

Episode 106: How to Write a Book to Build Your Consulting Business—with Vikrant Shaurya

Deb Zahn: Hi. I want to welcome you to this week's episode of the Craft of Consulting Podcast. On this episode, we're going to talk about how you, yes you, could become an author of a book. In all best cases, it would be a best-selling book. And that can help you not only get consulting business more easily, but you can also use it as another way to generate revenue for your consulting business. So I brought on an expert in how to do this. Vikrant Shaurya is from bestsellingbook.com. He is going to come on and tell us all about the ins and outs of how to do it. And he has a very deliberate process that he takes people through from start to finish until they end up not just with a book, but they figured out how to use it to serve their business goals. Fantastic episode. So let's get started. Hi and welcome to my show today, Vikrant Shaurya. Vikrant, welcome to the show.

Vikrant Shaurya: Thanks for having me, Deb.

Deb Zahn: So let's start off. Tell my listeners what you do.

Vikrant Shaurya: So simply what I do is I help entrepreneurs, experts, consultants, church leaders who have amazing ideas to share with the world in the form of a book. But just because they're busy, they don't have the time, they don't have the skill set to write a book. They are stuck. So I have a book publishing company for which they provide all of these book writing publishing marketing services, through which we turn their ideas into a best-selling book. So yep, this is how we help hotlines.

Deb Zahn: That's wonderful. Now, obviously, I know a lot of consultants who in one of their first steps, created a book or somewhere along the line they decided to for business purposes. But what is it that you think publishing a book can do for consultants?

Vikrant Shaurya: So one of the most important reasons why a consultant needs some kind of tools. It could be a book. It could be a YouTube channel. It could be a podcast. Is to get clients. Is to establish themselves as an expert. Is to get their name out. Is to get more audience for their message. So writing a book is kind of that medium which can help them get more clients. Because it is going to, first of all, whenever we are reaching out to any consultant, we have seen that maybe out of 100 only one person is a published author. So this one thing is simply distinguishing yourself or is helping you stand out from the crowd. So if now you're a published author, maybe you can demand a higher price.

Deb Zahn: That's right.

Vikrant Shaurya: Maybe now you can be very selective about who is the client you want to work with. Otherwise, of course, if you are still struggling or if you don't have that kind of a piece...that kind of maybe a bestselling book or a published book, then you just have to work with anyone. Any client just for the money. But we all know that some clients are really difficult, of course. Although you know you really want to help them, they are still really difficult. But now if you have a published book, now you can demand a higher price. At the same time, you can be very selective of who is the person you want to work with. Because maybe you will be having more people who want to work with you.

Deb Zahn: Yeah, interesting thing. So I absolutely agree that it can be a very powerful tool to get clients. I had the odd experience of handing a client a book that I did not write, but that my colleagues did. And it was one of the ways that I got business even though I hadn't actually written it. And I can imagine the

power if I handed them something that I actually wrote and said, "This is something that I'm actually an authority on so much so that I actually wrote the book on it." Can be a very powerful thing to say to a client. So I'd love that. So I know a lot of consultants, particularly when they first started in their first couple of years, often have a crisis of confidence. So they're having to do business things that they've never had to do before. Go get clients. They're just used to being a really smart expert that people automatically turn to. I imagined the thought of writing a book would create some mindset blocks for folks that are thinking about and I'm sure you've encountered it many, many times. What are the typical things you see and how do you help folks get past that?

Vikrant Shaurya: So the first thing is, of course, as I said, there's always a mindset block. They feel that maybe they are not worthy to write this book. Maybe they don't have that much. They are not kind of an authority on this topic so that they could write a book. And they also sometimes feel, I'm not sure whether people really want to buy my book. They really want to see me as an author. So this kind of thing comes from this uncertainty just because they haven't written a book before. For example, of course, writing a book is kind of a skill set. Any skill, which we have learned we haven't done really perfectly from the beginning. So you have to make mistakes. You have to do certain things and then you will realize how to make it really good.

So book writing is also kind of a skill. Now if you know that it is going to help me establish myself as an authority. And this is the thing which I learned from Brian Tracy, maybe several years back in a video. He was talking about authority...the first letter is "author." If you're an author, it automatically makes you an authority on the topic. So if you now know that, yes, writing a book can really help me take my consulting business to the next level, then you just have to start. Of course, there could be so many things going on. Maybe once you start writing the book, maybe you have created the outline, then on the third day or on the fourth day, again, you will see oh, maybe I don't deserve writing this book. Maybe I'm not worthy to write this book. But you have to keep going. You have to just keep going.

