Here’s What a Federal Rate Cut Means for Small Businesses, According to Analysts

In his annual address in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, on Friday, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell indicated that, despite “sweeping changes” in economic policy, a possible interest rate cut could come at the Fed’s next meeting in September.

“With policy in restrictive territory, the baseline outlook and the shifting balance of risks may warrant adjusting our policy stance,” Powell said.

Related: A Big 4 Firm Is Cutting Back on Entry-Level Hiring, According to a Leaked Report

The Fed has held rates between 4.25% and 4.5% since December 2024.

EY-Parthenon Senior Economist Lydia Boussour told Entrepreneur in an email that the Fed’s focus is “shifting from inflation to the labor market,” and Powell used his speech as “an opportunity to recalibrate the Fed’s assessment of the balance of risks, which had leaned more heavily toward inflation at the July FOMC meeting.”

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell (R) is seen with Bank of Japan Governor Kazuo Ueda (2nd R), European Central Bank Governor Christine Lagarde (2nd L), and Governor of the Bank of England Andrew Bailey (L) in Grand Teton National Park on August 22, 2025, near Jackson Hole, Wyoming. (Natalie Behring | Getty Images)

“Powell also acknowledged that while there is a possibility that tariffs could trigger lasting inflation pressures or influence long-term inflation expectations, current market and survey indicators suggest that inflation expectations remain stable and aligned with the Fed’s long-term inflation goal of 2%,” Boussour said.

When does the Fed meet next?

The next Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting begins September 16. A policy decision will be released on Wednesday,

September 17.

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“While a rate cut at the September meeting appears more than likely, in line with [EY-Parthenon’s] long-held view, we anticipate the Fed will maintain its cautious, data-driven approach as tariff-related price pressures continue to work through the economy,” Boussour said.

Boussour said EY anticipates a cut in September and “another 25bp cut to follow in December, with an additional 100 basis points of easing likely in 2026 as economic and labor market conditions deteriorate more visibly.”

What would a rate cut mean for consumers?

One rate cut might not make much of a difference, CNBC notes. Mortgage rates remain high, and the markets (not the Fed) move the 10-year Treasury yield, which influences the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage.

Boussour expects more cuts to follow, however, which could lead to improved consumer confidence.

What would a rate cut mean for small businesses?

A federal rate cut likely means small businesses can borrow at lower costs, which can lead to various other growth factors, including increased consumer demand and more hiring, per Bankrate.

Lower borrowing costs mean lower financing rates for business improvements, like updated equipment or software. It also

leads to lower monthly payments, which frees up monthly income for other expenses. Lower rates also tend to boost customer spending, Bankrate notes.

It can also make banks more agreeable to approve loans, which can be a boon for businesses in rural areas with smaller, regional banks, and provide more opportunities to refinance existing loans with higher rates.

Related: The Real Estate Market Is a Nightmare Right Now

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Everyone's Trying to Build Flashy AI Tools — But Here's

Where the Real Money Is Being Made

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Most people building with AI are chasing the same thing: viral chatbots, cool demos or the next trending wrapper. But I think the real money — the serious, unicorn-level money — is somewhere else entirely.

It's in the stuff nobody wants to touch. Tedious, time-wasting, must-do tasks. The things you hate doing, but have to. That's where the next wave of AI companies will emerge.

Painful > pretty

AI that makes you laugh is fun. AI that gets your taxes filed, your Visa sorted or your documents organized? That's life-changing.

When I moved to the UK on a Global Talent visa, I couldn't find a single tool to track my absence days — something crucial for maintaining legal status. So I built it myself. Not to show off. Just to solve a problem I was quietly freaking out about.

That's the kind of "boring" problem most people overlook. But if it causes stress, repetition or fear — it's valuable.

There's more money in fixing one painful workflow than chasing 100 likes on a fancy AI-generated avatar.

