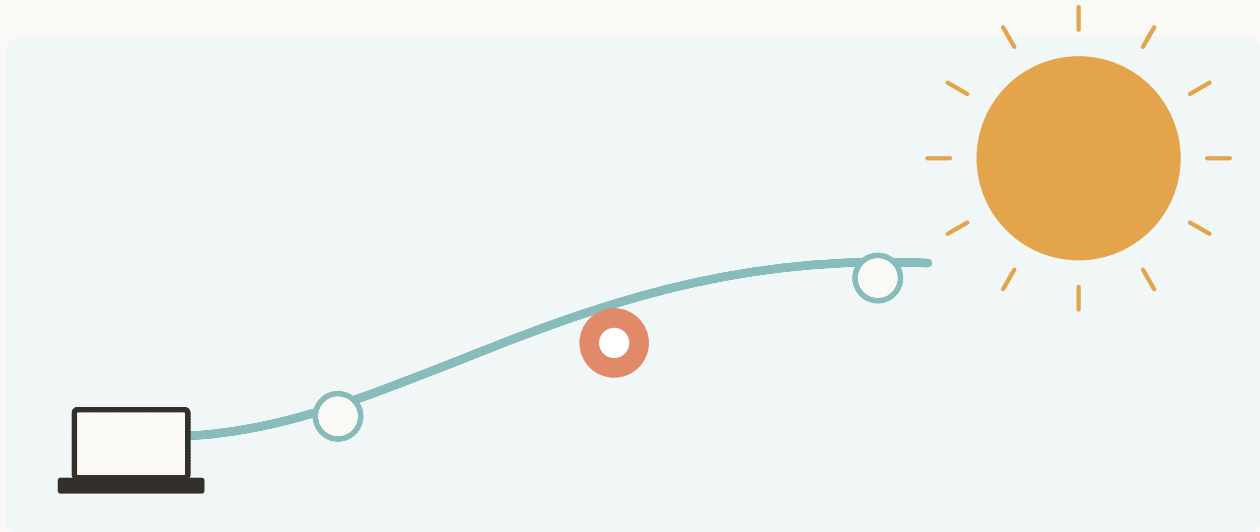




THE LAPTOP BOSS

The Plotter

90-Day Plan

You've got the idea. The next 90 days give you the order.

All 13 weeks, in order. What to do, what to decide, and roughly how long it takes.

Where you're starting

A plotter is someone who's been quietly working it out. Circling an idea, half-testing it, thinking it through in the gaps. That's real work, and it's why you're further along than you gave yourself credit for. What's been missing is the route.

So this plan is mostly sequence. It takes what you already have, tests it properly once, then puts the essentials in the order that stops them tangling. The end of week 13 has something of yours live and buyable.

The salary keeps landing throughout. Nothing here needs you to jump.

If you've tried this before and stopped

Then read this bit twice. Starting a business used to mean somewhere north of 150 separate tasks, most of them boring, many of them writing, all of them landing on one person after a full day's work.

People didn't stall because they lacked grit. They stalled because the workload was genuinely unreasonable, and nobody said so out loud.

That's the part that changed. The heavy lifting, the drafting, the blank pages, the rewriting, hands over to AI now. What's left for you is the deciding, and deciding is the part you were always able to do.

How to use this plan

Read one week at a time. Not the whole thing in one sitting, however tempting that is. Each week is written to be opened on the Monday and closed on the Sunday, and reading ahead mostly produces worry about decisions you don't have to make yet.

Every week has three parts: what to do, the one decision that's yours, and roughly how long it takes. The time estimates assume you're tired and doing this around a job, because you probably are.

If a week takes you two weeks, it takes you two weeks. The order matters far more than the pace, and the order is the thing most people get wrong.

Four things worth doing before week 1

- 1 **Pick where this lives.** One notebook, one document, one folder. Somewhere your lists, notes and half-thoughts all land in the same place. Ideas that live in six apps quietly disappear.
- 2 **Book the time.** Look at next week and find the hours. Put them in your calendar now, with a name, before anything else claims them. An hour or two is genuinely enough to start.
- 3 **Decide who knows.** You don't owe anyone an announcement. Some people work better with one person cheering them on, others need the quiet. Choose on purpose rather than by accident, and check your employment contract while you're thinking about it.
- 4 **Write down why.** One line, today, before the work starts. On the weeks where nothing seems to move, that line is what gets you back to the desk. Keep it where you'll see it.

What your destination changes

All four destinations are here on purpose. Most people sit somewhere between two of them at the start, and plenty change their mind by week 6 once the idea gets real. So read yours, then read the others. Knowing what the alternatives ask of you is part of choosing properly, and it costs two minutes now instead of a rebuild in month four.

The 13 weeks are the same whichever one you picked. Your destination changes one thing, and it's the big one: what shape of business is worth building in the first place.