Deb Zahn: I love that.

Vikrant Shaurya: No matter what you think. If you know that this is for you, you just have to do it. Because it's just a thought. Whenever we are learning a new skill set, any skill set. Maybe swimming as well. Maybe riding a bike. Anything which you are learning there could be so many things going on Oh, I guess I can't learn it. OK, I can do it. But you just have to do it. You just have to keep on pushing. And one day you will write a book. You will become a best-selling author. You are going to be a published author. And then it can help you establish yourself as an authority.

Deb Zahn: Yeah, I love that idea of emphasizing that it's a skill. Because I think some people think either I am an author or I'm not an author. Like it's like you came out of the womb, and you're either an author or you're not. And that was pre-determined as opposed to if it's going to serve your business purposes. And if you recognize it's a skill that you can learn, then yes, you can actually be an author. And if there are pieces that no matter what you'll never be good at. There are places you can go and get help to do those things.

So I actually read your book this weekend, which I very, very much enjoyed. We're going to talk about that more towards the end. But you are very good at laying out a really clear process that explains the how of actually writing a book and we can't go through the whole thing. But if you can give us sort of an overview of what those three phases are, and then we're going to dive into two of them. We're going to dive into the very first step of your nine-step process. And the very last step of your nine-step process

which you have to keep in mind while you're starting. So can you give a sort of brief overview of the three phases and then we'll dig into the details?

Vikrant Shaurya: The reason I created this kind of system in my book, so basically if you are not aware of the book, the book is called *How to Write a Bestseller*. And I have laid down everything in very simple step-by-step instructions. This is how you have to do it. And also it comes with a checklist. Your audience can simply go there and then it is going to be OK. So the first step is coming up with a book idea. The second step is identifying your target reader. So it's going to be a checklist. An established checklist where they can simply download it or print it out and then paste it on the wall and then start doing it. So it becomes really easy for them to follow it. Now the reason I did it is because in maybe nine to 10 years of my business in this publishing industry, I have realized that most people just because they are not sure about exactly what could be the step, know that there are so many things they need to do in order to write a book.

There are book cover designing, editing, publishing, marketing, and sales reviews. So just because they know subconsciously that there are so many steps, and but still they don't know like "OK, so this is the step." What could be the sequential way? These are the step-by-step instructions they have to follow. They don't take action. Due to this, they always procrastinate. They always overwhelm themselves and they don't take action. And sometimes it takes them several years. Sometimes an entire lifetime. They are not able to write the book. So I had created this kind of simple process. So there are just three phases which you have to take care of. The first phase is the produce phase. That you have to produce the manuscript. It is all about the idea, your target reader, your book outline, writing the actual book, then editing it.

So basically, it is all about producing the manuscript. Then comes the publish phase, which is all about creating the description to designing the cover. Designing the book itself. Then actual publishing distribution process. Then comes the profit rate. This is also important because for a consultant, if you just write a book and publish the book, maybe none of that you will be able to get that kind of attention from people. But the thing is you really have to know how to use that book. How to use that material to use it to establish yourself as an authority. So the thing is, these are the three phases. The third phase is kind of one of the most important phases. Once the book is published, you have to get sales. Get reviews. And then actually, how you have to use it to get maybe an email list. To get speaking gigs. To get consulting playing. It's how you have to use it. It is all about that. So these are the three phases. These are some of the substeps they have to take care of when they are writing and publishing a book.

Deb Zahn: Yeah, and I love that. I love what you do with the profit piece because I think a lot of times people think about the first two phases, the produce and publish. But if you don't figure out a way to essentially monetize the fact that you wrote a book, it's a vanity project. It's not actually a tool for business. And what I like about what you talk about in the book is that it is intended from the beginning to be a tool to grow your business and to generate revenue. Not just a book to have a book. And I've seen people go through the painstaking process of actually writing a book.

And then they didn't know what to do with it, except give it out to their friends and family. And it didn't even occur to them to give it to prospective clients to get speaking engagements. So I love that you emphasize that part. So let's start with the first one. So you have three phases. You have nine steps within those phases there. The sequence is very, very logical. Let's start with the first step and dig into that a little bit. So people sort of get a feel for, well, if I were going to start this, what are the first things I actually have to do. So let's talk about ideation.

