**TBP 250 Edited\_Transcription**

[Daniel Hill] (0:05 - 29:36)

Welcome to the Blueprint Podcast. In these episodes, I'm going to share with you my life's work boiled down into simple blueprints that I used to build a 10 million pound portfolio and retire with financial independence at the age of 35. You can listen to these podcasts in any order, and I guarantee you that when you execute them in practice, you will see that success and failure are both very predictable.

Let's get into the next blueprint. The swoop and poop. So welcome to this next episode, and this is one that's actually requested by a good friend of mine, and I can't take credit for this.

So the swoop and poop concept is one that I was introduced to a couple of years ago when I was looking into the chairman role and looking about CEOs, bringing in boards of directors, remuneration packages, incentives, and how to actually give teams the framework and the autonomy to run your business, but then acknowledging that there's going to be a few challenges as you break through and step change to this next level. If you've not already listened to the Breakthrough Blueprint Podcast that I did, that talks about some of the challenges that I had breaking through to the chairman level, and this will be another example of that.

There's lots of this. Every level has another devil. You need to shed your skin to go to the next step, and this is what I'm going to share with you, because the swoop and poop is one of those challenges, and after a proper entrepreneur event the other day, I was chatting to a friend, and they said, oh, how's the chairman role going, et cetera, et cetera.

I said, oh, I had an interesting experience at the end of the year awards because I decided to do a swoop and poop on one of our team, and what this basically means is a swoop and poop is where you come into somebody else's environment. So bearing in mind all of my companies now at an executive level are run by other people, managing directors, board of directors, managers, executive assistants, they all just run the show, and my job is basically to leave them to it and get out of the way and not interfere with the day-to-day executive run of the business and just be there for board meetings. And I decided to walk into one of their events and then start offering feedback, and as soon as I did it, I just thought, what on earth am I doing?

This is their show. It's their party. It's their business, and I've just walked in out of nowhere, giving them a complete curveball of telling them something to do or a suggestion, and immediately afterwards, I realized it wasn't the thing to do, and this is called a swoop and poop, and what you might find is if you're somebody that wants to step out of your business, you might have even found the right people to run that business, but one of the challenges you're going to have, whether it's your first employee or your 50th, is that you're going to struggle to let go, and whether that's having the trust or confidence to let go or it's the bad habits that stop you from letting go, and you feel like you constantly need to interfere, look over their shoulder, check in on what you're doing, and the reality is that will never give you the freedom that you want to not be involved in the day-to-day run of the business, and it'll never give your team the confidence or the experience or the ability to actually take the company to that next level, doing things their way, because they're constantly trying to appease you and keep you happy by doing things your way.

And if you want to get to this non-exec director or even chairman level, you're going to have to get to a point where you step out of the day-to-day and leave things alone. So this is what I'm going to take you through in this podcast. You'll notice this happens all around your life, your business, and it's just starting to develop that awareness and take it to the next level.

As soon as I clocked this and I was chatting to my friend about it, I was sitting there with Sav, my partner, I was sitting there looking after Harper, Harper's crying, and Sav's looking there twiddling her thumbs, getting twitchy, because she's dying to jump in and take over. It's not that I'm doing a bad job, it's not that I don't know what I'm doing, it's just she's protective over it, over the situation, she wants to get involved in sorting it out, and that's just human nature. And you're going to be the same in your business, but the aim of the game is, rather than sit there and watch me look after Harper, why don't you go for a walk, enjoy a couple of hours to yourself, and for you guys as business owners, get out of the day-to-day noise of the business and actually work on it rather than in it.

And this is what I'm going to take you through in this podcast, how do you go through that. So I shared my story at the end of the year awards, and the reality was, as soon as I did it, I knew that I'd done wrong. I literally said, right, I said it, stopped speaking, sat there and thought, what on earth have I just done?

I've interfered, I've accidentally swooped and pooped, so I've basically swooped into what they're doing, pooped on what they've got going on, and then I've disappeared off. And that's completely intrusive, it's completely unnecessary, and immediately I just thought, why on earth did I do that? So what I'm going to share with you now is, how do you know when you want to interfere and when you should do?