Related: **Don't Be Afraid to Embrace Boring Ideas**

The more annoying it is, the bigger the opportunity

Scheduling medical appointments. Submitting invoices. Picking wines from a 40-page restaurant list. These aren't sexy problems. But they're everywhere, and no one enjoys dealing with them.

I've built apps that take care of those exact scenarios. Some were simple side projects, but they solved problems that people *repeatedly* run into. That's the magic formula.

In a piece I wrote earlier — 7 AI-Based Business Ideas That Could Make You Rich — I pointed out that the most profitable ideas are often hiding in plain sight. This is another example of that.

No team? No problem.

The tools available now are ridiculous. With GPT-4o, Supabase, Vercel and Claude, I've launched entire products in a week — solo.

No designers. No backend engineers. Just a painful idea, an AI stack and a few cups of coffee.

I'm not the only one. I've seen one-person shops build apps that manage apartment leases, prep legal docs and even coach you through IVF. They're quiet tools with unflashy interfaces, but they're deeply useful.

If you're a founder today, your MVP doesn't need to be impressive — it just needs to make someone's headache disappear.

Build for Tuesday, not for tech Twitter

Some of the smartest founders I know aren't even trying to go viral. They're building for Tuesdays — for that one problem that hits at 4:00 p.m. when you're stuck in a bureaucratic loop and need *someone* (or something) to handle it for you.

And here's the kicker: The more boring the problem, the less competition you'll have. AI founders are still chasing novelty. That's your advantage.

This article on overlooked metaverse jobs made a similar point: There's a fortune in places people ignore.

Boring doesn't mean small

If you told someone a decade ago that accounting automation or AI-powered scheduling tools would be billion-dollar companies, they'd probably laugh.

Now those tools run quietly in the background of almost every business.

The lesson: Don't build for applause. Build for relief. If your product makes someone breathe easier, saves them time or reduces stress — they'll pay for it.

Even if they never tweet about it.

Related: Why Unglamorous Entrepreneurial Opportunities Can Be Lucrative

Boring tools can still build billion-dollar companies

If you need proof, look at Expensify. It started by solving

one thing: making expense reports less painful. It’s not exciting, not revolutionary — just useful. Nobody dreams about scanning receipts, but millions of people have to do it.

Now Expensify processes billions in transactions. All because it made one annoying task easier.

Same story with Calendly, which killed the back-and-forth of scheduling. DocuSign, which removed the pain of printing and scanning contracts. UiPath, which built a massive business by automating office tasks.

None of these were flashy, but they fixed something people deal with every day. That’s what makes them work.

If you’re building with AI, forget the hype. Look for the problems people quietly suffer through. The ones they never talk about publicly, but deal with constantly. That’s where the best ideas live.

Boring isn’t a weakness. Boring is a business model.

You don’t need a revolutionary idea. You just need to make one annoying thing go away.

If you can do that, it won’t matter how it looks. It will sell.

Most people building with AI are chasing the same thing: viral chatbots, cool demos or the next trending wrapper. But I think the real money — the serious, unicorn-level money — is somewhere else entirely.

It’s in the stuff nobody wants to touch. Tedious, time-wasting, must-do tasks. The things you hate doing, but have to. That’s where the next wave of AI companies will emerge.

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I Risked Everything to Build My Company. Four Years Later, Here's What I've Learned About Building Real, Lasting Success

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When I first moved to the United States, my goal was simple: survive. I had no connections, little understanding of the system, and a burning desire to build something meaningful. At 33, I shared my journey here — how I used grit, education and a bit of luck to launch a real estate tech startup built on transparency.

Four years later, I'm still standing — but I've changed. So has my definition of success.

Today, I'm the founder and CEO of a growing real estate tech

company based in New York City. But how I run my business — and how I live — looks completely different from when I started. I've learned that building something sustainable takes more than hustle. It requires alignment, clarity, and the courage to evolve.

These are the five lessons I wish I'd known sooner. They now form the foundation of how I lead and advise others.