Vikrant Shaurya: Yeah. So in the first phase, which is the produce phase, the first step is ideation. In ideation, there are five sub-steps. The first sub-step in ideation is your book idea. So before you do anything, before you do write even a single word, you should have at least a basic idea about the book. What are you going to write in a book? What could be the topic? Just an overview topic or overview book idea is fine. So once you have the book idea, then the next step is why? Why are you writing this book? And basically, this substep is kind of one of the most important steps. As you said, we have to keep the end in mind before we start. So the second step or second substep is why. So you have to decide right now before you write even a single word why exactly you're writing this book. Are you going to use it to get consulting clients? Are you going to use it to establish yourself as a brand or authority? Are you going to use it to get more leads?

Are you going to use it to get speaking gigs? Are you going to use it to maybe establish your consulting business if you haven't done it yet? So exactly what is your why? And once you have identified your why, then you have to write the entire book accordingly. For example, if your number one goal is to establish yourself as an authority or build your personal brand, then maybe the book's content is going to be around your personal story. So that people can know more about you. If your goal is to get leads from the business, then you have to create something which they can get in exchange for the email address. Something like a checklist or a worksheet, or a short ebook. And then you can offer it inside your book with the link. And then they will click on that link. And they will go to the learning page where they can download it. And we will be receiving their email address. So always keep the end in mind before you even start doing a single word.

Deb Zahn: I love that. I love that so much because, again, that holds true for all of consulting. Anytime you're going to do anything, know why you're doing it. Because otherwise, you could end up in a different spot that doesn't actually serve your business goals. So I think that's very powerful. So what do they do next once they nail their why?

Vikrant Shaurya: So once they understand what is their why, then the next step is identifying your target reader. Who is the person who really needs this book? Of course, you have the basic idea of the book. You know why you are writing this book. But who are your target readers? It is extremely important. Because if you really understand your target readers, if you really understand their pains, their problems, their desires, it can be extremely easy for you to write the entire book around that. So that they will feel so connected.

Do you really want to read and complete the entire book? Otherwise, if for example, this is the example I give to my clients. If you are writing a book about how to increase your productivity. And this productivity, like this, is the basic idea. And this applies to anyone. It could be for students. It could be for entrepreneurs. It could be for employees. Now, you have to identify who is the target where you can really leverage. Who is the person who can also become your target clients in the backend? Why it's really important that, for example, you can write a book about how to increase productivity for students, but maybe students won't be paying you higher prices.

Deb Zahn: I guess they're broke.

Vikrant Shaurya: Right? Exactly. So that's why once you identify that, "Oh, so I think I should write a book about how to increase your productivity for entrepreneurs." Or those people like we're at C-suite level. So now, once they read your book, like once these people will be reading your book, then

eventually they can also, they have the money to also pay for your consulting program. So this is why the targeting or exactly who is going to be the target reader is extremely important.

Deb Zahn: That's great. Because otherwise, you start writing, if you don't know that, you could just wander all over the place and anybody reading it doesn't understand or feel that you're talking to them. Or that it's relevant to them. So all roads lead to who you're trying to actually help you get business. So I love that step. And it's the same way when people start consulting. And they need to identify who their ideal client is because everything they do should be targeted to what they care about. What motivates them, etc. So it matches very well with that. So what's the next step?

Vikrant Shaurya: Yeah. So the next step is once you have identified your target readers, then you have to create a hook for your book. This is kind of a really amazing section there. But the thing is people take several weeks to create a hook. So basically, the hook could be one of the statements. The hook could be your book title. The hook could be any angle of the booklet that can distinguish your book from all the other books in the market. There could be thousands and thousands of books on the topic. But why your book is different from other books on the same topic. And if you don't know this, then don't move to the next step. Otherwise, it's going to be difficult for you to eventually do the marketing. Like this hook is going to help you in marketing as well. And hooks could be like, people take several weeks. But of course, I have tried to make it extremely simple for people. That if they understand that what is the problem of the target readers.

If they understand how the book is going to help them, then it makes it really easy. For example, if you're writing a book about productivity, the productivity book only for entrepreneurs who are in the business for maybe more than 10 years. Now, this is a very niche-specific book and you will feel like OK, maybe my book is going to be applicable for everyone. But because everyone needs their productivity in their life or business, but you have to be very specific. You have to be very niche because now you are going to be working with those premium clients only. Those specific clients only. Only that niche. So this is how you create a book of the book. And once you have the book, this is how you distinguish yourself from all the other books on the topic. And once you have the book, then comes the next step which is the book outline. But please let me know if you have any questions.

Deb Zahn: So I want to highlight the hook because I could see this being a part where people think that they can skip over it or just say, "Oh, no, mine's a how-to and that's my hook." Which it isn't. It's the same way when you first start consulting or as you're consulting, you develop a value proposition. What is uniquely valuable about what you offer is different than what your competitors offer. Or will assuredly solve the pain points and achieve the gain points that clients are trying to achieve. Without that, you're just another consultant who's coming along saying, "Hey, hire me." So I think that you also do that with the book is great. And I'll give a quick example that could easily, I think, translate to a book just so folks can wrap their head around it. So I had someone on my podcast whose specialty was mergers. And as most people know, who've worked on a merger which I have, is that 70 to 90% of them, depending on who you ask, fail. So they have really high failure rates. And they cost a lot of money, pain, torment, all that kind of stuff. Her hook was essentially that she helps mergers succeed and be profitable on day one.

Vikrant Shaurya: Wow.

Deb Zahn: That is an extraordinarily bold statement to make. She can back it up with the results that she's helped clients achieve. But if somebody saw that, who was thinking about a merger and knew anything about mergers, they'd say, wait a minute. I thought I was going to have a lot of money for a

year. And then hopefully things would work out. This is something different. So I want to give that example because that's the power of a hook of why someone will pick your book over someone else's.

Vikrant Shaurya: Awesome, I love it. One other thing, which I learned from Grant Cardone is, of course, most people see that you always should under-promise and over-deliver. But he says over-promise and over-deliver.

Deb Zahn: I love it.

Vikrant Shaurya: You don't have to always minimize yourself. You don't have to devalue your services. Whatever you do, of course, give your best. But at the same time, all these statements, it could be like we can use these statements in your title or subtitle. So I really love your example.

Deb Zahn: Great. Now let's hit the outline. Because I know you have a very special system for developing an outline. And I know how powerful outlines are. So how do you help people figure out what their outline is.

Vikrant Shaurya: So till this time, we have covered four elements. The basic idea of the book. Why are you writing this book? And the third is the target readers. And the target readers also include their pain, problem, their desires. Why they want to read this book and then the hook. How this book is going to be differentiated from other books on the market. Once you have these four book outlines, then I would urge you to maybe download it or print it out and just paste it somewhere in a paper in front of you. And then the next step is, of course, this step is extremely important because people take several months sometimes to write just the book outline. And trust me guys.

Trust me that whenever the written outline...Even if you take several years as well, still the outline is not going to be finalized. It will always be like once you start writing the book, then you will always be changing the outline. You'll always be changing the table of contents. So it's important that you start writing the book instead of just working on the book outline. So what I recommend to our clients and to all the students I work with, is once you have these four elements, your idea, your target readers, your why, your hook, just paste it in front of you and set a timer of just 30 minutes. Just 30 minutes and switch off all the distractions in your phone and everything.

And start writing all the major ideas and sub-ideas. Maybe in a journal on paper or in a Google doc or MS Word, whatever you are comfortable with. Anything. Just keep on writing all the things going on in your mind. Just have it and set an alarm for just 30 minutes and write all the ideas, sub-ideas, everything which is coming in your mind into that flow state and just write it. And don't worry about whether I should include this ID or not. Whether I shouldn't use this sub ID or not, don't worry. Anything which is coming to your mind around that topic, which you can write in the book, just keep on writing everything. And once you have that, so after 30 minutes, just stop writing. You don't have to change anything. You don't have to do anything. All the ideas. All the majors. All the important ideas and sub-ideas will be on the paper.

Deb Zahn: Love it.

Vikrant Shaurya: Now the next step is you have to use any mind mapping tool. It could be anything like I used to use bubbl.us. It was one of my favorites. But you can also use mindmeister or any kind of mind

map tool. Now, all the ideas which you have written are going to be your main chapter. And all the sub-ideas are going to be your sub-chapters. Just rearrange it properly. Be using the mind map tool. It's going to be extremely easy for you to visualize everything. To see everything in just one place. And then you can basically also rearrange everything.

OK, so I'd see this chapter come. Is going to be first and this is going to be second. So this is how you create the book outline. And also for information, this is not a finalized outline. But this is a workable outline. This is a workable table of contents. And once you have it, then it's going to be within just two hours. Like in 30 minutes, you have all the ideas. It's already on paper. And within just one or one and a half hours, you can rearrange it in the mind map and then create a table of contents around that. And that's it. Within two hours, your book outline and table of contents are ready.

Deb Zahn: That's great. And what I love about that is I also know people who have skipped the outline, which I would never skip. But one of the things that it does for you and including doing it quickly is, it breaks up something that is big and scary, like writing a book into little pieces. And you can write that little piece, and then you write that little piece, and then you write that little piece instead of oh my gosh, I have to create a book. Aside from helping you organize your thoughts, it also makes it more manageable to actually get the work done.

Vikrant Shaurya: Directly. One more thing that I've noticed is, whenever people start writing the book, they always feel, they always think that they should start the book from the beginning and then keep on writing it and then complete the book. But basically, once you have the book outline, then maybe if you are in that zone like if you want to write about chapter one, you can write it. But now if you don't want to write about chapter one, if you have some major ideas about chapter four, then you can write about chapter four as well. You're not stopping yourself to complete the book. You can just write it because you have all the small pieces. Add all of the pieces in different areas of your book's manuscript.

Deb Zahn: Wonderful, I love that. So that is a perfectly logical sequential way to actually get started. And then I know you have several other steps in between that, again, takes them step by step through the rest of production publishing. But I do want to hit on the last one in profit. So this is the final step which is monetization. And I do want to hit on that. Because again, you should have been thinking of those things in the first step that we talked about. But let's get to that endpoint. So how are ways that you could actually monetize this? And what do those steps look like?

Vikrant Shaurya: So, of course, once you have identified because this is the first step. You have to identify why you are writing this book. And once you have identified maybe your primary goal is to establish yourself as a brand or to get clients or to get leads. And now the mediums are endless. For example, if you want to establish your brand then maybe being a guest on a podcast could be also one of the mediums. Now, if you will be reaching out to a podcast host. And if you will say that, OK, I can talk about this topic, then maybe they can get you on the podcast. Maybe they won't. But if you say that I'm a published author on this topic and I can really provide value to your audience or I'm a best-selling author around this topic, and I really put the value on this topic, then the chances of you being selected as a guest is going to increase 10X.

Deb Zahn: Yes.

Vikrant Shaurya: That's the power of a book. Only your imagination is the limit. You can use podcasts. You can use...There are so many of our clients, they also got on TV just by using the book. If you have a good PR firm, they can pitch you as a best-selling author. And then they really want to interview those people who are experts on the topic. As I said, I started by brand faces like a statement that in authority the first word is author. On TV as well, people don't want to call anybody on their platform, they want to have best-selling authors. They really want to have authors on that topic because they know that they have someone that's why they have written around that topic. So that's the power of a book. So basically, there are so many things like you can use, for example, if you want us to get more leads, so whatever your book topic is all about, you can create kind of a checklist or worksheet or ebook, or it could be a webinar, mini-video series. It could be anything that can be linked with your book. And here's one of the really great tips I want to give you guys that, if you see the introduction section like if you go to Amazon then you see this feature called Look Inside.

Deb Zahn: That's right.

Vikrant Shaurya: Basically, they can read a few pages of the book. So that's what I always say to my client, that introduction is kind of a sales page for the entire book.

Deb Zahn: Yeah. Because if you have a potential client and they Google you and they see that you're on Amazon, they're going to take a pic. And even if they don't buy the book, they're going to take a pic. And now you've had another way to sell to them.

Vikrant Shaurya: Right. And inside the introduction, just before the separate starts, you can mention your landing page where people can download your checklist or worksheet in exchange for the email address. So you can also build your email list even if they're not buying the book. So this is one of the techniques that you can use out there.

Deb Zahn: Yeah. For consultants the other thing that I think of and I've actually seen this done is, before your meeting with a prospective client for the first time, you can send them your book and say you're really excited about our meeting. Wanted to make sure you had a complimentary copy of that. And it does a couple of things. One is to establish your years in authority because you got the author already. Then the other thing that it does is it creates a feeling of reciprocity. So you've now given them value and they're more likely to want to have you keep giving them value, but now for money. But also we're wired as human beings. When somebody does something for us to want to return that favor, and that might make them more likely to actually hire you. So that's a powerful thing to do. Because I assure you, most consultants are not doing that.

Vikrant Shaurya: Exactly.

Deb Zahn: That's wonderful.

Vikrant Shaurya: And of course, there are two or three options where you can publish the book. The kindle version. The paperback. The hardcover and also an audiobook. So for all the premium clients you're going to meet, you can print out some really amazing-looking hardcover books. And maybe on the first page which is usually blank, you can write something personal for them. So whenever they open it, they see a handwritten message from you. One more thing which they can do which can really make a personalized connection with the plan, they feel like they have really done something for me.

Deb Zahn: That's right. I like that a lot. Because again it's all about relationships. And that's you building a relationship in building and know like trust factor. The other thing I would say is, again, even if you're doing a proposal, you mentioned that you put a picture of the book in the proposal, it automatically elevates what your proposal is. They are going to hear about it from other people. That's going to get you more leads. So there are endless ways to do it. One of the ways I want to highlight that I know you talk about in your book, that consultants don't always think about...Consulting is not just getting in front of clients and doing work. You can also have products or a way to generate revenue.

The book could be one of the products. It could be linked as you were saying earlier with other products like video courses, assessments, things like that. That is another way to generate revenue. And your book could be the lead into that. You could have a membership group that you publish a book and you say you get 60 days complimentary being part of my membership group. And the book is basically the hook that gets them into that. And then of course you deliver wonderful value and they want to stay in it. So I want consultants to shake up their idea of what they think consulting is to not just be in front of clients doing work, but also think of it in terms of products.

Vikrant Shaurya: For the clients we work with, we always create the back end of the book. But it is also one of the important things like having a funnel in the backend. And it could be anything. It could be your video courses. It could be your consulting business. It could be anything like one on one consulting offer. So once you have the book. And in the book itself like there could be...The book itself is divided into four sub-products, the kindle book, the paperback, the hardcover, the audiobook. 50% or 30% of people want to listen to the book. They don't want to read the book, just like podcasts. So it could also be a great platform like I've seen that from my clients and for my books as well. 50 to 60% of the sales we are getting, is for the audiobook. You should have a kindle or paperback. And usually audiobooks are a little bit expensive, \$14.99 or \$19.99. So you will be having a good profit margin on that as well.

Deb Zahn: You know what I love about that particularly if you're the one that actually does the audio, which I know is one of the things that you talk about in your book is, so when I do my podcast and I meet people I've never met before who listen to my podcast, I always hear the same thing. At the beginning, I was like, "Oh, I already think we're friends and I realize I don't know you." Because they get used to your voice and they feel like they're having a conversation. An audiobook can work the same way. So it can warm somebody up so that they really feel like they know you before you've ever had contact with them.

Vikrant Shaurya: Yeah.

Deb Zahn: Obviously, you have a whole bunch of other steps that folks can find out about, as well as the service you offer. So how can folks find out more about you?

Vikrant Shaurya: So if your audience will just read the bestsellingbook.com they will see all the information about how we help our clients. And also for your audience, I have something kind of really cool about the checklist I was talking about. I could offer them to your audience for free. I mean it was the bestsellingbook.com/blueprint. They can download the checklist along with a short 20-21 page ebook that explains how to use that checklist. And which makes your life extremely easy in order to write and publish and market the book.

Deb Zahn: And it's no joke. Because I downloaded it last night. And I will tell you, I found it extremely helpful. So I have never said this publicly and you've inspired me to say it publicly, I am going to write a book about how to be a successful consultant. And I downloaded it and I felt soothed. I said, "Oh yeah, this is completely possible, I could do this. And there's a map to do it." So I really, really liked it. And I'm not getting paid by you to say that. So folks can actually bank on the fact that I believe that. So we will have links to this in all of our and all of your information in our show notes. Let me ask you that one last really important question. Because you seem busy helping a lot of other people. How do you bring balance to your own life?

Vikrant Shaurya: Yeah. So being balanced, like there are so many things, of course, I applied. There are so many things, my friends have pride in. And one important thing, one of the things which I have learned in seven or eight years of my business is, having an accountability partner really changes the game. Let me tell you how I came to the conclusion that this is one of the important things. Especially for me, and of course, it can vary for different people, but I think you can try it. So like I'm into martial arts and sometimes I go to the gym, sometimes I don't. But two years back, I hired a personal coach who comes to my society. Comes to my home and then trains me at 6:00 AM in the morning.

Deb Zahn: Wow.

Vikrant Shaurya: And for being prepared for that training. I have to wake up at 5:00 AM. Now the thing is if he wouldn't be there, then maybe sometimes I could wake up, sometimes I won't. But now if I am paying him money and then he's coming to my home and he's teaching me then it's my responsibility. Even if I'm sleeping at 1:00 AM in the night, I'm still waking up at 5:00 AM just because he is coming and it is my responsibility to show up.

Deb Zahn: I love it.

Vikrant Shaurya: So this is one of the things and I also apply it now in my business. What I usually do is I just work out of this room that I just worked for six hours in a day. And for six hours a day as well, I work in a kind of like which is a hybrid of Pomodoro Technique, a 15 minute I work. And there's a platform called focusmate.com, it changes the game. Focus Mate is a platform where there are so many people around the world who join this conference Zoom platform. It is not Zoom but they have this kind of on laptop or on your phone, you can have this recording. People will come. They will greet each other. They will say OK, in this session we're taking, my goal is to complete this task.

Deb Zahn: Wow.

Vikrant Shaurya: And they will also say this thing, and the video is going to be live. And we'll be working together. So now there will be kind of an accountability thing like I'm accountable to him, or he is accountable to me. And now, this really changes the game. I just have six sessions a day. And I think I am able to produce. Am able to work. Am able to have 10 times more outcome than before.

Deb Zahn: Oh, yeah. And it makes you say it out loud. So it makes you actually think what do I want to accomplish in this period of time? Instead of like, oh, what am I going to do next?

Vikrant Shaurya: Right. And after these six sessions, I can just focus on my family. I can work. I can do something which I really love. Maybe I can go around with my wife. I can do anything I want. Just six

hours of work, nothing else. But when I'm working, then I'm just working. And when I'm doing the martial arts, then I'm just doing the martial arts. When I'm with my wife, I'm just with my wife. So this is the kind of balance that I have created. And one more thing which I've done is, for my entire day, I've hired an accountability assistant. I pay her the money. She's from the Philippines. And she tracks my entire day, like what are the habits I've done. Whether I was able to wake up at 5:00 AM. She checks in with me on WhatsApp every two hours or three hours. "Hey, what's going on?" And I also pay her a penalty if I'm not able to follow.

Deb Zahn: That's fair.

Vikrant Shaurya: So now I don't have any option, I just have to do it. Otherwise, I have to pay her the penalty. I just have to pay her the money. So of course, this is how I have trained myself to work. Now I don't have any excuse. I just have to work. I just have to...If I'm with my wife and I'm also, for example, spending quality time with my wife in my system which my accountability assistant can also go through it. I have rated everything. How productive I was. So I can rate myself out of 10. So maybe six, maybe seven. And then she asks me a question: "Why would you think you're not productive?" Twice a week we have these calls like we always discuss that. How can we improve next week? So there's always a kind of accountability. There's a review. So that makes me be more productive. Be more focused on my work. In my personal life and professional life. And I always feel extremely happy because I believe that I'm doing all the things in my life. I'm not missing anything.

Deb Zahn: That's right.

Vikrant Shaurya: I'm trying to do all the things. So say like this one accountability in every aspect of my life has changed the way I perform in every aspect of my life.

Deb Zahn: That is a game-changer. I've never heard that. And I love that so much. So I'm so happy that I asked you that question. So I really appreciate you coming on the episode again. And again, I loved your book. I really, really like your system. And thank you so much for joining us.

Vikrant Shaurya: Thank you so much for your time. Thank you so much for having me here.

Deb Zahn: Thanks so much for listening to this episode of the Craft of Consulting Podcast. I want to ask you to do actually three things. If you enjoyed this episode or if you've enjoyed any of my other ones, hit subscribe. I got a lot of other great guests that are coming up and a lot of other great content and I don't want you to miss anything. But the other two things that I'm going to ask you to do is, one is, if you have any comments, so if you have any suggestions or any kind of feedback that will help make this podcast more helpful to more listeners, please include those.

And then the last thing is, again, if you've gotten something out of this, share it, share it with somebody you know who's a consultant or thinking about being a consultant, and make sure that they also have access to all this great content and all the other great content that's going to be coming up.

So as always, you can go and get more wonderful information and tools at craftofconsulting.com. Thanks so much. I will talk to you on the next episode. Bye-bye.