How do you know when not to? When you do and you should or you do and you shouldn't, what do you do about it? And when you know you're going to do it moving forward, what's actually going through your mind and when you feel like doing it, what should you actually do instead?

So hopefully this will be a game changer for those of you that want to get out of the day-to-day business, bring a team in to run it and know when to interfere and when to step well back and lead them to it. I suppose it's like the reality of, if you want your team to be autonomous and you want them to succeed, you have to let them fatten. If you think about a child, those of you that have got children in your direct or wider families, it's like allowing a child to walk or ride a bike.

A child is never going to be able to walk unless they can stand up and fall down. There's no child in the history of the world that learnt how to walk without trying to stand up and falling over because allowing them to fall over is how they realise that it's a potential outcome. It's how they learn from their mistakes, it's how they figure out how to balance, it's the same as a bike.

Yes, you can put stabilisers on and you can be there, you can onboard them, you can train them, you can do a phased exit, all of these things that we recommend, but at some point you've got to take those stabilisers off and they are quite likely to fall off at whatever point that is and sometimes you just need to allow that to happen. Equally, you wouldn't want your child going out of control into the road and getting hit by a vehicle. So, when do you allow them to fall over when they're learning to walk or ride a bike and when do you step in as a safety card and make sure that a problem doesn't become an emergency?

So, I'm going to take you through this and I'm going to look at the first thing is how to keep yourself in check, so how to actually understand that this is a real thing and it's not good for you or your team if you get it wrong. Second is when you've done it, how do you actually respond? So, when you know you've done it and you sit there like I did the other Friday, just thought I've just swooped and pooped, what an idiot, why did I do that?

What do you actually do? And the third is when you're about to do it and you get a bit more developed and you appreciate you're going to do it, what's actually going through your mind and how do you deal with it and when you feel like doing it, how do you deal with it instead? So, I'm going to take you through this step by step.

So, the first is how to keep yourself in check and this really is, if you're in a position now to become a non-exec director or even a managing director to a good degree and you've got a senior team, when you've got those key individuals, those high performers, you're paying for experience, you're not teaching it and you've brought them in to do a better job than you, they've got more experience, more expertise, they're getting paid very well, remunerated and incentivized to do a great job, how do you actually understand how to go through this process? So, the first thing is self-awareness and you just need to start having the awareness that the swoop and poop is a thing. The swoop and poop is a thing that you come in, interfere, disappear out and actually didn't add any value and there is a development process of this and breaking through and I can tell you that it doesn't last forever, it's a reasonably quick thing but you just need to have that self-awareness that it exists and there's a qualitative sort of element to this that I can't explain but you need to have this feeling of your objective is to bring world-class team members and professionals into the business, remunerate them well, incentivize them effectively and then get them to run the business for you.

That's the aim of the game, you don't want to be interfering. That said, we all know that the industry standards for a successful recruit is only 50% so you're going to have team problems, you're going to have issues. When do you duck in and when do you sort of step out?

And you need to have this ongoing awareness of when someone's doing a fantastic job, they're autonomous, they're running with it and you're best not to interfere but then also when there's a team member who may be great but having a bad day or maybe experienced but dealing with something they haven't yet and you've just got to develop this awareness of understanding that this is less about when you step in and when you don't, it's more about understanding that you can but it doesn't mean you should and it's really just having that self-awareness of understanding the difference between the two. And the big difference here is let's say, quantitatively, 95% of the time you should stay well out of the way and I'll explain why that is. So, for example, you're going to get to a point where, so we've got businesses that I've never met, we've got businesses I've never been to, employees that I've never met and we now employ team members like cleaners.

We've got cleaners all around the country who do various works and I just wouldn't even dream of telling a cleaner how to clean because there's other people who employ those cleaners, there's cleaning managers, there's department managers, there's operation people who instruct them. It's so far out of my thing, I just wouldn't deal with it but go back 15 years, I would have been managing the cleaners, I'd have been recruiting them, I'd have been auditing their work. You have to go through that journey where you get to a point where there's certain things you just would never do anymore because it just happens.