The Jet Setter

Everything you build has to survive patchy wifi and a five-hour time difference. That rules out anything delivered live to a fixed UK diary, and anything needing you physically in a room. What's left is still enormous: written work, recorded work, things that sell while you're on a plane. Your plan makes you test the idea against that at week 2, when changing course is free, rather than at week 9 when it's built.

The Own Hours Boss

You've got the widest choice of anyone here, and that's the trap. When you're not building around flights or around a day job, almost any shape of business works, so the deciding gets postponed. Your plan pushes you to pick a shape early and commit to it. The one rule worth honouring: build something where the work fits your rhythm rather than someone else's diary, or you'll rebuild your commute in a different shape.

The Side Hustler

Your constraint isn't where you are, it's the diary. Whatever you build has to be deliverable in evenings and weekends, without a client expecting you at 2pm on a Tuesday. That points away from scheduled calls and towards work you do in your own time. The upside nobody mentions: keeping the salary lets you be picky and slow in a way full-timers can't afford to be. Your plan treats that as an advantage.

The Free Agent

Wanting the choice is a real answer, and it carries a real risk: building something so flexible it never becomes anything. The freedom you're after comes from the business running without you being in a particular place at a particular hour, so that's the test to hold every idea against. Your plan asks you to commit to one shape first and collect the flexibility afterwards, because it arrives as a result rather than a starting condition.

Lock the idea

Week 1 · Name the micro-problem

Most ideas at this stage describe a category rather than a problem. This week you narrow yours until it names one specific problem, for one specific kind of person. Narrowing feels risky and is the thing that makes everything after it easier.

This week. Write your idea in one sentence, then narrow it until it names a single problem for a single kind of person. “I help women in corporate get organised” is a category. “I help newly promoted managers stop drowning in their first 90 days” is a business. Before you commit to it, hold the idea against your destination from the page before this one: could you actually run this alongside the life you want?

The decision. The one problem your first offer solves.

About 45 minutes.

Week 2 · Line up ten conversations

You're lining up ten short conversations with people who have that problem. This week is only the asking, not the talking.

This week. List 10 people with that problem and ask each for 20 minutes. Ten, because you'll get six or seven, and six is where the patterns show.

The decision. Who's on the list.

About 40 minutes.

The ask

“Hi [name], I'm working on something for people dealing with [problem] and I'd rather build it from real experience than guesswork. Could I ask you about yours for 20 minutes? Nothing to buy, I promise.”

Week 3 • Run them

This week you have the conversations, twenty minutes each, on a call or over coffee. Write down the exact words people use, not your tidy summary of them.

This week. Have the conversations. Same five questions as any good validation call: what do you do now, what's the worst part, what have you tried, what did it cost, what would need to be true to fix it properly. Write down their exact phrases.

The decision. None yet.

About 2 to 3 hours across the week.

Week 4 • Decide what you heard

Now you turn what you heard into a decision. The idea gets confirmed, adjusted or replaced this week, and all three of those are good outcomes.

This week. Mark every phrase that came up twice or more. Then make the call: the problem is confirmed, the problem needs adjusting, or you were solving the wrong one. All three are wins in week 4 and disasters in week 40.

The decision. The locked problem and who has it.

About 60 minutes.

PHASE 2, WEEKS 5 TO 9

The essentials, in the order that works

Why this order

Name before anything that carries the name, money route before you can take money, legal basics before you're publicly trading, page last because it needs the other four decided. Doing these out of order is what forces the rebuild in week 11.

Week 5 • Name it

This week you name the business. You'll also check the name is genuinely free: a web address nobody owns, a social handle that's available, and nobody in your field already trading under it.

This week. Draft 15 name options. Check each for a usable domain and social handle, and search whether someone in your field already trades under it. Say your favourites out loud on a phone call, which is where bad names reveal themselves.

The decision. The name.

About 90 minutes.

Week 6 • The legal basics

This is the admin week nobody enjoys and everybody needs. You're finding out what your country expects from someone earning money alongside a job, and doing the piece that's due now. This plan points you at the questions; it doesn't answer them for your situation, so if anything looks complicated, an hour with an accountant is money well spent.

This week. Find out what your country needs from you: sole trader or company, tax registration, and whether you need to register for handling people's data. Then do the one that's due now. Check your employment contract for anything about outside work while you're at it.

The decision. The structure you're starting with. Simple is usually right at this stage.

About 2 hours, and it's admin, so put music on.

Week 7 • The money route

This week is about how money actually reaches you. That means a payment tool that takes card payments online. Stripe and PayPal are the two everyone uses, and if you're on [Systeme.io](https://systeme.io) it connects straight to both, so this is a short job rather than a project. You'll also want a separate account so business money never mixes with your own.

This week. Decide how money gets from a customer to you: the payment tool, the account it lands in, and how you'll keep business money separate from personal. Set it up this week rather than the week you need it.

The decision. Which tools, and the account.

About 90 minutes.

Week 8 • Shape the offer

Now you decide what you're actually selling. Not the whole business, just the first thing a person can buy from you.

