain point, because I really felt like a chicken sitting on a guillotine, waiting for it to come down and slice my neck off, because being paid by one person is very dangerous, in a luxury market where money's drying up. I felt that it was a ticking time bomb. So there's my why. My why was very clear. The how, the what, you know; there was no Internet when I wanted to have my own business in the beginning, like pre-'96. So I'm not sure how I could have done what I'm doing now if I was born at a different time. I'm very fortunate that things worked out the way they did. But yeah, eventually things started to come in and now I actually dedicate quite a lot of my time to thinking about where I would like to take the business, what would be the most useful strategy to aim for, and then to fill in all the tactics. So I'm much, much clearer on the how. And now I in fact help other people do that. So it is a process, but certainly in the beginning, I did put in a lot of energy burned to get a result that wasn't that great compared to what sort of results I can get now with the same amount of energy.

**Paul:** Right. And that's because you've grown, you've learned, you understand, you're more aware, you're more keen, you're more understanding and you're more honed in to what your gifts and your talents are in bringing your business to where it needs to go to.

### **Dealing with Procrastination**

**James:** Exactly. So let's cover procrastination.

**Paul:** OK.

**James:** What if you just can't get anything done? I suppose people get overwhelmed, or have too much choice or they're not sure what they should do. What causes procrastination?

**Paul:** Right. Well, you know, if you can't get anything done, with all due respect, obviously you're doing something wrong. And you can correct that. The thing about procrastination is... I used to be one of those kind of guys, James, that made a list of 25 things to do each day. Right? And I couldn't wait to put number 26 on it because that made me feel I was more productive.

**James:** Right.

**Paul:** And I would end up doing three things. Right? And for the longest time, I would beat myself up about the other 22. Right? And most of the things on that list were things I shouldn't do. Because I was never focused in on what my core strength was. And so what I teach people through the work that I do, and in fact my program called "Day Sculpting" is actually focus in on what your core strength is. What are the things that you are good at doing? And only do those things. And delegate everything else to somebody else. So I could remember that I would want to learn how to create a website. And that's not my strength. I don't even know the first thing about code.

I mean, I remember there was one time when I... A lot of my programs are online coaching stuff, and it involved either hangouts or calls like this or teleseminars, whatever it might be, and at the end of it, you post the recording so people who couldn't make the call would listen to it. And I remember my tech guy, I said to him one day, his name was Ted, "Ted, you know, rather than wake you up at midnight..." Because I'm one of those kind of guys, when I do a call, I'll stay on the call until the last person has a question. Might be an hour, might be three hours. Whatever it is, I believe in delivering value. And so I said to Ted, I said, "You know, man, I don't want to call you at like midnight and have you post the call, because I wanted to make sure the

calls got up immediately. So why don't you tell me how to do that?" And he said to me, he said, "Paul, that's a little bit above your skillset." And I never forgot it.

So the truth of the matter is, I only do the things that I'm good at. And I break it down to what are the three things that I need to do today? The reason most people procrastinate is either they're in fear of trying something and not feeling it's going to work, they're looking for an excuse because maybe they feel that they're not worthy enough to try it. Most people will, it's funny and I used to do this, and so everything I talk about I've experienced. I remember I have deadlines. I remember, OK I got to get this thing done and I try to find everything else to do other than what I needed to do. So, if I had a deadline to write some copy or create a program, I might say: "Well, I think I might clean the garage today." So, we tend to avoid the stuff that we need to do because of some particular mindset or thought about our ability to accomplish it in the way that we think we need to accomplish it which gets into this whole concept of expectations. And what I believe about expectations is expectations will always lead to disappointments because you've set this bar for yourself and chances are, you'll never reach the bar because you've set it at an unreachable level. And so, procrastination comes in because you've convinced yourself that you'll never be able to accomplish it.

**James:** Exactly.

**Paul:** And so, it comes down to mindset. And so I know you teach amazing stuff. I mean I've seen your program. I think you're one of the people that I resonate with because you're high in integrity and authentic but the truth of the matter is if you can give people small steps to get to the place that they want to get to, and of course they're telling you where they want to get to, then they'll actually get there. But if you leave it to their own devices, they're going to try to do too many things that get in the way of what they really want to create in their life. And so what they'll do is they'll end up procrastinating.