You wouldn't tell the cleaners how to clean and you just need to get to that point and gradually move away where the things that you used to get involved in, like I would check that the pens at proper entrepreneur events were completely level when I do my audit. I haven't done those audits for probably three to five years because you just go through the levels and in order to go to the next level, in order to elevate, you have to delegate these things. So the aim of the game is gradually to get these things out of your remit.

So not only are you not checking them, swooping and pooping on them, you're not actually checking them at all. That said, there'll always be things in your business that you do need to check. And this is sort of understanding how to keep yourself in check is what bits should you be checking and what bits shouldn't.

So I wouldn't tell the cleaners how to clean. I wouldn't tell the team how to put the pens out. I wouldn't even tell them where to order the banners, the pads, the workbooks.

I'm so far removed from that. I just would not even dream of interfering. Now the awards, you know, buying end of year awards up to probably two years ago, I was still choosing the awards.

But now I've just mentally committed to the fact that they're running the business, they're running the show. And whilst my opinions might be different, which is what I'll come on to a minute, they just fall into that category of things that I just wouldn't interfere with. On the other hand, there's things that I would interfere with.

And I use interfere because 95% of the time you don't want to interfere. I'm using it as a negative word. You are interfering with somebody else's work.

95% of the time you don't want to do that. 5% of the time you do want to interfere with that. So a key place where I would still interfere is with our builders.

So when we've got main contractors in doing big builds, whether it's a building a four bedroom house or it's developing a block of 20 flats, I will always, while I say that, I will always get involved in some of the key bits. So I will tell them how the floor plan needs to look. I will tell them what materials they need to use.

I will tell them what construction methods need to use. Because on my site, I'm a developer. The developer is the person who understands how to optimize the scheme, how to solve problems on site, and sometimes how to spot things that they just haven't spotted.

Because you're able to see the wood from the trees. Or they are the builder who's thinking about how to build this as quick and cheap as possible and make their life easy. I'm the developer who's looking at optimizing the scheme, maximizing the value per square foot.

And that's my expertise. If a builder could be a developer, they wouldn't develop. And if a developer could only build, they wouldn't do big developments.

So things like that, I will sense check and look at. And where there's design elements, so for example, we're developing the west wing of the hall at the moment and turn it into a separate house for our estate managers to live in. And within that, we're turning it into a three or four bedroom house, the west wing.

And we're basically introducing some internal bits to it. And looking at the way that the builders had come up with it, it just wasn't optimized. It was straightforward.

It was easy. But aesthetically, it wouldn't look the best. There's more creative ways to do it.

And the net result would be significantly different. It would be significantly more effective. And the end result would add a lot more value.

And it would be a lot more desirable. So in that case, my input was essential because I was that strategic part of the task triangle at the top, which nobody else could notice. As we go through this, you'll get a better idea of when to step in, when it is actually being a strategic step in, and when it is just being a swoop and poop.

And that sort of is the first line of drawing that. So when you've done it, let's say you do do a swoop and poop. But now you've tuned into it.

You've realized, actually, you're interfering with your team. You're getting in the way. You're not giving them autonomy.

You're not giving freedom. You're actually wasting your time every day doing other people's jobs rather than having the freedom and capacity to go and do your own. When you've done it, how do you actually respond?

Well, this comes back to, again, was it necessary or not? And if it was valid and necessary, so there's two things about this. Valid and necessary means that it had to be done.

And let's say your team are about to do a deal that doesn't make sense. You know, they're about to spend a million pounds buying a site, and it just completely doesn't make sense. They're doing a build, or they're about to release a campaign, and they've completely misheard it.

And you see it, and you know for whatever reason, it's an absolute mistake. And it's not them falling off the bike. It's them about a ride in front of a bus.

What do you do there? Well, what I would do is I would register it. And I would say, look, just to let you know, I've seen this.

This comes to my attention. I want to share it with you. And I would register it.

I would ask their feedback. And in most cases, they'll say, you know what? You're absolutely right.

Hadn't caught that. Didn't know that. Missing piece of information.

Really appreciate you doing that. And then if you need to, you can loop back and loop back. Was it sensical?

Was it strategic? Was it actually the right way? And actually, you are the genius.

