

# FIRED UP & FOCUSED

Hey there, Rachel Cook here, host of the Promote Yourself to CEO podcast and founder of the CEO Collective. Welcome to the final day of the Fired Up and Focused Challenge. I am so honored that you have spent the last 10 days with me to learn more about how you can be more productive and more profitable in your business.

Now, as we wrap this challenge, I want to make sure we have time to really reflect and get clear about what we need in order to design our next normal. Because, to be honest, 2020 has been unlike anything any of us could have possibly predicted. And it's not going back to "normal" anytime soon. So we have to decide how we are going to get intentional and design the business and life that we want, that actually works for us, so that we can move forward and continue growing our business, keep our businesses going.

The truth is the only constant is change. Things will always be changing for entrepreneurs, and as wild of a ride as 2020 has been, it is just really an amplification of this lesson, that things are always going to change. Our job as the CEO of our business truly is to be able to adapt and adjust as things continue to change.

A great example of this, things are always changing in our businesses, in the business landscape, in the online business and social media landscape. Just this week that I'm recording this training for you, TikTok has now been copied by Instagram. This happened years ago, when Instagram started creating stories to challenge Snapchat. So we have always seen that things are going to change. Things are going to evolve, and it is up to us as CEOs, as entrepreneurs, to adapt and adjust, and not just sit back and say, "Oh no, things are changing again." We have to be willing to handle the change and accept the change and decide how we are going to respond to that change.

So, in light of this, all that's going on, I want to make sure we have a chance to reflect and think about what we truly want and need to design our next normal. These questions are questions that I ask myself, that my coach uses with me, that my husband and I talk through whenever we are trying to make a big decision, whether it's in business or our life, to figure out what is it that we really want. What is it that are truly our priorities? I recommend taking these questions, downloading the workbook to go along with this, and thinking about what is going on in your life, in your business, in your health, in your finances, in your wellbeing. And this will help you get clarity on what your next steps needs to be.

The one thing I would recommend, as you are thinking about these questions, is to focus on one kind of area at a time. Because if you get too broad, you won't feel clarity. You'll feel overwhelmed with all the information now in front of you. But if you get narrowed in, then you will walk away with clarity on what your next step should be.

So, for example, I have taken these questions and thought about how do I need to thrive in order to show up as my best self, as a CEO leading this business. These questions gave me clarity on me needing to move out of my home office, which I've had for 12 years, and find an office space. These questions have helped us to decide how are we going to move forward with the kids for school this year. These questions have helped us to figure out what

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our priorities are going to be in our finances. These questions have helped me figure out what I need to adapt and adjust in my marketing plan.

So, you can use these questions for anything, really, but I want you to think about one topic area that you need clarity on to tackle with these questions. So, let's go through, and I'll describe these questions and give you some things to think about.

The first question to ask yourself is what is working? What's going well here? What is working the way that it should be working? What is going right in this specific thing that you're thinking about? This question is so important because, often, when we are feeling frustrated or like things need to change or not going according to plan, we lose sight of the parts that are working. So, really get clarity about what is going well, what is working, what's going right that we can celebrate, because we want to double down on what's working.

Then we need to ask ourselves what's not working. What isn't working right now could also translate into what's causing you stress. What's causing you anxiety? What is causing frustration? What are you settling with in this specific thing you're looking at? When you have these answers, we start to have more ideas around where, maybe, we need to adjust. We can see where boundaries have been overstepped. We can see where we need to make a call in order to relieve this pressure.

What changes do you need to make? This is where you can start to brainstorm. What are the solutions here? What are all the options in front of me? What are all the potential things that we could do in order to get more aligned again? Brainstorm all of those and put them down in one place.

And as you brainstorm them, then you can review and say, "Okay, what are our top priorities here? What are our criteria for what we truly want? What are the things that are most important to us in this topic area?" So, when we were going through these questions with the thought of what are we going to do with my kids for school, we had a couple very important priorities. One was our family's health and wellbeing. The other was making sure that the kids felt loved and connected instead of anxious or stressed out. So, we had a list of priorities, the criteria to help us figure out what our decisions were going to be, what our next normal was going to look like, related to my kid's school.

When I was thinking about the top priorities for how I needed to thrive while I'm working, it came up over and over again in this brainstorm. I needed quiet. I needed a place where I wouldn't be distracted. I needed a place where I wouldn't be interrupted, and those became the criteria for me, or the starting of the criteria for me.

Okay, so now I have a list of your top priorities for the specific thing you're working through to design your next normal. Then we want to think about what is the ideal outcome. If you could wave a magic wand and think about what would be the best outcome possible here, then you can really give yourself permission to think big and to think differently. What would the ideal outcome be? What would it potentially look like if we went down this path?

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Next, what are your negotiables? There is always the give and take, and this is something that I think is so important to remember right now, especially, because there's always going to be something we have to negotiate on, something we have to be willing to give up in order to go in the right direction for us, for our business, for our family, for ourselves. So, what are you willing to give up? What are you willing to compromise on right now, when you're thinking through this topic?

Then, what are your non-negotiables? What are you absolutely not willing to negotiate on? This is another way to ask what are your priorities here, but in a different lens. So what are the things you're not willing to budge on? What are the things that will make you go, "Nope, this isn't the direction we want to go."

These things often, for me, are the easier ones to come up with because I'm very clear about where my boundaries are. These are the things that help you really start to create those boundaries in your life and have more clarity on what you want to be designing for yourself.

Who do you need to ask for support? This is an essential question to ask whenever you're thinking about change, whenever you're thinking about going in a new direction. Who do you need to ask for support? This could also be who do you need to ask for feedback? This could be who do you need to ask for accountability. Who do you need to ask to brainstorm this with you?

Sometimes, when I'm going through this process, I'll show up to my coach and say, "Hey, I'm trying to process this and work through this. Can we dialogue on this for a bit?" If I'm working through something that's more personal, I'll go to my husband and talk through this with him. If I'm trying to figure out something for my health or my wellbeing, I will start to reach out to my therapist or my doctor, or any of those people I have in my personal success team. If it's something in the business that I need some feedback from the team, I will say, "Hey, I need to get on a call with my operations director, or my customer experience director." So, who do you need in your corner to help you think through this, to help you brainstorm this, to help hold you accountable, or who needs to be a part of this decision making process?

Where do you need to ask for support? Slightly different question, but very important question. So, where, in relation to creating this next normal, again, we're on a specific topic as we're going through and journaling these questions, responding to these questions, where else do you need support? Where do you need to ask for support in order to and move forward?

It could look like you need to, and you're thinking through your workspace and how you can thrive while you're working right now, maybe you need to look for support with things like meal prep, to make sure that you actually have lunches that are available when you're working. Maybe where you need to ask for support or get support is you need to have your babysitter or your partner make sure the kids are out of the house so that you can have some quiet time to record that podcast or do that interview.

Maybe if you're looking at something that's more on the personal front, you need to ask for extra help around the house. You need to get your kids involved or your spouse involved, or

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you need to hire somebody. Where are the areas that are causing you stress or frustration, because they're not operating as smoothly as they could? Those are the areas we can start to troubleshoot and we can start to move forward.

And the final question is how will you stay accountable to your next normal? When I'm thinking through all these questions, I'm thinking through them, again, on a specific topic, a specific area of my business or my life or my wellness or my family. And once I get to the point where I'm like, "Okay, I have more clarity on what I need to do next," then I need to know how I'm going to stay accountable. How do I know I'm actually going to do that thing? How am I going to go out there and make that change?

And it's usually, for me, I'm going to start taking action on this within 72 hours. I'm going to start reaching out and asking people if they know office spaces that are available. I'm going to start emailing people and seeing if I can find a babysitter. I'm going to start asking my husband, "Hey, can we sit down and talk through redistributing our chores in our home so that things run a little bit more smoothly?" I'm going to make sure I'm taking action within 24, 72 hours.

So, I hope you enjoy these questions. I find this exercise to be really, really helpful whenever, again, I'm feeling stuck, I'm feeling frustrated, I know that things aren't going as well as they could. And usually, it's because we're out of alignment in some area. We're operating from default instead of by design. So, we want to design our next normal and think through these different areas of our life and our business.

Download the workbook, use these questions, think through some things, and please reach out to me, let me know what are the decisions you're making to create your next normal? What are you doing to create more ease and less stress in your life and business using this framework to get the clarity that you're looking for.

Congratulations, friend. You have finished the 10 day Fired Up and Focused Challenge. This is one of my favorite things to share with people in entrepreneurship, in small business, because I know how hard it can be to navigate running a business in any normal time. But now more than ever, it has become more complicated. So, I hope these strategies you've been learning in each of the daily challenges are ones that you're going to implement and continue to use.

And if you want even more, you want to dive deeper into how you can plan, prioritize, and boost your profitability, I would love for you to join us at the next CEO Retreat. We are hosting a CEO Retreat, coming up September 18th, and it is 100% virtual. You can get all of the details in the link below. We want to make sure that anyone who is ready to create their 90 Day Plan, get clarity on their goals and the specific action steps they need to do to take action on an order to achieve those goals, that you have a full day set aside with me and my team to help you get all of those pieces of the puzzle in place.

We will be coming together 100% virtually. So, no matter where you are, you can join us from the comfort of your kitchen table or your home office or your outside office, and walk

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away with a ready to implement 90 Day Plan that you can plug into your project management system, pass off to your team, or simply sit down with yourself and stay accountable to finishing, to following through and getting the results that you're looking for.

Until August 25th, you will be able to save \$300 on your ticket when you join us for early bird special, early bird pricing. And we would absolutely love to mail out to you, your CEO Planner, your CEO Retreat Workbook, all of the planning tools that we use and a copy of my book Fired Up and Focused, that actually has 28 days of challenges inside.

Okay, I hope you join us. I hope you check out the CEO Retreat and even more than that. Thank you so much for joining me for this challenge.