

THE OWNER'S WEALTH SERIES • COMPANION TO BOOK 4

The First 1,000 Days Planner

Free printable companion to *After the Wire: What to Do With Your Money After Selling Your Business*

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How to use this planner. Print it and fill it in with a pencil. Start with page 2: write down the dates of your Decision-Free Zone and the deadlines that cannot wait. Page 3 sets up your tax reserve. Page 4 tracks the money you do not have yet: escrow, earnouts, seller notes, and rollover equity. Pages 5 and 6 are the tax-year map to build with your CPA. Then come the First 1,000 Days Checklist, a 36-month calendar, and 35 questions to ask any advisor. Everything here is copied from *After the Wire*, where each item is explained and sourced.

My Decision-Free Zone

From Chapter 1. A defined period after the sale when you make no large, irreversible decisions that are not on a deadline. Often 90 days to six months.

My Decision-Free Zone runs from _____ to _____

Dollar threshold: decisions above \$_____ wait until the zone ends.

People I have told: _____

Deadlines I will handle on time

Deadline	Due date	Who handles it	Done
Federal and state estimated tax payments (Ch. 2)			
Health insurance: COBRA election or marketplace enrollment (Ch. 9)			
Conversion window for company-paid disability or life coverage (Ch. 14)			
Retirement plan distribution or rollover elections (Ch. 8)			
Post-closing deal dates: working-capital true-up, escrow claims (Ch. 4)			

My “No for now” list

A starting point from Chapter 1; edit it to fit your family. Putting an item here does not mean the answer is no. It means the answer is “not yet.”

- ☐ Buying, building, or renovating a home or second home
- ☐ Lending money to family or friends
- ☐ Investing in a private company, fund, or real estate deal
- ☐ Starting or buying another business
- ☐ Large gifts to family, beyond what your estate plan already calls for
- ☐ Large charitable commitments, beyond what your tax plan calls for this year (Chapter 7)
- ☐ Committing all of the proceeds to a single long-term investment strategy
- ☐ Buying a permanent life insurance policy or annuity
- ☐ Moving to another state for tax reasons
- ☐ Retiring a spouse from a job, or other major family role changes

Tax Reserve Worksheet

From Chapter 2. A rough planning ceiling so you can open a separate reserve account the same week, before the full calculation. It is not a tax calculation. Your CPA's estimate replaces it. Rates shown are 2026 federal figures (Rev. Proc. 2025-32; IRC §1411).

A	Estimated long-term capital gain on the sale (from your CPA, or your own first estimate)	\$
B	Ordinary-income pieces: depreciation recapture, non-compete, consulting, transaction bonus	\$
C	Federal long-term capital gains rate to assume on line A (ask your CPA; 20% applies above \$613,700 MFJ / \$545,500 single for 2026)	%
D	Net investment income tax, if your CPA says it may apply (3.8%)	%
E	State and local rate to assume	%
F	Rough ceiling on line A: $A \times (C + D + E)$	\$
G	Rough ceiling on line B: $B \times (\text{top ordinary rate your CPA gives you} + E)$	\$
H	Cushion you choose to add	\$
I	Reserve to set aside now: $F + G + H$	\$
J	Your CPA's detailed estimate, when it arrives (date: _____)	\$
K	Safe harbor basis your CPA chose: 90% of this year's tax, 100% of last year's, or 110% of last year's (if last year's AGI was over \$150,000)	

Estimated payment log

Federal estimated payments are generally due April 15, June 15, September 15, and January 15 of the following year (next business day if a date falls on a weekend or holiday). State dates may differ.

Due date	Federal or state	Amount	Paid from reserve on	Confirmation number

Reserve account (institution and title): _____

Keep the reserve separate from your spending account. Release any excess only after the sale-year return is filed.

“Money You Don’t Have Yet” Tracker

From Chapter 4. Plan the household on cash at close. Each item below counts only after it arrives. Update the tracker every quarter. When an item arrives, reserve the tax on it and decide where it goes.