And you're helping your team do what they need to do. And you sort of stepped in and saved the day and waved your little magic wand. But just remember, only five times out of 100 is that actually going to be the case.

Because a lot of the time, it's not going to be valid and necessary. It's actually going to be invalid or valid and not necessary. And let me just break these down for you.

So invalid means you're wrong. It means you've just jumped in to somebody else's dinner party and told them they need to change the wine that's being served for the meal. And they say, well, no, you don't because we've got fish next.

And you go, oh, I feel like a right idiot. Why did I say that? I've completely interfered.

I was just trying to help. But actually, you're just completely wrong. You don't have the context.

You don't have the full picture. You've swooped and pooped. And you were just actually completely wrong because you didn't have the full picture.

Or second is it's valid as in you've got a point and it's a preference, but it's not necessary. And this is normally where it's your personal preference or you would do something slightly different. Or maybe they've done it 80% as well as you could have.

In order to move to the next level, you're going to have to appreciate that if you want your team to succeed, they're not going to do things the way you want. And sometimes where you used to do 80%, they will now do 100. Equally, where you would deem something to be 100, they're going to do 80.

Or maybe you were doing it one way. They've completely changed the way they do it. And it's completely different.

But it's just a matter of preference. Most things are subjective, especially anything to do with creative or design. It's just a preference.

And that is if it's invalid, you're wrong, or it's valid and not necessary. It's just your preference. You need to let them crack on with it.

You need to go on and do your own job. And potentially, if it is wrong, in some cases, and it is a preference, but it's going to go wrong, you need to let them fall over. Because that's just the way it works.

If you're going to go to the next level, you have to let your team fail if you want your team to succeed. And in that case, it is letting them fall over. It's letting them fall off the bike, stand up against the bed, trying to walk and trip over.

You don't swoop and poop. You don't get in the way. And you just let them do it.

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Go into the show notes now, click the link. It's www.lifebydesignscorecard.co.uk Back to the podcast. If you do swoop and poop, and it's not necessary, and it's or it's not valid, and you know you've done wrong like I did the other week, at the most suitable opportunity afterwards, you sit there, reflect on it.

I immediately went up to the team member and said, look, I just need to apologize. I shouldn't have interfered there. Yes, what I suggested was a way to do it.

But the way you were going to do it was absolutely fine. It was just personal preference. I shouldn't have interfered.

I just apologize. And they said, oh, no, it's absolutely fine. I appreciate it.

It was actually a great call. It works really well. And it's like, yeah, OK, well, that's good.

That makes me feel a bit better. But actually, my job is to let you do your job. And I'm just getting in your way.

I shouldn't have done that. Please accept my apology. I won't do it again.

Both people feel better. I take pride in it. I acknowledge the fact that that's their job, not mine.

And I don't want to interfere. I want to let them run the show. So the next step is once you've identified where there is a swoop and poop, and you understand that if you do do one, you need to apologize, when you're about to do it, what's actually going through your mind?

So why do you feel like you need to do this? And the reason, I think, that we swoop and poop is a few things. So one is we don't want to relinquish control.

You know, you think you want to be a managing director or a CEO or a chairman. But actually, you still want to tinker. You still want to manage the cleaners and tinker with the tires.

If you want to go to the next level, you can't. If you want to break through and go to the top level, you can't be involved in the day-to-day. So I think there's that degree.

It's a maturity and a professional ability to relinquish control. And there is risks associated with that. You know, they can cycle into a ditch or cycle in front of a bus.

And we need to prevent that. But the reality is, if you want to get to the next level, you've got to break through. And to share my journey, at the beginning of my journey, same as lots of you, I didn't want to delegate anything.

I wanted to be a complete control freak. I wanted to do everything myself. Nobody could do anything as well as I do.

And the reality was that was a complete false economy. But I believed it for years. Now I'm at the other side of the spectrum.

I don't want to do anything. But I genuinely don't want to do anything. I never think, when am I going to do that?

Or how do I do that? I think, who am I going to get to do that for me? And I can just trust me.

