

Course: Mission Control: Master Your Data, Metrics & Money

Lesson 6: Solopreneur-Simple Bookkeeping (The 30-Minute/Month Plan)

1. Core Concept & Learning Objective

Core Concept (148 words): "Bookkeeping" is the #1 "head-in-the-sand" task for solopreneurs. You *know* you should do it, but you "hate" it, so you "ignore" it... until "Tax Day" becomes a 4-day nightmare. This lesson ends that. You do *not* need a "CPA" or "QuickBooks" (yet). You just need a "dead-simple" 2025-friendly system. This lesson teaches you the "30-Minute/Month Plan." You will learn to use "modern" tools (like Catch, or a simple spreadsheet) to "tag" your expenses as you go. This *is* your "bookkeeping." No more "shoebox" of receipts. This is your "Profit-First" (from C5, L5) "Automation" system.

Learning Objective: By the end of this lesson, you will be able to design a "dead-simple" (30-minute/month) bookkeeping "SOP" (Standard Operating Procedure) and set up a simple, 2025-friendly system (using a tool or spreadsheet) for tracking your money.

2. Interactive Content Activities

Activity 1: Case Study: "The 'Tax Day' Nightmare"

- Type: Case Study Analysis
- Time: 15 minutes
- Instructions:
 1. Read the two scenarios:
 2. 'Founder A' (The 'Shoebox' Method): "Ignores" his finances for 12 months. On "Tax Day," he spends 40 hours "digging" through 1,000 "Stripe" and "credit card" receipts, trying to "remember" what was a "business" expense. He "misses" \$5,000 in "deductions."

3. 'Founder B' (The '30-Minute/Month' Method): Spends 30 minutes on the "1st of every month." She "tags" her 50 expenses from "last month" in her simple "tool." On "Tax Day," she clicks "Export." It takes 5 minutes. She "captures" 100% of her "deductions."
4. In the text box, answer: "What is the *real* 'cost' of Founder A's 'Shoebox' method (it's not just 'time')? What is the one 'habit' Founder B mastered?"
 - **Expected Outcome:** An "a-ha" moment that "bookkeeping" is a *small, monthly habit*, not a *giant, annual nightmare*.

Activity 2: Tool Exploration: "The 'Modern' Bookkeeping Tools (No 'QuickBooks')"

- **Type:** Tool Exploration
- **Time:** 20 minutes
- **Instructions:**
 1. You are *not* a 50-person company. You do *not* need a \$50/month "accounting" tool.
 2. Explore two "Solopreneur-Simple" options.
 3. **Option 1: The "Simple Tool" (e.g., 'Catch' or 'Found').** Go to the website for "Catch" (or "Found"). See how they *automatically* "tag" expenses and (most importantly) *automatically* "set aside" money for "Taxes" and "Profit" (the "Profit First" method).
 4. **Option 2: The "Simple Spreadsheet."** Open the "30-Minute Bookkeeping" Google Sheet (template provided). It has 4 columns: "Date," "Vendor," "Amount," "Category" (e.g., "Software," "Ads," "Contractor").
- **Expected Outcome:** A "sigh of relief." You realize your "system" can be a "simple tool" or just one "Google Sheet."

Activity 3: Strategic Exercise: "My '5-Bucket' Categories"

- **Type:** Strategic Exercise
- **Time:** 15 minutes
- **Instructions:**
 1. Your "bookkeeping" is just "tagging" (or "categorizing"). You don't need 50 categories. You need 5.

2. Your task: *List* the 5 "Category Buckets" your business has.

3. *Example:*

- 1. "Software" (Kajabi, ConvertKit, Zapier)
- 2. "Marketing" (Ad Spend)
- 3. "Contractors" (Video Editor, VA)
- 4. "Education" (Courses, Books)
- 5. "Admin" (Stripe Fees, Office Supplies)
- **Expected Outcome:** Your "5 'Buckets'." This is the *entire* "system" you need to "tag" 99% of your expenses.

Activity 4: "My 'Bookkeeping' Choice" (Peer Collaboration)

- **Type:** Peer Collaboration / Discussion
- **Time:** 10 minutes
- **Instructions:**
 1. Go to the community discussion board.
 2. **Post:** "My 'Solopreneur-Simple' bookkeeping (from Activity 2) will be [Choice]."
 3. *Example:* "I'm choosing the 'Simple Spreadsheet.' I only have ~20 expenses/month, so the 'Google Sheet' (L3) is *all* I need. I don't need *another* tool."
 4. *Example:* "I'm choosing 'Catch.' I need the "Profit First" (C5) and "Auto-Tax" saving features, so I want the 'Simple Tool'."
 5. Reply to one other student's choice.
- **Expected Outcome:** Validation of your "simple" system.