Item	Amount	Expected date(s)	Conditions	Who decides	Tax estimate	Status
Indemnification escrow						
Working-capital adjustment						
Special escrow						
Earnout, year 1						
Earnout, year 2						
Seller note payments						
Rollover equity						
Consulting or employment payments						

Other deferred items

Item	Amount	Expected date(s)	Conditions	Who decides	Tax estimate	Status

Quarterly review dates

Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q5:	Q6:
Q7:	Q8:	Q9:	Q10:	Q11:	Q12:

Tax-Year Map Worksheet

From Appendix B; build it with your CPA (Chapter 5). In each cell, note the expected amount and its character: long-term capital gain (LTCG), ordinary income (ORD), self-employment income (SE), interest (INT), or excluded (EXCL). Use pencil. This worksheet does not calculate tax.

Part 1: The Sale

Piece of the price	Sale year	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Cash at closing: goodwill / stock					
Cash at closing: recapture items					
Cash at closing: inventory / receivables					
Working-capital adjustment					
Indemnification escrow (if released)					
Special escrows (if released)					
Seller note: principal					
Seller note: interest					
Earnout (if earned)					
Non-compete payments					
Consulting or employment payments					
Transaction bonus					
QSBS exclusion (if any)					
Rollover equity (if sold)					

Part 2: Other Income

Source	Sale year	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Wages					
Interest and dividends					
Other capital gains					
Rental income					
Retirement distributions					
Roth conversions (if any)					
Social Security					
Spouse's income					

Tax-Year Map Worksheet, continued

Part 3: What the Map Tells You

Question	Sale year	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Expected federal bracket (ordinary)					
Expected capital gains rate					
NIIT applies?					
Itemizing deductions?					
Medicare premiums affected (two years later)?					
Marketplace premium tax credit possible?					
State tax notes					
Estimated tax payments needed?					

Part 4: Decisions to Consider by Year

For each year, list the decisions your CPA suggests evaluating, such as charitable timing, Roth conversions, gain harvesting, the installment method election, or retirement plan contributions. Note the deadline for each.

Year	Decision to evaluate	Deadline	Who

2026 Reference Figures

Federal figures for tax year 2026, for orientation only. Many adjust each year. Verify current figures at [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

Item	Married filing jointly	Single
0% long-term capital gains rate applies up to (taxable income)	\$98,900	\$49,450
20% long-term capital gains rate applies above (taxable income)	\$613,700	\$545,500
22% bracket ends (taxable income)	\$211,400	\$105,700
24% bracket ends (taxable income)	\$403,550	\$201,775
37% bracket begins (taxable income)	\$768,700	\$640,600
Standard deduction	\$32,200	\$16,100
NIIT threshold (MAGI; not indexed)	\$250,000	\$200,000
Medicare IRMAA begins (MAGI two years earlier, for 2026 premiums)	\$218,000	\$109,000
Annual gift exclusion (per recipient)	\$19,000 per giver	\$19,000
Basic exclusion amount (estate and gift)	\$15,000,000 per person	\$15,000,000

Sources: IRS Revenue Procedure 2025-32; Internal Revenue Code §1411; Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2026 Part B premiums; IRS, estate and gift tax guidance. Full citations are in the chapter Notes of After the Wire.

The First 1,000 Days Checklist

From Appendix A; use it with Chapter 16. Write a name next to each item: you, your spouse, or an advisor. Cross out what does not apply and add what does. This checklist is educational and is not a recommendation to take any action.

Before Closing (if you are reading this early)

- | | |
|--|------------|
| ☐ Ask your CPA to model the tax on the deal as structured, including allocation and ordinary-income pieces (Ch. 2, 5) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Ask about QSBS eligibility and assemble documents (Ch. 6) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Consider charitable gifts of stock, or a charitable remainder trust, before a binding agreement exists (Ch. 7) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Ask how health coverage will continue for your family (Ch. 9) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Ask what will happen to each retirement plan (Ch. 8) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Ask whether a D&O tail will be purchased (Ch. 14) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Review estate documents for anything that refers to company stock (Ch. 13) | <u>Who</u> |

Day 0 to Day 90

Money and taxes

- | | |
|--|------------|
| ☐ Confirm the amount received at closing and list every deferred amount (Ch. 4) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Get a tax estimate range from your CPA (Ch. 2) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Open and fund a separate tax reserve account (Ch. 2) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Calendar federal and state estimated tax dates and amounts (Ch. 2) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Organize cash into tiers: now, soon, long-term (Ch. 3) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Check FDIC coverage by bank and ownership category (Ch. 3) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Confirm wire instructions by phone; turn on multi-factor authentication (Ch. 3) | <u>Who</u> |

The deal

- | | |
|---|------------|
| ☐ Get a one-page calendar of post-closing dates from your M&A attorney (Ch. 4) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Start the "money you don't have yet" tracker (Ch. 4) | <u>Who</u> |

Decision-Free Zone

- | | |
|---|------------|
| ☐ Choose an end date and dollar threshold (Ch. 1) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Write the "No for now" list with your spouse (Ch. 1) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Practice your "not yet" script (Ch. 1) | <u>Who</u> |

Coverage and plans

- | | |
|---|------------|
| ☐ Elect COBRA or enroll in marketplace coverage before the deadline (Ch. 9) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Check disability and life insurance conversion windows (Ch. 14) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Get written summaries of retirement plan options and deadlines (Ch. 8) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Compare all options for each balance; request direct rollovers if you roll (Ch. 8) | <u>Who</u> |

Family and documents

- | | |
|--|------------|
| ☐ Review wills, trusts, and powers of attorney with your estate attorney (Ch. 13) | <u>Who</u> |
| ☐ Update and confirm every beneficiary designation (Ch. 13) | <u>Who</u> |

- ☐ Make sure your spouse knows where the money is and who the advisors are (Ch. 1, 15)

Who

Months 4 to 12

- ☐ Finish the household spending number, including add-backs (Ch. 9)
- ☐ Build the tax-year map with your CPA (Ch. 5, Appendix B)
- ☐ Review umbrella, auto, home, and property coverage (Ch. 14)
- ☐ Re-check the purpose of each life insurance policy (Ch. 14)
- ☐ Choose your advisory team; read Form CRS and Form ADV (Ch. 16, Appendix C)
- ☐ Write a family investment policy statement (Ch. 11)
- ☐ Write a deployment rule for long-term money (Ch. 11)
- ☐ Set a private investment limit in writing, if any (Ch. 12)
- ☐ Before December 31 of the sale year: complete any planned sale-year charitable gifts; review estimated payments (Ch. 2, 7)
- ☐ End the Decision-Free Zone with a review (Ch. 1)
- ☐ Talk through the identity questions with your spouse (Ch. 15)

Who

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Who

Year 2

- ☐ File the sale-year return; release excess reserve only after filing (Ch. 2)
- ☐ Track escrow releases, earnout, and seller-note payments; reserve tax on each (Ch. 4, 5)
- ☐ Evaluate Roth conversions or gain harvesting with your CPA (Ch. 7)
- ☐ Check Medicare enrollment timing and IRMAA effects if you are near 65 (Ch. 7, 9)
- ☐ Review the investment policy statement (Ch. 11)
- ☐ Update the spending number with a full year of data (Ch. 9)
- ☐ Consider lifetime gifts with your estate attorney, if appropriate (Ch. 13)

Who

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Who

Year 3

- ☐ Close out deferred payments; update the tracker and tax-year map (Ch. 4, 5)
- ☐ Re-run the low-income window analysis (Ch. 7)
- ☐ Review beneficiary designations, estate documents, and insurance again (Ch. 13, 14)
- ☐ Review your advisory team and total costs (Ch. 16)
- ☐ Set an annual planning rhythm for the years ahead (Ch. 16)

Who

Who

Who

Who

Who

36-Month Calendar

From Chapter 16. Month 1 is the month your sale closes. Write the month and year in each box, then add your own dates: estimated payments, escrow releases, earnout measurement dates, seller-note payments, insurance and enrollment windows, and review meetings.