When you get to the other end of the spectrum of the journey, you have a different mindset. The mindset of, I'm not doing that. You can have my head, but you can't have my hands.

There's a journey you need to go on. The next, I think, is as you're breaking through, like I said at the beginning, there's a journey to go on. And it's a false of habit because your job up until now has been the leader.

You know, it's your job to bang the drums, hold the standards, raise everybody, raise the bar, audit people, check people, make sure it's going well. But that's been your job. And it just becomes a false of habit.

Like you walk into the room. Why did I decide to say that? Well, because for the last 10 years, it's been my responsibility and my job to make things as good as I thought they could be.

And that was just my job. And I think it's just a false of habit. So relinquishing control is an issue.

Being a false of habit is something you need to break. Equally, it's acknowledging that sometimes it's needed and you are adding value, in which case, look for those five out of a hundred times and approach accordingly. But other times it's not.

So it's having that awareness of thinking before you speak and appreciating that if you want your team to succeed, you need to allow them to fail. And also appreciate that a lot of things are your personal preference. And this is your brand and it's your baby and you know the best way to do everything.

Well, actually, when you take the child to the qualified nurse or nanny or school teacher, and you think, oh, I know how to look after my child better than anyone else. You normally find actually, they know things you don't know. They've baked far more cakes than you have.

And there's other ways to do it that you don't appreciate. But you, because you've been told you're the boss and you've worked as a boss, you think you're the boss and you do everything better than anyone else. It's not until you find the actual group of professionals at level three that come in and do everything better than you, that you realize actually, I've sort of been blagging this for quite a long time and I need to get out of the way.

They're the times when you don't want to be interfering. You don't want to try and tell, you don't want to buy a dog and bark yourself. You don't want to teach people to suck eggs.

You know, you want to get out of the way and let them do what they need to do. So sometimes it's needed. And that's basically when it's business critical.

So it's business critical, pull them to one side, do the feedback. As I was sharing earlier with developments or doing deals that don't work equally when it's personal preference or it's actually wrong and invalid because you don't have the full picture. You just don't do that.

So even poop nine and a half times out of 10. You don't want to be doing it. And then finally, when you feel like doing it, what do you do instead?

And this is that final self-awareness piece really is if I feel like I'm about to do it, you just need to clock it. So there's only so many times you'll see yourself make a mistake. Eating snacks out the fridge, falling into bad habits, talking yourself out of going for a run, going to the gym, doing steps.

Just clock that this has happened before. We acknowledge it's a bad habit. It's a mistake.

I shouldn't do it. And then go on about your day and do what you actually should do. So the first thing is clocking that you should do it.

And again, you'll trip over and fall over a few times before you learn to walk. But then clock you're about to do it and then stop yourself and then ask yourself, is this actually valid and of value? Or is it a swoop and poop?

And it's not necessary. It's not valid. And actually, I just need to let them do it.

That one I shared with you the other day, I didn't even consider it. I'd already said it and I was halfway through saying it before I realized it was a swoop and poop. And then as soon as I finished speaking, I realized I was like, oh, what have I done?

It's that analogy really. So clock you're about to do it, then stop yourself and then get into that notion of is this actually business critical or is it just personal preference? And if it's not personal preference, but it is going to be potentially a bit critical to the business, are they going to fall in a ditch and actually they're just learning to walk or are they about to cycle in front of a bus and it's going to be game over for everybody?

That's basically the aim of it. It's much like offering feedback to somebody. You've probably got people in your team or your family who sometimes you think, I could offer them some feedback here.

And sometimes you have to do it because if you don't, it's going to cause them some harm. Or other times you think, do you know what? I could offer them feedback, but it's only my opinion.

They're probably going to get more upset or do more damage than good. I don't actually need to do it. I'm going to get out of the way and just let them crack on.

It's that sort of thing. If it's business critical, share it as it is. You know, this is what I've observed.

Assume you're wrong. This is what I've observed. This is what I think.

What's your thoughts? And sort of frame it that you're wrong. And I suspect because of your expertise, you'll actually be right when you get the hang of this and you won't keep stepping in.

And if it's personal preference, you could acknowledge it. You could say, just so you know, I've observed this. You probably know it or you probably considered it.

