



Scott Ritzheimer

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Note: *This transcript has been lightly edited for clarity and understanding. There may still be grammatical and spelling errors,*

Les McKeown: Hi everybody, and welcome back to Scale! with Predictable Success, where we get the opportunity to speak to those who have, by themselves and with other people delivered what we call Predictable Success in their own life and career.

And today, I'm absolutely delighted to be talking to someone who I first met, I guess, as you'll hear, sort of as like a client, and who's become in turn a colleague and recently just a great friend. And it's Scott Ritzheimer, CEO of Scale Architects. Welcome, Scott.

Scott Ritzheimer: Les thanks for having me. I'm looking forward to this.

Les McKeown: We amped up the anticipation for each other, let's face it, by both having to reschedule twice.

[laughter]

Les McKeown: And we're ready to do it. And as the listeners will hear, part of the reason Scottie had to reschedule it because of a major life event that occurred last year. But we'll get to that at some point.

We want to talk a lot, Scott, about Scale Architects during this call. But let's just set that aside for a moment.

And I'd love for the listeners just to hear a little bit about you. I mean, where'd you grow up; what you do? What was your life before you got to Scale Architects? And then we'll talk about what came after.

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, so my life was a little bit of everything, folks ask where I'm from and I still haven't quite figured out the answer to that question. Because I was born in California, grew up in Pennsylvania, went to school in Kansas City and I live in Atlanta.



[laughter]

Scott Ritzheimer: So with all of that Atlanta is home, I've lived here longer than anywhere else. And it's the city I enjoy seeing most from the window of a plane if you know what I mean.

And, you know, Atlanta is definitely home. I live here with my wife, Hilde Marie, who is from Norway, which a friend of mine told me is a rare commodity, and to hang on to that as long as I can.

Les Mckeown: Absolutely!

Scott Ritzheimer: And so she's wonderful. We have three children, Benjamin, Liam and Isabel. Isabel is our newest, she joined us last year over the summer and has just been an absolute bundle of joy.

As I look back at it now, business and entrepreneurship was always kind of woven into what I did, I just never saw it. You know, I was never the quintessential like selling candy on the playground, I didn't really care about that.

But I was always finding a way of making money and more so finding a way of leading something. And so it took me a while to get there.

Where I spent more of my time, especially in the earlier years was a ministry. I did a lot of work with ministries, went to a school of ministry in Kansas City.

And that's actually how I landed here in Atlanta was to come and work with an organization called Gate City, and I'm still on the board of directors with them now. Fantastic organization built around the idea of 24/7 prayer, which is pretty cool.

And while I was there, I bumped into a guy named Raul Rivera and Raul is "*the entrepreneurs entrepreneur*". He's what in our world we call a Visionary to the nth degree.

And when we had moved down, we were just working for a ministry and we're doing it free. So I needed something as some kind of income. And so he came to me one day, and he's like, "*Hey, you happen to be looking for a job?*" because he was just dying to bring people in, you know, and I wasn't remotely qualified for anything that he did.

He did IRS preparation work for churches. And I was a punk kid who had gone to ministry school, you know, but it's like anyone he could hire. He was hiring. We were working in his basement at the time.



My first week I was corresponding with the IRS for folks. And you know, it's just it was sink or swim, do or die and I started in the not so proverbial mailroom with him. I was answering emails. We had an email address support at StartChurch.com. And that was my job.

And we had some software and I was working on that. And it was a side thing you know, is enough to have money to do ministry.

Shortly after I started, he actually sold the company to a competitor that was in Nashville. And it was one of the best business lessons of my life.

Within 18 months, the organization went from 13 employees and several million dollars in sales to three employees working from home with no sales whatsoever.

And just watched the new owner systematically but unintentionally destroy the organization.

And it was just a great, great lesson in what not to do in a purchase transaction. What not to do if you're selling how businesses work, and what what makes them not work, all in a very short period of time.

Les Mckeown: And without breaking any confidences if you can, what were the key contributing factors to such a precipitous decline?

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, I love being able to talk about this on this show, because the model is really helpful for this.

So the Predictable Success model that you've created that me and the Scale Architects use every day, really is a helpful explanation. Because what had happened was, he had fought hard to get out of Early Struggle, and had really spent every bit of energy that he could to break free of that gravity.

So we've got 13 people, basically all of us brand new, within a year or two working in a basement, just trying to figure it out as we went. And so much of the organization rested on his shoulders.

He was our primary sales rep. He was our primary technical consultant. He did all the speaking at our conferences. He was the company.

And everybody in the process underestimated that. And so when he sold, he sold with, "*I'll consult with you and be helpful*", but they really wanted space from him. And he really wanted space from the company.



And so they bought a company, but they gave up its best asset, is what really happened at the end of the day.