It's funny, (line cut out for editing) I was at an event while speaking at it. It was about teaching people how to write books and getting in the right mindset about how to be creative and so forth. I remember I met a friend of mine there who had a PR company and we were talking about procrastination and he said: "You know what? Procrastination is kind of like any other kind of organization that people don't want you to know that they procrastinate." He said: "You know what? You should maybe get the website ProcrastinationAnonymous.com, right?" And I did. So, I haven't done anything with it but again, procrastination is just another way to avoid what it is that you truly wanted to do because you're totally getting in the way of yourself and if

you would just kind of let it all go and believe that you could have it and not worry about the outcome and the expectation, you'll get to that place much quicker. So, that's my take on procrastination.

**James:** Perfect. Alright, that's some useful tips right there. So, just keeping it into very small steps, little bite-size pieces and don't do things that you shouldn't be doing in the first place.

**Paul:** Absolutely.

**James:** Something we talk about a lot in my group is writing that big list of everything that you think you have to do and then give it to someone else.

**Paul:** That's a good move.

### **Distraction and Human Nature**

**James:** Then there is distraction. So, what about if you're constantly getting distracted and you're lacking focus?

**Paul:** Well, it's funny. Again, all three of these things kind of work hand-in-hand – waiting for the right time, procrastination, distractions. The truth of the matter is you could take them on your own but together, they kind of all work on the same thing. And again, distractions are really how your mind is avoiding what it is that you're trying to tell it to do but you're not doing the right kinds of things that give you the inspiration or the motivation or the empowerment to do it. We live in a world that's highly distracted, OK? Now, I'll take you as an example. You're not a distracted person as far as I could tell and I know you pretty well. You love to surf, right?

**James:** Uh-uh.

**Paul:** You could get distracted by your love of surfing so that all of a sudden you're not doing all of the other things you're doing. But since you're a highly systemized and organized human being, you fit that stuff in so that you can make sure that everything else that you do in your life – your business, [the coaching that you do](#), the ability to take people to the next level in their life, your relationship. All that stuff, you make sure all that stuff is taken care of so you can surf without having to feel bad about anything else that you're doing at that moment. Would that be accurate?

**James:** Yeah, trying to treat it like as if time is a bucket. You have a limited quantity and then you have to fit all the rocks and the sand and the pebbles in the bucket and you certainly can do it.

**Paul:** Right, and the stuff that's important to you. Right?

**James:** Yeah.

**Paul:** And so...

**James:** So, the rocks go in first which means I don't podcast at high tide because I'd rather allocate that time to surfing.

**Paul:** Exactly! To surfing.

**James:** I'd rather podcast when there's a closeout so it's not surfable because there's no conflict then.

**Paul:** Exactly! Right, and so I'm talking to you today. You're in Sydney, Australia. I'm in Marina del Rey, California. It's quarter to six at night my time. I've had an amazing, highly productive day today and so now I can focus in on this. So, distractions, technology is a wonderful thing but again, it's either/or – either it can distract you from you doing the stuff that you need to do to create the success you want in your life wherever that might be, whatever it might be for you; or you can use it as a means to inspire or empower you to do what it is that you want to do, so you do it in a much more high level kind of way.

So one of the things that I teach people is I don't sleep with my phone next to my bed. Because I know if I did, then I would look at it as soon as I wake up in the morning. And so, for me, when I wake up in the morning, the first thing I want to do is spend the first 20 minutes of my day on me and getting myself into the right frame of mind. So, I'm not distracted by anything that takes me out of my routine or my ritual if you will and I think human nature is to try to find magic bullet or the shiny penny. And I say that because most people, I mean if you've ever done any personal development courses and I've spoken at a lot of personal development or big seminars – multi-speaker, whatever it might be; and I find that people end up looking for that next big fix without even looking at the fixes that they already accumulated. Does that make sense?

**James:** Yup.

**Paul:** And so human nature is to be distracted and to take the eye off of what it is that you want to create. So distractions are one of the biggest pitfalls into creating success in your life, wherever that might be. I mean, if you're in a relationship with somebody and you're trying to take the relationship to the next level and you're sitting there talking to them and you're basically not paying attention because you're distracted by "Oh, I forgot to do whatever it might be," you're never going to get to the deepest level with that relationship or the same

thing happens in business or whatever it might be. So, distractions have a tendency to take you off your game. And so what I teach people to do is I teach them to schedule. I teach them to schedule in all the things you need to do and make sure you get those done before you get distracted by things that aren't really in the mainstream of what you're trying to create in your life.

**James:** Yup. So basically, if you want to eliminate distraction and get more focus, you actually build-in activities into your schedule so that they just come along and happen rather than you having to initiate something.