3. Assignment & Project Milestone

Assignment: My "30-Minute/Month" Bookkeeping SOP (Component 6 of Final Project)

- **Estimated Time:** 60 minutes

- **Deliverable:** A 1-page PDF or Notion doc "SOP" (Standard Operating Procedure).
- **Description:** This is your "Bookkeeping" "SOP." It is the "habit" you will follow once a month to keep your finances "clean" forever.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 1. Open the "Bookkeeping SOP" template (provided).
 2. **Section 1: "My 'Tool'."** (e.g., "The 'Simple Spreadsheet' in my 'Finance Dashboard' (L5).")
 3. **Section 2: "My 5 'Expense Buckets'."** (Paste in your 5 "Categories" from Activity 3.)
 4. **Section 3: "My '30-Minute/Month' SOP (The 'Habit')."**
 - (Create a 3-5 step "checklist" for your *monthly* habit.)
 - *Example:*
 - [] **(1st of Month):** Open "Stripe," "Credit Card," and "Bookkeeping Sheet."
 - [] Go "line-by-line" through *last month's* expenses.
 - [] "Copy/Paste" and "Tag" (categorize) all 20 expenses into the "Sheet." (Time: 20 mins).
 - [] "Review" my "Financial Health Dashboard" (L5) (which *auto-updates* from this Sheet). (Time: 10 mins).
 5. Save this 1-page document. This is Component 6 of your Final Project.
- **Connection to Final Project:** This "SOP" is the "manual process" that feeds your "Financial Health Dashboard" (L5). This "habit" is what makes your "Profit" (L5) numbers "accurate."
- **Evaluation Criteria:**
 - **Excellent:** All 3 sections are complete. The "SOP" (checklist) is a clear, *monthly* "habit" that is "sustainable" (e.g., 30-60 mins).
 - **Proficient:** All 3 sections are complete, but the "SOP" is "vague" (e.g., "Do my books") or "unsustainable" (e.g., "Check daily").

- **Needs Improvement:** One or more sections are missing, or the "Tool" is "QuickBooks" (which is *not* "Solopreneur-Simple").

4. End-of-Lesson Assessment

(Multiple Choice 1) In the "Tax Day' Nightmare" case study, 'Founder B' (the '30-Minute/Month' CEO) won because:

- A. She "hired" a "CPA" (an accountant).
- B. She turned "bookkeeping" from a *giant, annual 'project'* into a *small, monthly 'habit'*.
- C. She "ignored" her expenses.
- D. She used the "Shoebox" method. (Answer: B)

(Multiple Choice 2) What is the "Solopreneur-Simple" (MVP) version of "bookkeeping"?

- A. "QuickBooks" (a \$50/month "accounting" tool).
- B. "Ignoring" it until "Tax Day."
- C. "Tagging" (categorizing) your expenses *once a month* into a "Simple Tool" (like 'Catch') or a "Simple Spreadsheet."
- D. "Hiring" a "bookkeeper." (Answer: C)

(Multiple Choice 3) What is the *purpose* of the "5-Bucket" Categories" (from Activity 3)?

- A. To "complicate" your bookkeeping with 50 categories.
- B. To "simplify" your bookkeeping. 99% of your expenses (Software, Ads, Contractors, etc.) will "fit" into one of these 5 "buckets."
- C. To "feed" your "Marketing Dashboard" (L3).
- D. To "feed" your "Sales Dashboard" (L4). (Answer: B)

(Multiple Choice 4) Your "30-Minute/Month" SOP (your assignment) is a:

- A. "Financial Dashboard" (L5).
- B. "KPI Brief" (L2).
- C. "Habit" (a monthly "checklist") that makes "bookkeeping" simple and fast.

- D. "Tax Form." (Answer: C)

(Short Answer 1) What "Bookkeeping Tool" (from Activity 2) did you choose, and why?

- (Example Answer: "I chose the 'Simple Spreadsheet' because I already built my 'Finance Dashboard' (L5) in Google Sheets, so I can just 'add a new tab' for 'Bookkeeping'.)

(Short Answer 2) What are two of your "5 'Expense Buckets'" (from Activity 3)?

- (Example Answer: "1. 'Software' (my 'Tech Stack') and 2. 'Marketing' (my 'Ad Spend').")

(Scenario-Based 1) You just bought a "\$500 Course" on "How to use AI." You open your "Bookkeeping" system (from your SOP).

- 1. What "Date," "Vendor," and "Amount" do you enter?
 - 2. What "Expense Bucket" (Category) does this go into?
 - (Answer: 1. Date: [Today's Date], Vendor: [Course Creator's Name], Amount: