

All right.

Quick break to tell you about another podcast that we're interested in right now.

HubSpot just launched a Shark Tank rewatch podcast called Another Bite.

Every week, the hosts relive the latest and greatest pitches from Shark Tank, from Squatty Potty to the Mench on a Bench to Ring Doorbell.

And they break down why these pitches were winners or losers.

And each company's go-to-market strategy, branding, pricing, valuation, everything.

Basically all the things you want to know about how to survive the tank and scale your company on your own.

If you want to give it a listen, you can find another bite on whatever podcast app you listen to, like Apple or Spotify or whatever you're using right now.

All right.

Back to the show.

What's up, y'all?

Sean here.

Sam is in Europe traveling around with the fam and so I'm on my own today and I wanted to do something cool and I think I got a great idea.

So I believe, here's my guess.

I think this pod is going to be one that people really, really like because I know I would have wanted to hear this at some point in time.

And the reason why is because most of the people who listen to this podcast are some form of leadership, right?

You might have started your own company or your own business.

You might be kind of an exec somewhere or a manager somewhere or you want to be a leader, right?

So most people who don't want to be leaders are not listening to a podcast like this.

So the problem is me and everybody else sucks, you know, everybody sucks the first time that they are managing people.

And this isn't like, you know, how to manage people 101.

There's a lot of books that are written about this.

There's some best practices.

There's common sense.

But I wanted to share some of the unorthodox, some of the weird things that I do that I have found work for me.

And they might not work for everybody, but they work for me.

And not all of these people are going to agree with.

Not all of these will work for you.

But again, they all work for me.

Nobody I couldn't find any of this stuff in a book.

I heard about these either from somebody or I just kind of made it up on my own.

And so I think I have five, maybe six different things that I do that are unorthodox but work.

Okay.

So let me start with number one.

And this is called Dr. House.

It's inspired by Dr. House.

So if everybody watches the TV show House, he always does this thing.

The show is like, there's this genius doctor, but he's kind of like a curmudgeon.

And all the other doctors really respect him because he's amazing, but he's kind of hard to work with.

And one of the things he does that's amazing, but hard to work with is he has these like three junior doctors who are kind of like, he's advising them or whatever.

They work under him.

And when a patient comes in and they run a test to try to figure out what's wrong with the person, he doesn't just look at it and say, here's what's wrong with the person.

Right?

First of all, it's usually not that straightforward.

Second of all, even if he kind of has an idea, he doesn't spoon feed it to his team.

Instead, he will usually slap the like maybe the scan or the data or the x-ray or whatever up on a screen.

And he'll say, what do you see here?

Or he'll say, what's weird about this?

Or he'll say, what's interesting about this?

And then the team has to start thinking and getting curious and looking at the thing and saying, well, there must be something there.

What do I see?

And this is really effective.

I do this all the time.

I will take, let's say some data I'm looking at when I'm curious about something.

I see something that makes me go, hmm.

And what I used to do is I used to just like share that with the team.

Hey guys, here's what I found.

Look at this data.

This data shows that A is B and C, right?

I would like give them a conclusion.

I'm basically spoon feeding them an answer.

They'd read it.

They'd say, yeah, that makes sense.

And then they would go on with their day, right?

Because they didn't have to struggle to understand it.

They didn't have to be curious enough to go find it.

They just got spoon fed an answer and they say, yeah, yeah, I'm not surprised by that.

All right, I'm going to move on.

Or, oh, that's weird.

Okay.

Sounds like you got the answer.

I'm going to, again, move on.

So I do it the other way, which does three things.

One, it trains the team to be curious and clever, right?

Because you're not looking for some look.

I'm not telling you to go do 10 more analyses.

I'm saying there's something in this.

What is it?

It's a little bit of a riddle.

The second is it's not a gotcha, right?

Like I'm genuinely asking because they will see things that you don't see.

So even if you saw one of the interesting things, they might find two others that you didn't really appreciate.

And the last is it trains everybody on how to, because, you know, maybe one person out of the group will see the interesting thing, but the other four will say, why didn't I see that?

And that trial and error, that like guess and check is how people get better at stuff.

So you'll train a team of curious, clever people who get good at finding insights and data.

And so that's the Dr. House technique.

I recommend you try it rather than spoon feeding your team answers.

Okay.

The second one, I learned from my wife.

My wife was a consultant and she used to go to these companies and I was like, it was always like, I'm getting alignment, right?

She would go, it would be a board meeting of like, you know, Yahoo's board meeting.

It's like, you have 10 executives at Yahoo and they cannot, you know, they all think they're on the same page and then only when you ask them certain questions, do you realize that like everybody has like a different, you know, game plan, vision of what we're trying to do here, et cetera, et cetera.

So she got good assessing that out, but people are a little bit not defensive, but they're a little bit limited when you just ask them very literal logical questions that tap into only the analytical part of their brain.

Like if you say, what are our three key objectives for the year, they sort of feels like they're taking a math test.

And so she does this thing that was called the holiday party.

The holiday party tactic is she had me go, she had me go to a whiteboard and she goes, all right, let's fast forward.

It's Christmas Eve of this year and we're at the company holiday party.

I want you to start drawing what's at the company holiday party.

I'm like, what do you mean?

She's like, just draw things that would make it an awesome company holiday party.

So I'm like, okay.

All of a sudden I'm having kind of fun.

I'm something creative.

I'm drawing.

I'm just thinking of cool shit that could be at a party.

Right.

[Transcript] My First Million / Shaan's 9 Unorthodox Management Tips

So my guard is down.

And so, you know, I'll draw like whatever there's a DJ and we kind of laugh because the DJ booth is like, you know, my drawing is bad.

And then I'll draw the next thing and then she'll say, okay, what's on the script?

What are you celebrating?

And that question, what are we celebrating is like, that's kind of like, what are we trying to do this year?

Right.

What's the milestone that we hit?

And instead of saying, what are we trying to do?

It's assuming it's already done that we're already celebrating.

We're popping bottles because we hit one million users or 10 million downloads or 100 million in revenue, whatever it is.

And so, you know, we'd say our big North Star goal because it's like that screen can only have one big thing on it that we're all cheers in our glass to.

So what is that North Star metric?

And then she would say, cool, let's walk around like, you know, who's at this party?

And you know, there's a little exercise and as she unfolded this party, it kind of, at first it got me in the mood for winning, right?

And it's like, I'm already working backwards from the assumption that we've won.

Then I identify the North Star goal and then after we do that little game, it only takes two minutes.

Then we would say, all right, so how are we going to get there?

Right?

What would be the things that we would need to do now so that that party happens?

And all of a sudden we're talking and brainstorming from a place of certainty and confidence rather than fear and doubt about not being able to pull it off and the stress, right?

Because when you're in fight or flight, your brain only works in a very limited capacity compared to when you are, you know, at ease, relaxed, which is why, you know, great ideas come to you in the shower because you're, you're relaxed, you have warm water pouring on top of your head.

And so your brain kind of melts away and can start to, you know, put together different data points that are not there when you're tense.

And so I love this tactic of the holiday party drawing game.

It really loosens people up, it gets them thinking, it focuses them on the North Star goal.

And then when you make a plan after that, they go into that plan from in a state of mind of we already won.

Okay.

Now, here's the opposite.

This is called the, the misery, misery loves company tactic.

Okay.

So whenever we're making a plan at the beginning of any plan, everything seems achievable and up everyone's optimistic.

And it's hard to say it's one thing to ask somebody, what are the key risks in this?
And then people, you know, again, they get a little defensive to using the logical part of your brain.
And the question is, you know, if I was to, um, let's say, you know, we, you go do this, I go do my thing and we get busy and, you know, six months from now, 12 months from now, we, we catch back up or we're getting a beer here at the local pub in the afternoon. It's four in the afternoon.
We go grab a beer and we say, man, that idea was so cool.
Let's assume it went wrong.
Right.
So man, that idea was so cool.
I can't believe it didn't work out.
Now, what happened?
What is the, what is the most likely reason we would give that things went south?
And this is a way to identify the core risk, the chief assumption, the riskiest proposition in your plan is to sort of work backwards from we're getting a beer, we're hanging out, it's already failed.
And we say, man, that thing had so much potential.
What went wrong?
What do you think is the number one reason it might go wrong?
And then because you're identifying that up front, you can now like work against that. You can get, you can game plan around that.
Okay.
Here's another one.
I find that people get very defensive about the status quo, especially the leaders because as a leader, you're sort of responsible for the way that the company works, right? You're like, you're responsible for how many people work at your company, right? If I said, did you hire too many people?
Most people don't want to say yes.
And the reality is that certainly, I don't know, 20, 30, 40% of the time, the answer truly is yes, you've hired too many people.
But if you ask CEOs, they'll rarely ever say yes.
And in the same way, you'll say, are you working on a bunch of useless stuff? Or are you working on a bunch of extraneous things?
They would say, no, I mean, these are all important, they're valuable, right?
So people get defensive about their current plan.
And so how do you get people to identify the fat in their plan, right?
To be able to trim the fat without the pressure and the stress of them feeling like they're wrong or they're being blamed or that they're going to have to make some tough decisions to have some hard conversations and because of that, they just want to avoid it.
So here's what I do.
We play a game.
It's sort of like that, you know, that F murder Mary game, right?
Where you decide, you know, out of these three choices, who would you murder?

Who would you marry?

Who would you F?

So similarly, let's just focus on the murder part, which is like, if I asked you, right, so I could sit down with any manager in my company, I could say, in your team, I know you love your team.

And I know they're, they're, they're all great, they're all great in their own ways.

But if you had to do it, what would be the three, who would be the three people that you would cut if you had to cut, not saying you will, where you're not going to cut anybody.

But who would those three people be?

Um, similarly, like out of all the projects and initiatives you're doing, what are the three that you would cut if you had to cut three initiatives off?

Which ones would go?

Um, and you could do this with anything, right, customers, of all your customers on the roster, your clients, who are the three that you would cut where they're just a pain in the ass, it's not worth, the juice is not worth the squeeze.

And if you can create a safe, a safe space basically, where somebody can freely identify what they would cut if they were going to cut, but don't worry, we're not asking you to cut anything.

Uh, and you do it yourself, right, you're not just asking others to do this, but you do it yourself and you think aloud, maybe do it as a group like, Hey, what would we, what projects would we cut, you know, which team members are really not, you know, are at the bottom, right?

There certainly is a top and a bottom.

Who was that?

Right.

Which customers are the top and the bottom?

And if you can identify those, it plants a seed and people, once they've said it out loud, they've heard a truth, it's very hard to unsee a truth and it might be a month later or two months later or three months later, but eventually they will decide to trim some of the fat either on their team, their projects or the client list that will help the team grow.

Um, so that's the F murder, Mary tactic.

Okay.

I think I've done.

What is that?

Uh, four tactics.

Okay.

Let's do another one.

Um, this is the superpower one.

So this is a way to build people up.

So I did this at my, my last startup and people really resonate with this, which is I made a presentation about each person in the team.

I did this on a Friday afternoon.

I said, Hey guys, let's go do a little happy hour.

And I said, I got a presentation for you guys.

I said, you know, I've learned that in it, in any team, you can, you can look for two types of people.

You can look for people who lack weaknesses, meaning they're pretty well rounded. They have no fatal flaws, but they may not be great at anything.

Right.

They're, they're just good.

They're, they're at least good at everything.

Or you can have some people that are amazing at some things and kind of weak in other areas. And I've learned that the, the best performing teams are filled with people who are amazing in at least one area.

Uh, so you're hiring for an extreme strength, not a lack of weakness.

Right.

You know, it's like the Horowitz framework that I really loved.

And so I said, I'd like to, you know, I said, but the funny thing is for most people, they don't, they're not even aware of what their extreme strength is.

And um, because you're too close to it's so normal for you to be great at it.

You don't even really realize you're great at it at some point.

It's other people who point it out.

So I'd like to point out for you the superpower that I've seen each of you have.

And then I would give, and so I put each person's face on a slide.

And I would say, Hey, this is like, for example, Hey, this is Derek, Derek's our designer.

Derek, what I've noticed is your superpower.

I don't know if you're aware of this, but most designers that I've worked with, they're creative types.

They're sort of like, you know, messy desk, procrastinator types.

They pull all nighters when they get creative inspiration and they do amazing work sometimes.

And other times, you know, they get stuck with sort of a creative writers block of sorts.

I said, Derek, your superpower is that you're a great designer, but you're like the mailman.

You deliver every day at the same time, right?

Like I give you the brief, I scribble a poorly written address of where I'm trying to get this package and you're able to interpret it like a mailman and say, Oh, I know where this is trying to go.

And then you deliver it every day at five PM before you leave.

And I said, you're like the mailman.

I said, and you know, you don't work on the weekends.

I know that you're not the type of guy that I should be hitting up for that like, that crazy project we're going to do on the weekend.

So you're like the mailman.

You deliver every day of the week, except for Sundays.

And so I gave him basically a superpower, which is you have this amazing ability to consistently take a loose set of instructions and deliver on it.

And I gave him a nickname that goes with it.

That's why I call you the mailman.

And then, you know, that's your superpower.

And I gave it a little symbol.

And then I like, you know, then went to the next person I said, Oh, this is Fur Con.

Fur Con is, you know, he's not going to win any awards for, for being the most eloquent speaker or the most politically polished kind of guy.

But man, when I, when you talk to Fur Con, it's almost like he's allergic to bullshit.

Like, you know, when someone's allergic to peanuts, you can't even have a peanut dish or you feel uncomfortable taking peanuts around them because you might kill them.

I said, that's what it's like when I bring bullshit around you.

I don't even feel comfortable saying bullshit around you because you're so good at seeing through bullshit and saying, that doesn't make sense.

Or wait, I thought you said this other thing.

So how, how could both of those be true, right?

And so, you know, you are like, you are allergic to bullshit.

That is your superpower.

You just can't stand it.

And that because of that, it makes the rest of us up our game and not bring that, bring half baked plans or incongruent illogical plans to you because you'll sniff it out in a second.

And the beautiful thing is these things are both true and aspirational, meaning they are this way, but by giving it their superpower, they then want to live up to that identity you've given them.

And so you can kind of architect the type of team you want by calling out areas they're good, but they may not be the best at it or they may not be doing it all the time, but by giving them their superpower, they will start to do it more often.

Okay.

So that's the superpower technique.

All right.

A quick message from our sponsor.

You know, I was thinking about the shortest day of the year earlier.

And while we technically have the same amount of time as every other day of the year, the lack of daylight makes it feel so much shorter, which is exactly the same kind of feeling as working with disconnected tools.

Our work days, the same length as always, but before you know it, we spent three hours just fixing something that was supposed to be automated.

Thankfully, HubSpot's all-in-one CRM platform can serve as a single source of truth for managing your customer relationships across marketing, sales, service operations with multiple hubs and over a thousand integrations and an easy to use interface HubSpot lets you spend less time managing your software and more time connecting with your customers. Learn how HubSpot can help you grow your business at [HubSpot.com](https://www.hubspot.com).

Okay.

I'm going to give you three quick ones.

The Tesla master plan.

If you've never read it, Elon Musk wrote a master plan for Tesla, you know, back when it started.

So he wrote the master plan V1 like 10 years ago and then he wrote V2 and basically he said master plan V1 basically was like, you should go read it. I've handwritten his many times and then wrote ours, wrote my own plan for my own business after writing his.

And so his plan basically says Tesla's job is to accelerate, you know, the societies move off of fossil fuels onto sustainable energy.

To do that, we need to create a car that's high performance and high efficiency.

And so we're going to start with the roadster, the expensive car, then we're going to make the next car, then we're going to make the mass market Model 3 car, blah, blah, blah.

He's like, you know, so in summary.

Here's the master plan, build an expensive car to build the brand, build a less expensive car to get more people on it, then build the, use the economies of scale and the learnings from production to build a mass market car that will get to everybody, right?

That's the master plan.

And then he wrote a master plan V2, but it is very powerful if you can write the master plan for your company, right?

It's basically, and it doesn't have to be right, right?

But it's you putting it out there.

What are we here to do?

How do we plan to do it?

And like, you know, here's the takeaway.

And if you look at his writing style, it's a very empowering style.

And so I like to take his master plan and then write my own.

All right.

The next one comes from the CEO coach called Matt McCurry or something like that.

He has this technique called the calendar audit.

It's very simple.

Imagine you print out your calendar from the last week and you look at every, every meeting that was scheduled, every kind of block of time that you used and you take three highlighters. You take a green highlighter that says, that was something that I enjoyed that gave me energy.

You highlight those in green.

And you take a red highlighter, you say, these ones that I highlighted in red are the ones that I felt like my soul was being sucked out of my body, right?

Like these are the soul crushing energy draining things that I dread parts, things of my day that I don't look forward to.

You put those in red and then you have the yellow that are like neutral.

And you look at that and then you say, okay, this is an audit.

I now need to take these red things and I need to figure out over time how I'm going to get more green than red, right?

How I'm going to phase all the red away and get to only green.

And that might be hiring somebody who doesn't, who likes doing that thing because what's red for you might be green for them or just getting rid of it or minimizing the time you do it in segment.

Do we really need three meetings for this?

Could we not just do it in one?

Could this meeting be an email, right, or whatever?

So calendar audit is a very valuable technique.

Okay.

So that was, so so far we've had number one, the Dr. House screenshot technique.

Number two, my wife's holiday party work backwards question.

Number three, the, if we got a beer saying, you know, saying, man, it's a bummer that thing failed.