Related: I Built a $20 Million Company by Age 22 While Still in College. Here's How I Did It and What I Learned Along the Way.

1. Stop chasing the finish line

Early on, I thought success meant scaling fast, raising capital and staying in the spotlight. But sprinting toward a vague goal is a recipe for burnout.

Now, I prioritize rhythm over speed. My weeks are structured around deep work, reflection and meaningful conversations. Sustainable growth isn't linear — it's iterative. Whether you're building a business or navigating a career shift, ask yourself: *What version of success feels good to live, not just good to post?*

Start your week with a "clarity session." List your top three priorities — both for your business and your wellbeing. If your calendar doesn't reflect those, you're running someone else's race.

2. Your business should serve your life — not the other way around

For a while, my business ran me. Every client issue, notification and small win or loss dictated my emotions. I was reactive, and my personal life paid the price.

Now, I see my company as a vehicle for the life I want to lead. I've built systems that support autonomy, hired people who don't need micromanaging and created workflows that don't require 24/7 attention.

Design your business — or your career — backwards. Start by defining the lifestyle you want, then build your work structure around it. This mindset shift made me a more present human and a better leader.

3. Real estate is still one of the best paths to wealth — if you play the long game

My company helps people make honest, informed real estate decisions. I've watched many chase trends or try to time the market. But real estate rewards patience and perspective.

Some of my best investments didn't look exciting on paper — but they had strong fundamentals. Over time, they became strategic assets, both financially and personally.

Avoid the hype. Focus on long-term value. Sometimes, doing nothing is the smartest move you can make.

4. You don't need to be the loudest person in the room

In my early years, I believed visibility equaled success. I over-indexed on appearances — networking events, interviews, panels.

But the most impactful moves in my career came from quiet, focused work behind the scenes. Today, I choose depth over noise. I nurture a few meaningful relationships and let results speak for themselves.

Build your “trust circle.” Choose five people you admire and invest in those connections. You don’t need a big network. You need a strong one.

Related: Entrepreneurial Success Comes Down to Having the Right Mindset — Here’s How to Make Sure You Do

The biggest myth I believed was that success meant arriving. But success is constant movement. It’s reinvention. Pivoting without losing your center.

I’ve evolved from immigrant to employee, tech lead to CEO, and now founder to educator. I mentor entrepreneurs, speak at universities and write — not just to share what I’ve learned, but to keep growing myself. Each quarter, ask: *What version of me am I outgrowing?* Let the answer shape your next chapter.

Looking back, my path hasn’t been straight — and I wouldn’t change a thing. Fulfillment doesn’t come from proving yourself. It comes from building in alignment with who you’re becoming. Whether you’re just starting or starting over, know this: you don’t need to build the biggest company or be the loudest voice to make a lasting impact. You just need to build with intention.

And most importantly — keep going.

When I first moved to the United States, my goal was simple: survive. I had no connections, little understanding of the system, and a burning desire to build something meaningful. At 33, I shared my journey here — how I used grit, education and a bit of luck to launch a real estate tech startup built on transparency.

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I Make Time for Lunch With Someone New Every Day — And Its Changed My Career

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Your network is your net worth. Heard that before? I've said it for years because I've lived it. The right connection can change your life. The right introduction can change your business.

The problem is that most people think networking means working the room, shaking 50 hands and walking out with a stack of business cards. I used to think that too — until I realized the most valuable connections happen one-on-one.

That's where *Lunch with Legends* came from.

Every weekday, I have lunch with someone new. Sometimes it's

an investor. Sometimes it’s a founder. Sometimes it’s a friend of a friend I’m meeting for the first time when they slide into the booth. The goal isn’t to pitch. It’s not to sell. It’s to connect because everyone’s happier with good food and good company.

Related: **The 10 Commandments of Networking You Need to Know**

Why meals are the secret weapon

Meetings are formal. Lunch is real. At lunch, no one’s watching the clock. No one’s hiding behind slides or an agenda. Food slows you down.

That’s when you get the truth. You hear about the deal they’re chasing. The challenge they can’t solve. The goal they’ve been sitting on because they don’t know where to start.

I’ve learned more over a plate of tacos than I ever have at a conference table.

How it started

When I was starting in real estate, I worked networking events like it was my job — because it was. I’d collect a pile of business cards, follow up with everyone, etc. One day, someone told me, “Forget the crowd. Take one person to lunch.”

It clicked. The best connections are personal, not rushed.

That first lunch turned into a connection that shifted my career. Not because I asked for anything, but because we built trust through conversation.

Since then, *Lunch with Legends* has been my daily habit. Networking isn’t about keeping score. It’s about showing up ready to help. Instead of leading with, “Here’s what I do,” I ask, *“What’s on your plate — literally and figuratively — and*

how can I help?”

That changes everything.

- **People remember you,** not as “the guy from lunch” but as the person who introduced them to their next hire or shared an idea that unlocked a solution.
- **The conversation flows.** You’re not pitching. You’re listening.
- **Opportunities come back around.** When you help without expecting anything, your name comes up in rooms you’re not even in.

What it looks like in practice

Last week, I had lunch with people in completely different industries. None of them were “prospects” in the traditional sense. But in every conversation, I found a way to connect them to someone else who could help. A manufacturer. A mentor. A friend.

I didn’t have to force those opportunities. They came up naturally because I was paying attention.

Related: This ‘Lumberjack Strategy’ Helps Me Find New Clients Quickly — and With Way Less Effort

How to host your own Lunch With Legends

You don’t need a big title or a fancy budget. You need consistency.

- **One lunch. One new person. Every weekday.** Could be a friend-of-a-friend, a young professional looking for guidance or someone you’ve been meaning to meet.
- **Keep it casual.** You will see me at the same five places. I have my rotation down. If it ain’t broke, don’t fix

it.

- **Listen more than you talk.** People will tell you what they need if you give them space.
- **Follow up with value.** If you can help, do it right away.

The selfie rule

Every *Lunch with Legends* ends with a selfie. It's not about ego. It's about memory. That photo is a bookmark. Months later, I can scroll back and remember, '*Oh yeah, she was looking for a podcast producer. I know someone now.*'

It's a fun ritual that makes the moment feel intentional, and it keeps the connection alive.

Networking is a long play. Not every lunch needs to turn into a deal. Some people I've met only once. Others have become friends, partners or clients years later. The value comes from showing up consistently, building trust and connecting people. That's how your network grows in both size and strength.

Why food works for networking

There's something about a shared meal that breaks barriers fast.

When you eat with someone, you're both just people deciding between fries or salad. It's human. It's disarming. It sets the stage for a real conversation instead of a surface-level exchange.

That's why *Lunch with Legends* works. It turns networking into something people actually look forward to. Who doesn't want to break bread and learn something? It's worth it every time.

It’s your move

Think of one person you’ve been meaning to meet. Invite them to lunch this week.

Don’t overthink it. Don’t make it about what you need. Make it about showing up, asking good questions and leaving them better than you found them.

And yes — selfie required.

Your network is your net worth. Heard that before? I’ve said it for years because I’ve lived it. The right connection can change your life. The right introduction can change your business.

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Stop Being a Leader Your Team

Depends On — Here's How to Save Time and Boost Productivity

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If your calendar feels like a constant game of catch-up, you're not alone. Most founders and execs spend their days fielding questions, solving problems, and responding to whatever's loudest. It feels productive. It looks like leadership. But it's a trap.

Reactive mode is where strategic thinking goes to die. In my time as the founder of ButterflyMX, I've learned that the longer you operate like this, the more you become a bottleneck, not a builder. Your team stays dependent, your vision stalls, and worst of all, your time stops being your own. This post is about taking it back and becoming the kind of leader your company actually needs.

Related: Fixing Every Problem Isn't Your Job — Here's How to Empower Your Team to Handle Issues Without Your Constant Involvement

The trap of reactive leadership

At some point, most leaders realize they're stuck in a loop: They wake up, dive into a flood of Slack pings and calendar invites and end the day wondering what they actually accomplished. Sound familiar?

This isn't just a startup thing; it's a leadership pattern. Early on, being in the weeds makes sense. You're hands-on,

scrappy and involved in everything. But what starts as necessary involvement often calcifies into chronic reactivity.

And the consequences pile up:

- You become the decision-making bottleneck.
- Your team learns to escalate instead of owning outcomes.
- And your most valuable asset, your time, gets spent on solving symptoms, not systems.

There's also an emotional cost. Constant firefighting feels urgent, even heroic. But in reality, it pulls you away from the one thing only you can do: chart the course ahead.

Time is a leadership asset, not just a resource

There's a quiet truth every seasoned leader eventually learns: Your calendar is a mirror of your priorities and your power.

When you treat time like a disposable resource, you spend it on whatever shouts the loudest. But when you treat it like an asset, you start investing it in what actually moves the business forward. That's the difference between managing chaos and building momentum.

Strategic leadership doesn't happen in 15-minute gaps between meetings. It requires protected time to think, plan and decide, not in theory, but in practice. That means blocking space for big decisions, pattern recognition and high-leverage conversations, just like you'd block time for a board meeting.

I've seen it firsthand: The leaders who scale aren't the ones who do more. They're the ones who do less, better. They get ruthless about what only they can do and design everything else around that filter.

The job isn’t to be everywhere. It’s to make sure the right things happen, even when you’re not in the room. And that starts by reclaiming your time.

Related: How to Reclaim Your Time and Start Focusing on Your Business’s Big Picture

How to reclaim your calendar and reset your role

This isn’t about downloading a new productivity app. It’s about shifting how you see your time and how you protect it.

Here’s how to start:

1. Audit your time like you audit your budget:

For one week, track where your hours go. You’ll be surprised how much time gets eaten by low-leverage work — things someone else could (or should) handle. Look for patterns: What drains your energy? What creates the most value? This isn’t busywork. It’s clarity.

2. Build “focus blocks” like your future depends on them, because it does:

Pick 2-3 hours a day (or even just a few slots a week) that are meeting-free and distraction-free. Use them to think strategically, review your org design, write out your vision or tackle the decisions only you can make. Treat these blocks like sacred ground.

3. Delegate outcomes, not tasks:

Too often, leaders delegate execution but hold onto ownership. Flip it. Give your team the “what” and the “why” and let them own the “how.” You’ll build trust, create more capacity and stop being the final answer to every question.

4. Install leverage, not just help:

If you're drowning in scheduling, follow-ups or inbox triage, hire an executive assistant or Chief of Staff. But don't stop at admin support. Empower them to shield your time, prioritize inputs and run point on internal processes so that you can stay focused on the big picture.

But what about the fires?

Let's be real, urgent problems aren't going away. Markets shift. People quit. Customers escalate. Even the best-run teams hit turbulence.

The goal isn't to eliminate all fires. The goal is to stop being the only one holding the hose. Reactivity isn't always bad; it's just dangerous when it becomes your default. As a leader, you'll still need to step in sometimes. But if every problem reaches your desk, that's a system failure, not a leadership virtue.

This is where systems and culture matter. Build escalation paths. Set clear decision rights. Empower teams to solve at the level where problems occur. That's how you create a company that doesn't crumble every time you take a day off. Reclaiming your time means building the structure to handle itself without you.

Related: Dear Business Owners: It's Time to Work on Your Business, Not in It

You can't build the future while stuck reacting to the present.

The shift from reactive to strategic leadership isn't just about time management; it's about identity. It's choosing to lead with intention instead of interruption. To focus on systems, not symptoms. And to spend your time where it creates the most value, not the most noise.