You don't have to do it, but I'll just share it with you if it's of value. But do feel free to ignore it if it's not. I'm not trying to interfere.

I'm not saying you have to do it. I'm just sharing. This is what it is.

Now that's halfway between a swoop and poop and actually adding value. And you probably want to move away from it. But I do appreciate that there's some times where you're looking at things and you just think, do you know what?

I could add value here. If it's managing the cleaners or moving the pens, just don't bother. You know, there's such incremental gains.

It's not going to add huge value. But if you're doing things like if you're seeing your team do things like PDPs or packages, that's the time really where you want to step in and say, look, have you considered this? And be the coach, the mentor to take people to the next level, but certainly not interfering for the sake of getting in the way.

So closing sentiments, don't buy a dog and bark yourself. If you recruit people and then spend your whole day trying to tell them how to do their job, that's not going to take the business forward. That's more like a three-legged race and it's just going to slow everyone down.

It's painful. It's awkward. It never works.

You just need to get this experience to take it to the next level. If you want them to drive the success, you have to let them have their failures. It's just part of learning to walk and ride a bike.

It is, however, a balancing act. You know, it's like having kids. You have to let them fall over and learn how to stand up, but you don't want them to run in the road or play with knives.

You know, it really is a balancing act. Knowing when it's in their interest and when it's not. And yeah, just a big difference between letting your team fall off their bike and driving your company off a cliff.

And it really is acknowledging the difference and acknowledging that failure when they're learning to ride a bike is in everyone's interest, but stepping in and swooping and pooping is a bad idea. But stepping in and being pragmatic and helping them when they're in the process of driving the company off a cliff, again, is in everyone's interest and you've got to run with that. So self-awareness, you know, be aware.

It will grow with experience and just start to have that self-awareness of where your team are, what is falling off a bike, what's riding in front of a bus and where you're potentially swooping and pooping. You do need to have a broad consideration for all the things that's going on. And that's the thing I said about it's hard to acknowledge, but it's like, does this actually matter?

And at some point, you have to stop telling the cleaners how to clean and telling the team how to put the pens out. You do get to a point where it's just not part of your job anymore. And at chairman role, you really are a company owner.

You know, you're a shareholder. You own the asset. You're not a business operator.

And if you've got other people in to drive the bus, you have to let them drive the bus. You know, think about the highest level. Jeff Bezos isn't telling people how to build the factories.

He's not telling people how to drive the couriers. You get to a certain level where you have to just own the business and trust that you've got the right people to do the right thing. But of course, that broad consideration, sometimes you'll step in.

If you do swoop and poop, you know, acknowledge it, apologize, own your apology, be proud of your apology. And yeah, acknowledge it. It's all part of progress.

It'll make them feel empowered. And everyone loves to get apology from the boss. It will enable you to acknowledge the mistake and move on from it.

And then just remember, we're all human. Going through the motions, you basically are leaving your brand and your baby at home for the first time. It's going to be nerve wracking.

It's going to be challenging. You're going to make mistakes as a day, but you want to fail fast. You want to fail forward.

But you want to make sure that that failure isn't fatal. That's the aim of the game, really. It's every day moving to the next level, consistently empowering your team more, training them, nurturing them, mentoring them.

And one of the biggest ways you can do that sometimes is to get out of the way and let them run with it. Hopefully that adds value for you. Hopefully that gives you a good understanding of how to move to the next level.

Acknowledging that you do want to help your team only 5% of the time. The rest of the time is a swoop and poop. It's not adding value.

It's wasting your time. You want to get up to that MD, CEO, chairman role. You can't be getting involved in the weeds of the business.

So empower your team, let them fall over when they're trying to walk, but don't let them fall off the edge of a cliff or cycle in front of a bus. And that's the swoop and poop strategy, really. Hope you got value from that.

I wish you the very best of luck putting into practice and I will see you on the next podcast. If you like them, share them, subscribe, make sure you don't miss a single episode and tune in every Tuesday for a brand new episode and then follow me daily on Instagram for free content post twice a day, completely free of charge. Success and failure are both very predictable.

I'll see you on the next episode.