Why did it fail?

Right?

That's number three.

Number four is creating a safe space for the F murder Mary game, right?

Who, who are the three that you would double down on?

Who are the three that you would cut?

Three is just a magic number.

It might be 3000 for you.

I don't know.

Whatever.

It doesn't, the number doesn't matter.

Same idea.

What are the bottom 20% of things?

What are the top 20% of things?

So what you're trying to identify and with the promise of we're not taking an action on this right now.

Uh, so that's what for, yeah, that's forward.

Number five was tell each person their superpower and give it to your team as a presentation.

They will live up to that reputation.

Number six is the Tesla master plan.

Number seven is the calendar audit.

Okay.

I'm going to do two more, maybe three.

Number eight is peer groups.

So anytime I have an objective, like let's say I want to become, uh, you know, a great poker player or I want to get to a hundred thousand Twitter followers or I want to build a DTC brand that does \$50 million a year, I will create a text chat group of five other people who have, who are in the same kind of ballpark as me of where they're at now and have that same ambition as their top ambition, uh, mentors and advisors overrated peer group underrated.

And so that's what I would do.

And I would start by texting them and then I would do like a once a month kind of call where we could spend three hours on the phone or in person hanging out, um, shooting the shit together, sharing tactics and strategies, what's working for them and trying to achieve your mutually shared goal.

Um, okay.

Last one is the kickoff document.

I think this is number nine, a kickoff document is a template that I have and I could share this, but, uh, if you're subscribed to my newsletter, I think you get it.

So just go to SeanPurri.com and, um, and I think you can get it, uh, or if not just email me at Sean at SeanPurri.com.

Okay.

So the kickoff document is basically something I do before I start a project because I believe that clarity is power and I think too often people go into doing something without actually being clear of what are we trying to do here?

Why are we trying to do it?

How will we measure success and what's the first thing that we should really do?

Um, and that's what a kickoff document does.

So the kickoff doc has three sections.

The first is what are we trying to do?

One liner.

The next is what's a win look like?

And I define a win in two ways.

I say, what's the floor of this win, meaning what is the minimum that I would consider like a successful good outcome?

Like what's achievable thing?

And then what's the F yeah, win, which is the like the, the result that would make me safe F yeah, then that really worked.

And so now I get kind of like a range.

I have like the bottom goal, my floor goal, and then I have my, my, my stretch goal.

And um, and then I also do an anti goal, meaning what are some traps that I could fall into along the way that would like make this whole thing.

Even if I hit my goals, I would feel bad at the end of it because I like did this other thing.

Right.

Like for example, we all have these in life.

Like, uh, you know, I would love to, um, be successful, but I don't want to, you know, screw over people along the way and carry that guilt with me.

Right.

So that's like being successful financially would be your goal.

I mean, you'd put some numbers around it, but then your anti goal would be, um, I don't want to do this in a way that makes me feel unethical or ashamed in any way of what I did.

I'd like to feel proud of it.

Right.

I'd like to be successful, but I want to be able to make sure I'm home with my kids every day at five because that's really important to me.

So an anti goal would be, yeah, I've made it happen, but I've never home.

Right.

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So my anti goal would be, you know, never getting home before, you know, next time. And so it's important to identify your anti goals.

They're very clarifying for you.

Um, and the kickoff doc ends with one hour or your power hour, basically like, what's something I could do in the next hour that would just get like create like momentum, get me to a win.

And so this is not like do some research or make a list.

It's like, get momentum towards the actual outcome.

So if I want to, you know, increase sales, that's like, make a sale, make one sale or like if I wanted to grow my list, my email list, it's like, I don't know, post a thread on Twitter in the next hour that will get some subscribers to my list, just something to get the ball rolling.

That's action oriented.

So you're not just always in planning, but so those are nine different little tips and tricks that really work for me that I don't think you'll learn most of those in, I don't know, business school or, you know, at your job that, you know, even if people try to do management training, it's usually not things like this.

These are my kind of like, you know, unorthodox pet tricks that I like to do that helped me, you know, with my companies.

And so I hope that's helpful for you.

If it is, let me know.

You can tweet it at me at Sean VP.

If it's not helpful, tweet it at me saying, Hey, you know, wasn't that helpful?

Honest feedback.

I love honest feedback.

Thanks for me.

I'm at Sean VP, which is S H A A N VP on Twitter.

All right.

I'm out of here.

I feel like I can rule the world.

I know I could be what I want to put my all in it like no days off on the road.

Let's travel, never looking back.