And so what that did for us, long story short, 2008 September, they call and say *"hey, we've given this our best shot. We've got no other option but to declare bankruptcy unless you want it back. We'll just give you everything back. You can take it and hopefully you can make something with it."*

Admirable. Right? There was no bad guys in this situation, just everyone trying to do a great job and it just it didn't work.

And so at that time, he asked me to come on. I was one of the three people that remained, he asked me to come on and work with him and relaunch the organization.

We had about \$150,000 in debt we didn't know about with vendors. We had about 250 clients for the two of us to handle that we didn't know about that hadn't been served by the other organization because they were just in over their heads.

And they had also completely destroyed the website and we were a web based company.

So there was no chance that this thing was gonna work, but it was our best shot and so during all of that kind of craziness, I had every reason to not like business, you know, I just saw the underbelly of how the business world works.

Even when good people are trying to do the right thing. And I fell in love with it. I fell in love with business. And I just realized, like in the messiness of all of that there's an opportunity to create something really special.

And that's what founders do at heart. And it's why I love working with them. And so I was all in. September 2008. Now, if you remember, that wasn't a great time to start a business.

Les McKeown: I do remember.

[laughter]

Les McKeown: I had just started the process of getting to publication with Predictable Success at the exact same time you're talking about, I don't remember everybody telling me *"could you have picked a worst time?"* Of course, neither you nor I got to pick the time, right?

Scott Ritzheimer: Nope. But it worked. Almost immediately the phone started ringing. And Raul is just a genius when it comes to sales. It's just spectacular, especially in the industry that we're in and what we're doing, we're working directly with churches.



So we were doing the actually the business side of church, which is the best way to describe what we did, particularly those that were starting, we would help them register with the State and the IRS and the Social Security Administration and all of that.

And so phones start ringing, sales start coming in, and we're trying to hire people really as fast as we can. We were able to hire back some of the people that had been let go.

But from there on, you know, we joke about this now, but it was pulse-based hiring. You know, like, if you had a pulse you were in.

The second criteria was, "*are you willing to work in a basement until we can find an office?*", you know, and so we had all the funny stuff of Early Struggle.

We were working in the basement, but we weren't really zoned to work in the basement. So there's this constant dance with the HOA. And at one point, I think we had about 12 people working there, in just half of his basement by this point.

And they started fussing about cars. So we had to park in a local shopping center parking lot, and I had to shuttle people back and forth in my truck. And that was just what we did.

To make a long story short, it worked phenomenally well.

Just like we talked about in Fun, you end the day righteously exhausted, but it was good. We were winning. Double digit growth year after year. We never registered, but with the growth rate that we were experiencing, we were, I think just about the top 500 of Fortune 500 for a while.

And it's just phenomenal. And it's one of those things you feel like, okay, you know, what are we gonna do? We're gonna add another million dollars next year. How are we going to do it? Same way, we've always done it, we're gonna add a sales rep, do a couple more events. It's great, isn't it?

Les McKeown: Rinse and repeat.

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, until it isn't. And listeners for this show, know all about Whitewater and what that looks like. But that hit us really hard. It hit us pretty early. Because of our work in the nonprofit space, we really did, we were about a fifth of the price of our competitors. So it hit us at a relatively low headcount and relatively low revenue number, but it hit pretty hard.

Les McKeown: How did it start to show up, Scottie?



Scott Ritzheimer: Where we felt it the most, was particularly with our events. A big part of our growth strategy, about 45% of our income at one point, was coming from events that we were doing all across the country.

We would do one day events, we'd bring people in, and the way that it worked was it was a small price to get in. And then we would sell our services. And that's how we actually made our revenue.

And the strategy was more, right, we just do more of these events. And you reach about 50 with one person than you realize, for one day events, you're about tapped.

And so we're like, "Okay, how are we going to grow?" And what we were doing was, we were trying to take what was the unique gifting of Raul and reproduce that across a bunch of people, but at a time when that industry was declining, right?

If public events, especially in the church world were declining, because YouTube is there and you know, so many things are online.

And so what happened was we kept pushing on the revenue number. If we can grow revenue, everything else will be okay. And our profit margin was shrinking every year.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: So we were going from 30% and it dwindled all the way down to one year, just over 7%. And revenue was going up the whole time.

And it's just like, what is happening? How is this even possible?

And what ended up happening was we didn't realize it, because we had no way of looking at the data; we didn't really use data all that much. It was you know, whoever had the best story was who won the argument.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: And what ended up happening was we were losing close to a million dollars a year on those conference events.

By the time you actually put in the cost of the event, the cost to do all of the work, the added cost of getting people there and back, and all of that, we looked like it was bringing us in about \$1.2 - \$1.3 million.



But it was actually taking a little less than a million dollars, but pretty close. And it was an enormous drain on our energy.

So our entire leadership team; almost every meeting was "how can we get conferences back on track?", and it just wasn't happening.

So around that time, I was listening to a podcast, and I don't remember if it was you, or if it was someone else on staff, but they got on Donald Miller's podcast from StoryBrand, and talked about "The Seven Stages" that that we all go through.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: And it was like, "what is happening?" I just I remember sitting there in my truck, and I just stopped at one point. And I was like, "this is uncanny! How is it possible?"

And so it's like, I have to find out more. And so I got the audio book actually. And funny story with it. It was actually 2014, because my wife and I had planned a trip. She's from Norway as I mentioned earlier.

So we're out in Norway. And every time we'd go over there, we'd kind of pawn the kids off on my in-laws and then travel across Norway or Europe or something. So we had trips to London and and this particular one, we went down to watch the Formula One race in Monaco, which is like creme de la creme.

It's like a beautiful place. We spent a lot of time in Nice as well, which is just marvelous. So Hilde Marie is having a blast. I'm getting to watch fast cars go around small streets and it just it doesn't get any better.

So we're about to go on this trip. And we're actually on the flight down. It was a connecting leg from Amsterdam to Nice, France. Romantic weekend with my wife, and what am I doing?

Mister romance, I'm listening to an audio book by this guy named Les McKeown. And I remember it clear as day. I remember looking out the window listening to it on my headphones and and got to the chapter about Whitewater.

And it was just one thing after the next like, yes, yes, yes. How can he know this? It's what I experience now. I mean, every time working with a client, I've heard you talk about it countless times...

"Do you have a camera in our office somewhere?" "Have you been reading my emails?"



And that's what it was. And the very first thought that went through my mind was "Oh, my goodness, we are in Whitewater!"

And the second thought that came right after that was, "if I could help people get out of Whitewater as my occupation every day of my life, I would die a happy man".

And that's a really weird thought. It's not normal.

[laughter]

Les McKeown: No, it's not.

Scott Ritzheimer: And so, like most entrepreneurs, what did I do? I went I had a great trip with my wife, came back and I did nothing. Yeah, I had it in a book. It was in my head. Okay, I've got it figured out. You know, we're in Whitewater.

And so I mean, it was another three years of just kind of slogging through Whitewater wondering what's going on and what we can do about it.

And I realized, hey, wait a second. Like, I know the answer. It's in the back of that book that I read. And so I dug it out, got the physical copy this time. And I just took my team through the back part of the book that says how to get out of Whitewater and into Predictable Success, and we work that plan.

And within 12 months, it was a massive transformation. We added a million dollars, not to our top line, but our bottom line.

Les McKeown: Wow.

Scott Ritzheimer: Which tripled our bottom line at the time, almost tripled our bottom line. And from then on, I was just like, this is it. I've used all kinds of different stuff from all of the people that we all know and it's great. It was helpful. It moved us along but nothing had anywhere close to the impact that just walking through that book did.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: And so it was just like this is tremendous.

Les McKeown: Just as an aside Scottie, I gotta say that hearing you say that, and obviously I've heard the story before, but having heard so many similar versions, the twinge I get every time I hear it is, why couldn't I have worked out a business model where instead of the price of the



book, people got the book free and I got a slice of the revenue and or profit improvement, because I would never need to work again.

If I could have worked that one out, but I didn't. Anyway, I'm glad it worked for you. So you've got it back on track. What happens next?

Scott Ritzheimer: And then what happens when you get out of Whitewater? You end up in Predictable Success, and I was looking at Predictable Success and thinking "that's wonderful. It looks kind of boring!".

[laughter]

Scott Ritzheimer: And so I worked really hard, but I could see that my time leading the organization. I love churches, I loved what I did there, they're a lot like founders, you know, they're really cut from the same cloth.

And I love that aspect of it, but my entire world was church. I went to church, my kids were at a Christian school, I worked at a company that only worked with churches, I needed something else. I needed to broaden that a little bit.

And I found that I enjoyed working on organizations, than working in organizations, right? I loved building StartChurch more than I did the products that we made.

Les McKeown: Classic consultant mindset.

Scott Ritzheimer: Exactly. And so being CEO, that's not what my organization needed, particularly in Predictable Success. It needed that vision, it needed that spark, and I wasn't the one to do that.

And so as all of those things were coming together, I was looking at what am I going to do next? And it's like, well, I'd love to do that, I'd love to do for other people what took me years to do, right?

Because I know that I can do it in a fraction of the time. And so as I started planning my transition out, I was looking at a few different options of what I was going to do. I knew I was going to be working with founders, I knew that I wanted to work in that entrepreneurial space, but I didn't exactly know what was going to land.

And my very last week, we did a whole transition process, went phenomenally well. It's one of those things where if you transition a company really well, you wonder like, was I screwing it up when I was there? Because it's working really, really well now.



[laughter]

Scott Ritzheimer: It was one of those. So I'm so proud of those guy's, they're doing phenomenal. But it was clear for me that it was time to move on.

And my very last week there, was the very first week that you opened the Predictable Success Practitioner program.

Les McKeown: I didn't realize there was such a close proximity to those two events.

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, they overlapped. I went and did the training with you in your living room back then. And I came back and I was there for one more day, we did a big celebration.

And that was it. I was off to the races. And it has been amazing.

I remember I had looked at several different programs at the time, again, you can name them, we don't have to name them.

But the thing that I had experienced with them is like you get this great book and then you kind of look behind the scenes and the book was the best part.

Les McKeown: The book was all there was.

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, it was like after that, it's kind of like it's all downhill from there. And so I kind of expected that. I expected the book is you know, what you see is what you get.

And that was great, because it did a massive amount of good for me in my organization. And I knew I could use it to do great things for other people.

But I remember sitting in your living room, and you pulled out, I believe it was the org chart workbook. And then you pulled out the lateral management workbook.

And I was like, "*Whoa, wait a second!*" There is so much more to this under the surface than I had any clue about.

And my first thought was like, "*Man, I wish I had this back then because it would have made figuring this out a lot easier*".

[laughter]

Les McKeown: But it would have made big book though, right?



Scott Ritzheimer: That would be a very, very big book. So I was like, "I wish I had it in the back end". But then I was like, "man, there's so much here and this is the start of something really exciting".

And, and so yeah, I hit the ground running as a Licensed Predictable Success Practitioner.

Les McKeown: So maybe it'd be good if I had a moment or two to talk a little bit about how that transitioned into you becoming the CEO of Scale Architects.

But before we get there, at the point where we just got to, what did you anticipate you were going to do becoming a Licensed Practitioner?

Were you intending to be a general consultant using Predictable Success as your core, go to model? Were you going to work in the church world? Probably not from what you've just said. Just sketch that out a little bit because this became a bit of a sliding doors moment for you. Where, had you taken the first option would you have landed up today?

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, I was doing some work in the marketing space as well.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: So general consultancy is a very good way of doing it. I was what I now call "an everyone coach". Because as an entrepreneur, we can dig into this a little bit later.

But as an entrepreneur, you are everything. Like you have to check all the boxes. So there was a time when I was our marketer. There was a time when I was our sales rep, there was a time when I was our fill in the blank.

And you have to be, to an extent a jack of all trades and so I was kind of walking out saying, "Hey, I've got this whole tool set", if you will, of life experiences. They weren't really tools, they were real life experiences. And I want to share this with other people.

What Predictable Success was for me, was I really wanted to help folks in Whitewater. That was the key. I really genuinely wanted to help folks in Whitewater and I had not seen any tool that was that was anywhere near it, in terms of its effectiveness.

For a long time I kind of rode two horses with one butt you know, it's really difficult to be a marketer and a consultant at the same time. In my mind those fit together a lot better than they did in the real world.

And so it took me a little while to kind of lay one of those to rest. I knew all along that what I really wanted to do was the consulting.



Les McKeown: Right. And so just if I can grab the reins for a moment of the narrative, for reasons that will become obvious. What happens, dear listener, is I launched this Licensed Practitioner Program and we get the first cohort, and I keep it deliberately small, because I'm testing this out.

It's the first time I've really tried to teach the model to more than one or two people at a time, in terms of them becoming people that can use it.

So as Scottie said, I do it in my own living room with eight or 10 people there. And there's this one guy, I don't know any of them personally, but there's this one guy. And he's always got a question that goes one level beyond what I had shown up, ready to talk about.

Now, in my own defense, and for my own self esteem, it's not that I can't answer the question, I just wasn't expecting anybody to ask it. And you'll not be surprised to guess who this is.

And we then have this series of Open Hours, which we still have every month, there's an Open Hours session.

In fact, just as we're recording this, our next one's the day after Scott and I record this interview. But back then, I'm hosting them. Now Scott runs them. And we have an open question period. And I'm sort of, frankly, to be honest with you, I'm on the call and thinking okay, the questions will drizzle out, we'll finish a little early and I'll get 15 minutes or so spare.

It doesn't matter what the time is available. This one guy just keeps asking questions. And he's still asking them as I'm cutting off the Zoom call. And he's pestering me with questions offline, online, making suggestions about stuff, telling me stuff that I only recently worked out about the program.

So I have all of that going on. And the other folks are no slouches, either. But this is just a different kettle of fish, as far as, let's say, the momentum that this guy was bringing.

And on the other side, I've experienced the same thing that Scott has just shared, which is, I have a big heart for what was then called our Licensed Practitioner Program. It is a fantastic way for me to leverage a wonderful model that I've developed.

But I hadn't really thought through the fact that, hey, you know what, I also coach and consult a lot of people. I've still got a practice of my own. And I was finding it very hard to make the time available to really develop the Licensed Practitioner Group the way I wanted to.

So I thought, you know what, I can kill two birds with one stone here. I go to this Scott Ritzheimer guy and I ask him to stop asking and start telling other people and ask him to take charge of this, that gets that off my back. And he stops pestering me.



So the first number one reason that I came to ask you, was just to stop the deluge that I was getting.

[laughter]

Les McKeown: I'm only joking, but anyway, it was right at the time. I called you up. You said yes. I don't think I'd finished the question when you said yes. Why was that? What was the attraction to you? Because at that time, we hadn't really scoped out what this was gonna become? Why did the idea of taking over what would become Scale Architects appeal to you?

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, so I mean, there's a couple of reasons that it was very easy. One is again, I've never seen a model out that it's like it. I was sitting at lunch, a couple months into working with it as a Practitioner, and I was having lunch with a friend of mine, who knows, I can poke a hole in just about anything, you know, and do so readily. And, and often.

And he said, "What is it that you don't like about the model?" and I was at a loss for words. There's things that I learned differently. There's different language that I've used for things and so there was just a language learning curve for me.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: But there's nothing that I fundamentally disagree with, in it at all, and I can't really think of anything else that's true, you know.

And I've heard you say this, "*the further you go with it, the more you realize there's more to learn*". Because of just the way that it's structured, the way it wasn't created as much as perceived, just lends itself to a constant opportunity to learn something new.

And for a guy who likes to ask questions, I'm lost if there's not something new to learn.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: And so I really enjoyed that. The second part was, I love scaling things up. I don't really see myself doing the 100, 200 sessions a year, that's not really center of the bullseye, for me. It's something that I love to do, there's something magical about being in the room with folks. But I knew that was a temporary thing at best.

And so the Scale Architects program gave me an opportunity to extend my impact and influence beyond my own personal hours. And that was something that was, you know, something I wanted to do. And it fast tracked that rapidly.



Les McKeown: And so, we pretty quickly got a deal hammered together, I think it was one of the most, if the legal side of a transaction can ever be anything other than, you know, getting a prostate exam, it was the most enjoyable if I can even say that. We got a deal hammered together really quickly. You got the Master License to license other people in Predictable Success. And you came up with and build the Scale Architects concept.

So I want you to share a couple of things. First of all, what's in it for somebody to become a Scale Architect? What does that mean? What can they do? What do you do to help them do that?

And then let's talk a little bit about what it means to work with a Scale Architect? So first of all, if any of our listeners want to be a Scale Architect, why would they do it? And secondly, why would any of our listeners want to work with a Scale Architect?

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, so it's a great question. And to keep the answers short on those, in working with our current Scale Architects, this year, I had the opportunity to speak with, and interview almost 200 different coaches and consultants.

And over the course of being able to do that, I recognize there is a recurring pattern that's happening for a lot of folks in the industry, dare I say, every single one.

And that is, in those early years in particular, but it can drag on for quite some period of time, there are three mistakes that they make.

And in making those mistakes, they limit their own ability to make income as a coach or consultant. And, probably more importantly, they limit the impact that they create inside of organizations.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: And so when you become a Scale Architect, either getting licensed with the materials that you can use, or getting certified and having me come alongside you and coach you each step of the way, what we're doing is tackling those three for you, the three main things that will cause coaches to fail, and about eight out of 10 new coaches do fail, and but it's entirely avoidable.

And so those things real quickly, and we'll kind of leave it here as a teaser for folks, that we've got a solution for you, that that you can pursue on your own if you're interested.

But the first one is becoming what I call an "everyone coach". This is someone who like myself, had success as a leader, by being a little bit good at everything.



Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: And I think that translates to being a great coach or consultant. And the truth of it is that's not what it takes at all. In fact, the opposite. And so what happens is, when you become an everyone coach, particularly today, you're not the ideal choice for anyone.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: And so it becomes exceptionally difficult to bring in especially high quality candidates, especially those ones that you can have the biggest impact for, because you're spreading yourself thin over all kinds of different areas.

Les McKeown: And I would say just to amplify that, Scott, one of the things that's heartbreaking to watch, and I know you've both seen this a lot is how often someone who is so highly respected as an informal mentor within organizations, they're known for it. They're the go to person, and they're brilliant at it.

And they think, understandably, why wouldn't you think, you know, I just, I just take what I'm doing here, I'm not getting paid for that. I'm getting paid to do the job I do mentoring people, and they love it, and I'm good at it. So I've stepped out and be a coach or consultant.

And it just falls flat because it's a very different thing being go to informal mentor and actually building a successful coaching or consulting practice. So yeah, 100% echo that.

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, absolutely. And so what ends up happening is that very quickly leads to the second problem, which is where that person becomes what I call a "What's up coach".

They're taking so many different things in some different directions. You know, "Can you help me with sales scripts?" Yes. "Can you help me with, you know, this employee problem I'm having?" Yes. "Can you help me build systems to scale my organization?" Yes.

Right, it says yes to all of it. You can't possibly have a structured process that you take people through for all of those.

And so what that means is, every single session, you're doing two, three, four, maybe eight times as much work before the session, just to get ready for the session. That's not sustainable. Nobody can make a living doing that.

And so what we end up doing, is showing up the sessions, preparing a little bit, but winging it, and the clear sign of that is, you walk into a coaching session, and this is helpful advice for folks who aren't coaches as well, that you walk into a coaching session, and the coach says, "what, can I help you with today?"



Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: It's like, "*I paid you for that*", you know, and so, if your primary consulting or coaching strategy is how can I help, right, that that's not very helpful.

And, so the best clients, the best coachees, whatever you want to call them, the best customers, they're not going to hang around for that. You get a couple sessions, and they're out, they just don't have time for it.

Les McKeown: And you get high turnover, which is incredibly expensive.

Scott Ritzheimer: And it's a cycle, and it just drives itself back again. And so then what ends up happening, is it gets harder and harder to hang on to clients. And it's really hard to find clients, because you're not the ideal choice for anyone.

And so what you end up doing is clinging to the clients that you have for as long as you can. And that clinging is what drives the third mistake, which I call being a "*freeloader coach*", where nobody wants to do this.

There's not a single coach that I've ever met that wants to be in this position. So I want to just be very careful with it. They're trying to put food on the table, right? And they say, I've got a mortgage coming up, I've got this client, I know that I've done my best work for them. And we're kind of on autopilot. But I have to keep them around, otherwise, I can't pay the bills.

And so what ends up happening is they hang on to clients too long, which damages that relationship long term, ruins any potential that they have for referrals, and keeps them stuck in this cycle of "*everyone coach*", "*what's up coach*" "*freeloader coach*", and again and again and again.

We've taken I believe, the best model out there, right? I've said it multiple times on this, I'm not blowing smoke. I had the option of picking any model I wanted. And I went all in on Predictable Success.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: So we've got that. You get access to all of that. But more importantly, what we do is teach you how to use it to overcome those problems. Because if you're a coach or consultant, that's what you have to do. And so you and I, we did this last summer, we put together a Masterclass on how to do exactly that.



So even if you don't become a Certified Scale Architect. Even if you don't know what Predictable Success is today, we have a Masterclass that will help you to avoid those three, and you can get it at <https://training.scalearchitects.com>.

And we can give that in the show notes at the end as well. But that Masterclass is free and it's available to anyone.

Les McKeown: It was a blast to do. It's absolutely jam packed with content. You do not need to be a Scale Architect to benefit from it.

But I will say that if you want to scale your own coaching/consulting client, whether you're a practice, whether you're already in practice, or you're thinking of stepping out there, the core thing you need to obviate those three fatal flaws that Scottie has so clearly enunciated, is you need a model that has clear goals to take your clients to.

That's what solves every single one of those issues. And that's the Predictable Success model provides.

Scott Ritzheimer: Absolutely. And it works wonders, you know, my very first year as a consultant out of the gate was making six figures using Predictable Success. And I've seen it happen time and time again for our Scale Architects.

And conversely, I've had quite a number of conversations with folks that are just barely making it by. I think the average coach in the US says something around \$60,000. For someone who's gone out and is not working for someone else, has no benefits, has no guaranteed income whatsoever, to make \$60,000 a year, it's just not worth it. Right?

There are so many things that you could do with a talent that these people have that either find a better way of doing it, right? Which I believe we've got a better way, or give yourself the out and go back to whatever it was that you were doing before, or step into something else.

And so it does, it breaks my heart that getting a coaching business really genuinely off the ground to where it's thriving is so difficult. It's not necessary and we're doing everything that we can to help out.

Les McKeown: And before we move on to the issue of why would someone then want to work with a Scale Architect.

Let's look at the other side of the coin, in terms of people who may be attracted to the notion of becoming a Scale Architect, as already said, it resolves those issues. It's for anybody who's got an existing practice is thinking of stepping out there and wants to maximize the chances of success.



But as we've learned, over the time that we've worked at this, there are certain presuppositions that people might bring that would be wrong. Who is this not going to work for? Who might step in, sign up as a Scale Architect and find that we don't deliver what they were looking for?

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, so there's a couple of things that I'll caution people of. One, we are not a lead generation source, right? That doesn't work the way that most people think it would. There's lots of people who can try to do that on LinkedIn.

If you're on LinkedIn for any given time, you've been hit by all of them. But that's not what we do. That's not the primary problem that you need solved, right, there is a more core issue that's dealing with that.

But if you're out there saying, *"Hey, I've got all figured out, all I need is a few leads"*, this is not the program for that. We have leads that come into the program, it's wonderful. But that's not why you become a Scale Architect.

Les McKeown: The way I think of that is, you know, you've got to do the final mile, the last mile. We'll give you everything to that final hook up to your client. We'll provide some fantastic marketing and sales materials, there's a lot of templates and stuff out there. But if you think, *"Oh, great, I'll just plug in here, I'll sign up. And then I sit back and the whole thing's on autopilot"*. That's not the way it works.

Scott Ritzheimer: You're not an employee, you're not a franchise, you're not any of those things, you're your own boss running your own organization, and we're there to help. That's, that's really what it is at the end of the day.

Second thing that I've found, is folks who kind of come in thinking that they'll do it a little bit, You know, I've got this other thing, and I like Predictable Success, I'm going to just kind of tack it on.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: The best analogy that I have for that is, you know, you have someone come out and maybe do some plumbing work, right, your toilets not working, is backed up and someone comes and fixes your toilet and they say, *"Oh, by the way, I can add a third storey to your house. Is that something that you'd like?"*

No, no, not at all. And so that's what Predictable Success is like. If you come in as a plumber, and then you you try and zoom all the way out and say, *"hey, I can actually help you with these massive structural issues"*, it's a lack of just cognitive dissonance for folks.



I did that I've seen a handful of other people do that. And I don't recommend that. Do you have to be all in and drink the Kool Aid of Predictable Success? No, by no means.

Les McKeown: We don't tell people, you've got to put our name on the front door. It's not a franchise, you get a license to use.

Scott Ritzheimer: But can you do it as a little side hustle? I've not seen that work very well. I typically don't recommend it, I think it's one of those things, that there's a disproportionate return on your time. The more time you put into it, the bigger the return, you're going to get out of it.

And you know, starting up a coaching consulting thing is hard. It's not easy, we make it a lot easier. But it's still hard work. And you've got to be all in on that concept. And we can make that shine.

Les McKeown: So a lot of our listeners, not thinking of being coaches or consultants, although maybe a few people in this conversation start to think of it is not a bad idea.

But many, many, many of them, as you know, are people who know the model, have been following it for a long time.

What's in it for somebody to approach Scale Architects and to talk to you about working with a Scale Architect?

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, the clearest thing that I like to use as an illustration is the org chart. So those of you who know about the model, maybe you've read the back part of the book, you know that one of the very first things you need to work on, we actually just did a webinar on this, you and I, but the very first thing you need to work on if you want to scale your organization is your org chart.

And what I found is, most people intuitively get that, you know, they kind of get that there's something to do with people, but they can't quite put their finger on it. And most of them just have a kind of visceral reaction to the words org and chart put together.

[laughter]

Scott Ritzheimer: You know, I'm not gonna do anything with that. And I worked on my org chart for five years, when I was CEO of our organization. For five years. I felt like it was something that needed to be changed. I didn't know that it needed to.

And I didn't quite know why it needed to change or how. I just felt like there was something off on it.



And so what I do now, and what our Scale Architects do, is they help organizations make more progress in one day, than I did in five years.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: And so anyone can get through Whitewater eventually, right?

Les McKeown: Eventually. Eventually, if you really want to.

Scott Ritzheimer: And if you really want to, you will figure it out, right? It's not rocket science, you know, you can fumble through the dark, it's not life or death. It's just how much pain and time do you want to endure along the way.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: And reading the book gave us a rapid acceleration through that. Bringing a guide in who knows the path will hands down be the fastest way to get through Whitewater and into Predictable Success.

It's the fastest way to get out of Treadmill and back into Predictable Success.

It's the best way to go the furthest in Fun, right?

And so having a guide come alongside you, is something that I woefully underestimated in my time as an entrepreneur. And today I recognize I went through a lot of hardship that was completely unnecessary.

From there is a couple of things. One is obviously if you're around here, you know, Predictable Success, you've heard my story, you've heard other stories, I'm sure. You know that it's a powerful model, you get the model.

You get someone who's been trained in that. Les and I have specifically gone in and worked with these people, hands on, at the ground level to make sure that they are exceptionally well versed in the model and can use it to help organizations.

And from there, what's unique about it is, our coaches aren't aren't struggling with those three problems that other folks are having, right?

So you know, that they're gonna be more focused on you, than they are on building their own business, because they've got a great book of clients already.



You also know that they can give you, and this is for Predictable Success as a whole. But the best thing about the Scale Architects is that they can give you stage specific advice.

Les McKeown: Right.

Scott Ritzheimer: There's no other model that I know of. I actually talked on this at our summit. But there's no other model that I know of, that has, at its core, the question of "when". When do we need to do these strategies?

You can go out and hire a sales coach, and they're gonna say I can grow your business through sales. Some stages, that's true, some stages, it's not.

You can go out and hire a marketing consultant, and they can grow your organization through marketing. Sometimes that true, sometimes it's not.

You can hire a management consultant who is great at big HR programs. Sometimes that's appropriate, and sometimes it's not.

And so when you when you work with a Scale Architect, they can really dial in to the specific things that you need to do on the Stage that you're in to get to the Stage that you want to go. And I don't know of any other system that does that as effectively.

Les McKeown: Just as you were sharing that, I remembered something that I learned over the holiday period.

I went back at Thanksgiving to the UK to visit my family. It was the first time I could do that for a couple of years because of the COVID thing.

And I spent some time with my 10 year old grandson, with him essentially handing me my behind on Super Mario Kart and whatever other games he was playing. I'm not a gamer never have been a gamer. I've never really been interested in them until my self esteem was so torpedoed by this cheeky little 10 year old.

So I did a really dumb thing. And I bought myself a PlayStation Five. And I haven't done it for years. I'm sitting in darkness devoting hours to something called Ratchet and Clank.

And I realized something which was, you know, you can, as you say, you can get out of Whitewater, or optimize your time in Fun or workout how to stand Predictable Success, whatever your key goal is, recover from Treadmill, by doing what is essentially what an idiot like me does, trying to learn a game and I don't mean that any of our listeners are idiots, but you can just get killed 100 times on the same level, just doing the same thing working out "*oh no, I'll die if I step on that rail*". Do it again, skip that rail, realize you've got to get out of the way of the truck



that's coming behind you, die twice, trying that and you can just go through the level 56 times until you actually got out and then you realize that just another level to go to.

Or, you can have a guy come in, if you want to, and just take you through the level and that's what we do, is we help people get to somewhere they would get to anyway without the interim grief of experimentation and experimentation and experimentation.

And that's mostly as you say, you go to any business library. There are a million books out there telling you to do this, do this, do this do this.

What we do, what we have in the model that nobody else has, is here is the sequence. Here's what's needed at this stage of your growth, at this point to do. Don't worry about the others, do this.

The other thing I'll say, without wanting to grab the whole narrative myself, is I do believe the question of accountability is a huge issue. That you hire a Scale Architect, you have somebody who's going to drive the process. You're still going to do the work, they're going to be your guide.

But you got to show up. You get the dates in the diary for the in person sessions, or the zoom sessions, whatever it might well be. You get checked up on by Slack or Vox or whatever your chosen communication processes, and that accountability is huge, because otherwise, the most urgent issues of the day just overtake.

Scott Ritzheimer: It's amazing how much work happens the two weeks before our next session.

[laughter]

Les McKeown: Right, right, right!! Maybe even the day before, which is great. Otherwise, it just doesn't happen at all.

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah

Les McKeown: In overall summary, we'll link to the specific webinar that we talked about, for folks who are either consultants or coaches, and are thinking of becoming, or might want to use this Scale Architects model. You'll get a huge amount of value, whether or not you follow up with theirs or not.

If you're interested in working with a Scale Architect, how do people get in touch with you and start?



Scott Ritzheimer: It's on the Predictable Success website, but if you go to ScaleArchitects.com and scroll to the bottom, there's an opportunity there to have just a free 15 minute consultation, where I'll sit down with you, find out where you are. And I'll help you find the best consultant for you.

Our Scale Architects specialize in different parts of the Model. And they're in different places; in different industries. And so what I can do in my unique position is kind of sit in the middle of all of that and say, "*Hey, here's who I think would be the best fit for you*".

And I'd be happy to have that conversation with you and get to know you a little better.

Les McKeown: That's fantastic. Well, we've talked a lot about the Predictable Success model, but I'm going to spring this on you. But one of the biggest fans I've come to learn of the Predictable Success model is in fact, your son Benjamin. So much so that he has his own sign personalized copy.

I found a podcast I'd never heard of because of his recommendation. Just tell us a little bit about Benjamin's fixation with Predictable Success.

Scott Ritzheimer: Yeah, Benjamin. He's too much like me, and it's kind of scary. He even looks like me. Poor kid. But he's read the book, not all of it, but most of it. And he read it I think when he was either eight or nine years old. So it's been a couple years now.

And I remember one day he came to me, you know, shortly after I had started the consultancy as a practitioner, and it was bedtime. And so I'd read him a story or something. And he was sitting there and in this moment of silence, he goes, "*Daddy, your business is in Early Struggle, isn't it?*"

[laughter]

Scott Ritzheimer: "Yes, it is" And he replies "*it's gonna be okay, dad.*"

[laughter]

Les McKeown: I love it.

Scott Ritzheimer: He's on an Alexander Hamilton kick right now. If he ever gets an opportunity to control the radio, he wants to listen to "*Business Wars*".

Les McKeown: Which I can recommend, on his recommendation. I've consumed all of it. Well, what I normally say to my guests at this point is, it has been fantastic. And we're going to have you back in three to five years and find out how this is all worked on.



But two things are different.

First of all, all of our listeners probably know a little bit about you already and will continue to, because we've obviously got a close working relationship.

But secondly, I suspect in three to five years I'll be talking to Benjamin about our topic.

[laughter]

Les McKeown: Scottie, it's been fantastic. Have a great day. Thanks, everybody.

Scott Ritzheimer: Take care.