### **Three Big Things (Rocks)**

**Paul:** Right. Well, you know for me, I mean I find that, again, I have this program called: "Day Sculpting" and so Day Sculpting is about creating a success routine, it's about creating habits and it's about creating a plan for your day and I do three things a day. I do three big, you talk about big rocks right? I do three big rocks a day. One of my big rocks today was talking to you. The other two were I had to work in my studio on a piece of music for my sculptures program and I had to work on finalizing some copy for a landing page. Those were the three things that I needed to do today. That's all I needed to do. As long as I got those done, then I didn't have any distractions around it but I scheduled them.

**James:** Yeah, that's exactly the same as me. Your podcast, [Ezra's podcast](#) and surf. They're the three things that I wanted to do today. This is number three and it's not even lunch time.

**Paul:** Great. Exactly. And all I do is three things because I know, first of all, I know that I don't need to do 25 things if I do three things really well. So again, I'm doing this podcast with you and it's very important that we have a really amazing, creative, inspiring dialogue so that whoever's going to listen to this, I'm not trying to sell anybody anything and you're not asking me to, what we're trying to do is deliver content to somebody that can help them. So, my focus is OK, how can I show up in the biggest, most powerful way that I can for you and your people, right?

**James:** Yup and that's how we come up with the framework that probably helps the majority of listeners because if we're honest, we've at some times do feel procrastination, perfection or distraction.

**Paul:** Absolutely. And then, writing copy for a squeeze page. Then you know, I mean I've got to focus in on OK, every word, every comma, everything to make sure that what somebody's going to see when they come to my site, they're going to want to opt-in for because I want

them to get this content that I believe is going to transform their life. And then working on this piece of music today that I'm doing for somebody that I'm creating a sculptation for which is my brain entrainment technology. I've got to like focus in on that. I mean that's plenty of stuff for me to do today so I'm only going to do three things every day that help me get me to what I call my chief aim. And so, if you're going to give yourself the permission to do that but don't be distracted by things. Again, I associate distraction to avoidance. And again, I'm not trying to criticize but the truth of the matter is if you get distracted, you're trying to avoid something that you really need to do that deep down you know is going to propel you forward but for some reason you're just not doing it. And so, you got to take a look at your patterns, your behaviors, your habits and your beliefs around things.

### **Summary and Action Step**

**James:** Perfect. So, I think we've probably helped somebody tune at least one thing. Let's see if we can wrap this up into a bundle here. So, if we were to summarize the key points, it is that you should be avoiding doing activities that you should never be doing in the first place, you should just get started with it and you're getting started with it because it's been scheduled in in advance, you've planned out what you want to do and you actually build the time for that. So that if the time comes along, the task appears, it's the right task because it's something you should be doing and you don't have too many of them, so you do it. Is that right?

**Paul:** Absolutely.

**James:** What will be a good action step for our listener to take today?

**Paul:** We all either use our smartphones, our computers, our mobile devices, iPads, whatever it is and chances are, most people either use Google Calendar or some kind of calendar program, unless we're old school, we use day timers which is fine as well, OK? Just write down what your three big rocks are for the day. So for me, I got a rock in there, five o'clock it's called: Interview with James Schramko, right? Just plot it out. Plan it out. And then, everything else that you're going to do during your day is planned around your three rocks. So once you put it down, once you get it out of your head and out and onto paper or onto whatever it might be, then that's an action step. So, there's activity involved with that. Right?

**James:** Yes.

**Paul:** And then, you make it happen. I mean, as simple as it sounds, that would be what I would do.

**James:** Well, that's working for you and working for lots of other people. You've got more material on [SuccessCreationInstitute.com](#).

**Paul:** Yes sir.

**James:** Paul, thanks so much for sharing these ideas with us.

**Paul:** Oh man, James, thank you so much for having me. I really appreciate it and I just want to say that those of you that are listening to this, I know that James is very much of an inspiration and a positive influence in your life and he does great stuff and I'm just blessed that you and I connected and anything I can do to help you and your people, please just let me know.

**James:** Thank you. I'll have to keep in mind if I ever need a serious jingle. You've got some massive credentials there.

**Paul:** I could write this whole sculptation brain thing which I should talk to you about at some point too, we can maybe talk about it some other time but I could always write: See James on a surfboard, we could write a song around that.

**James:** Oh, don't give my listeners ideas they'll probably...

**Paul:** Alright then, never mind, OK.

**James:** Thanks Paul, see you.

**Paul:** Bye.

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