Day 0 to Day 90: deadlines and the Decision-Free Zone

Month 1 Month / year: _____	Month 2 Month / year: _____	Month 3 Month / year: _____
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Months 4 to 12: learn, then decide

Month 4 Month / year: _____	Month 5 Month / year: _____	Month 6 Month / year: _____	Month 7 Month / year: _____	Month 8 Month / year: _____	Month 9 Month / year: _____
Month 10 Month / year: _____	Month 11 Month / year: _____	Month 12 Month / year: _____			

Year 2: the first full year after the sale

Month 13 Month / year: _____	Month 14 Month / year: _____	Month 15 Month / year: _____	Month 16 Month / year: _____	Month 17 Month / year: _____	Month 18 Month / year: _____
Month 19 Month / year: _____	Month 20 Month / year: _____	Month 21 Month / year: _____	Month 22 Month / year: _____	Month 23 Month / year: _____	Month 24 Month / year: _____

Year 3: settling in

Month 25 Month / year: _____	Month 26 Month / year: _____	Month 27 Month / year: _____	Month 28 Month / year: _____	Month 29 Month / year: _____	Month 30 Month / year: _____
Month 31 Month / year: _____	Month 32 Month / year: _____	Month 33 Month / year: _____	Month 34 Month / year: _____	Month 35 Month / year: _____	Month 36 Month / year: _____

Questions to Ask Any Advisor

From Appendix C. Use these with any financial advisor, wealth manager, insurance agent, or other professional you are considering after a sale, including the author. Ask for answers in writing where you can. Asking them does not create an advisory relationship.

Services

1. What services will you provide to me, specifically? What will you not provide?
2. Will you help with tax planning, estate planning coordination, insurance review, and cash flow, or only with investments?
3. How will you coordinate with my CPA and estate attorney? Will you meet with them?
4. Who on your team will I work with, and who will do the work?
5. How often will we meet, and what will we review each time?
6. Will you help me write a family investment policy statement? Will you follow it?

Compensation and Costs

7. How are you paid, from all sources, for the services you are recommending?
8. What will I pay in total in the first year, in dollars, including advisory fees, fund expenses, transaction costs, and any commissions?
9. Do you or your firm receive any payments from product sponsors, fund companies, or insurance companies related to what you recommend?
10. Are there any costs to leave, such as surrender charges, redemption fees, or account closing fees?
11. If you recommend rolling a retirement plan balance to an IRA, how would your compensation change, and how do the costs compare with my current plan?
12. May I have a copy of your Form CRS and, if you are an investment adviser, your Form ADV Part 2A and 2B?

Conflicts and Standards

13. Will you act as a fiduciary for all of my accounts, some, or none? In writing?
14. What conflicts of interest do you have, and how do you manage them?
15. Do you sell proprietary products, and are you paid more for some products than others?
16. Have you or your firm been the subject of any regulatory or disciplinary action? (Check FINRA BrokerCheck and the SEC's Investment Adviser Public Disclosure site.)

Experience

17. How many clients like me do you work with: business owners in the years after a sale?
18. What questions do you ask a new client in the first 90 days after a sale?
19. How do you approach the tax reserve, deferred payments, and the low-income years after a sale?
20. What credentials do you hold, and what do they require?

Investments

21. How would you decide on an allocation for me? What information do you need first?
22. How would you approach investing proceeds all at once versus in stages?
23. How do you think about sequence-of-returns risk in the first years of withdrawals?
24. Who holds custody of my assets? Will I receive statements directly from the custodian?
25. What is your view on private investments for someone in my situation, and how would you evaluate one?

Process

26. What happens if I disagree with a recommendation?
27. How will you communicate with my spouse?
28. What would cause you to recommend a change to my plan?
29. What do you need from me, and by when?
30. If you were in my position, what would you want to know about you that I have not asked?

For Insurance Professionals

31. What problem is this policy meant to solve, and what are the alternatives?
32. What are the total costs, including commissions, surrender charges, and riders?
33. What is guaranteed, by whom, and what is not guaranteed?
34. How does this coordinate with my estate plan? Has my estate attorney reviewed it?

For Private Investment Sponsors

35. See the due diligence questions in Chapter 12.

Rather talk it through? Book a free 30-minute conversation at oncehub.com/jamesustby. Bring this planner, or just the question. The conversation is educational. More at jamesustby.com.

Important Disclosures

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