This week. Write what your first offer includes, what it doesn't, and what someone gets by the end. Keep it small enough to deliver twice without dreading it. Price it at what feels slightly uncomfortable and check it against what similar things cost.

The decision. What's in, what's out, what it costs.

About 2 hours.

Week 9 • Draft the words

This week you write the words that do the selling, with AI drafting first. You'll open a free AI tool (ChatGPT or Claude), tell it who this is for and what it does, paste in the phrases you collected in week 4, and edit what comes back until it sounds like you.

This week. Draft your page copy with AI: who it's for, what it solves, what's included, what it costs, how to buy. Use the phrases from week 4, because those are your buyers' own words. Your job is deciding and editing.

The decision. Whether it sounds like you and says the true thing.

About 2 hours.

PHASE 3, WEEKS 10 TO 13

Shop front live

Week 10 • Build the page

This week your business gets somewhere to live: one web page, on a builder where you drag blocks around rather than write code. **The one I'd recommend is [Systeme.io](https://systeme.io)**, which is what I use: the free plan covers this, and it also does your emails and takes your payments, so you're not signing up to three separate things. Carrd and Wix are the other names you'll see.

This week. One page. Headline, who it's for, what they get, price, a button. Resist adding a second page; the second page is where launches go to die.

The decision. Live or not live. Live wins.

About 3 to 4 hours.

Week 11 • The way in

Plenty of people who visit won't be ready to buy yet. This week you give them a way to stay in touch: an email signup box on your page, with something genuinely useful behind it. If you went with [Systeme.io](https://systeme.io) in week 10, the emails are already in there, so there's nothing new to sign up for.

This week. Add one way for people to stay in touch who aren't ready to buy: an email signup with one genuinely useful thing behind it. Small and real.

The decision. What the useful thing is.

About 2 to 3 hours.

Week 12 · Tell people it exists

Nothing sells from a page nobody knows exists. This week you tell people, in your own words, at whatever level of public you're comfortable with.

This week. Tell your network, in your own words, that you've built something. One post, a handful of individual messages to people who'd want to know. Individual messages outperform the post, every time.

The decision. How public you're going, and where.

About 90 minutes.

If you're nervous about who sees it, this works

"I've built something on the side that I'm quietly proud of. It's for [who] dealing with [problem]. If that's not you, no worries at all, and if you know someone it might be, I'd love you to send it on."

Week 13 · Read the signals

The last week is for looking honestly at what happened and deciding what the next quarter is for.

This week. Go and look at what actually happened, with the numbers in front of you rather than the feeling you have about it. How many people saw the page, how many left an email address, how many asked a question, how many bought. Write the numbers down even if they're small, because small numbers are still data and this is the last quarter you'll ever have to guess. Read back the questions people asked you too: those are the objections your page hasn't answered yet, handed to you free.

Then write the next 90 days on one page. More of whatever produced a response, less of whatever produced silence, and the single biggest thing to fix. Resist rebuilding everything. One quarter of real signals is enough to sharpen what you've got and nowhere near enough to justify starting again. If nobody bought yet, that isn't a verdict on the business, it's a first read on a page that's been live for a fortnight.

The decision. What the next quarter is for, and the one thing you're fixing first.

About 60 to 90 minutes.

Where this leaves you

You started this quarter plotting. You end it with a locked problem, evidence in your buyers' own words, a name, the legal and money basics done, and something live that someone can buy. The plotting was never the problem. It was the map.

What happens next

You've got the map now. Every week tells you what to do, what you're deciding, and roughly how long it should take.

This plan gets you from a locked idea to a shop front that's live. The Launchpad is the full distance: everything it takes to go from an idea to a business that's up, running and taking money, with the guessing removed. You're already halfway. If you'd like the whole build laid out and done with you, that's what I made **The Laptop Boss Launchpad** for.

It's the complete launch system: everything it takes to start an online business of your own and get it properly live, from the very first steps through to your first sale. Not a version of this 90-day plan, the whole build. It's broken into small jobs you tick off one at a time, so you always know what today's is. It comes with ready-made templates for the fiddly parts, like your page and your emails, so you're never staring at a blank screen. And it comes with a set of AI helpers I made that write the first draft with you, in your own words, so the writing stops being the thing that holds everything up.

You don't have to go looking for it. You're on my email list, so that's where I'll tell you all about it.

Until then, week 1 is sitting there waiting. It starts whenever you decide it does.

All my best,
Nichola

Who wrote this plan

I'm Nichola. I spent 20 years in corporate life before I sold up in London and moved to a village in France to build something of my own. It was harder than anyone had told me it would be, and I got through it the slow way, by project-managing myself through every single task, years before AI could carry any of it.

That's where this plan comes from: the order I worked out the hard way, written down properly so you don't have to.

One thing you should know

Where I've recommended [Systeme.io](#), I'm an affiliate: if you sign up through my link I earn a commission, at no extra cost to you. I recommend it because it's what I run my own business on and its free plan genuinely does the job. Nothing in this plan needs paying for in your first 90 days.