So, here’s the challenge: Look at your calendar this week. Is it a reflection of the leader you are, or the leader you want to be?

Take back your time. Your team, and your vision, are counting on it.

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Watch Out for These Dangerous Business Habits That Masquerade as Strategy

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We love a good story, especially when it keeps us comfortable. In business, these stories often become rationalized myths. They sound like logic, feel like experience, and masquerade as truth. But really, they’re just assumptions wrapped in a confident tone.

You’ve heard them:

- “Customers only care about price.”
- “No one wants to pay for service anymore.”
- “Our market is too commoditized to differentiate.”
- “People just don’t read emails these days.”

What makes these myths dangerous isn’t their persistence, it’s

how we rationalize them. We tell ourselves they're based on data. (A survey from 2018? Please.) We cite competitor behavior. We assume it's "just the way things are." And then we design strategies, products and entire business models around them.

But these myths are born from perceptions. Not facts. Not insights. Just patterns we've gotten used to seeing and explaining away.

Let's start with one of the classics: *"Customers just want the lowest price."*

A B2B manufacturing client clung to this like a security blanket. Every RFP became a downward spiral of discounting. When asked how they knew price was the only factor, they pointed to lost bids. But after diving into post-mortems with prospects, the real reasons surfaced: unclear value, slow response times and rigid contract terms.

The issue wasn't price. It was *perceived value*. Prospects didn't see what made this manufacturer better because nothing was communicated that truly differentiated them. They'd accepted the myth and acted accordingly.

When they shifted their focus to flexibility, transparency and proactive support, those things customers wanted but weren't getting, suddenly they weren't the cheapest option. They were the smartest.

Related: 10 Popular Myths About Leadership and How to Overcome Them

Perception is reality, but not always truth

Humans are perception machines. We don't just see the world, we interpret it. In business, we build narratives around what

we think customers want, based on our internal views. But customers don’t live inside your boardroom, your org chart or your sales targets.

Frustrations, unmet needs and past experiences shape their reality. Which means you can shape perception if you’re willing to dig deeper.

Differentiation isn’t about being louder. It’s about being clearer on what matters. Most businesses try to stand out by tweaking what they already offer, rather than tapping into what customers crave but aren’t getting. That gap is where perception shifts and myths start to crumble.

A logistics company once told me, “We’re basically a commodity. Everyone moves boxes.” They’d convinced themselves that brand didn’t matter, experience didn’t matter, innovation didn’t matter. So, they optimized for efficiency and disappeared into the noise.

When we interviewed their customers, something fascinating emerged. Clients were desperate for visibility. Real-time updates, proactive communication and simplified invoicing. None of the competitors was doing well.

They leaned into this. Invested in client portals. Added human touchpoints. Their messaging shifted from “we move stuff” to “we make sure you know where everything is.” Perception changed. They weren’t a commodity anymore.

Breaking the myth cycle

Rationalized myths persist because we’re listening for confirmation, not contradiction. We validate what we already believe and ignore what feels inconvenient. But strategy isn’t about being right. It’s about being relevant.

To break the myth cycle:

1. **Listen for gaps, not praise.** Ask customers what frustrates them, not just with your company, but with the entire category.
2. **Challenge internal dogma.** Just because it's always been done that way doesn't mean it still works or ever did.
3. **Reframe differentiation.** It's not about being "better." It's about offering what no one else is offering in the way your customer truly needs.

Myths are comfortable because they make the world feel predictable. But they're dangerous because they keep you from evolving. The truth is you can't build meaningful differentiation on faulty perceptions. But if you're willing to challenge those myths and the stories you tell yourself, you can find the whitespace your competitors don't even see.

Customers don't always want more. They often want something different. And different is where real value and growth live.

Related: Developing a New Product? Here's How to Make It a Hit Success

Myths don't linger, they multiply

The problem is myths don't just linger, they multiply. One assumption quietly supports another until you've built an entire strategic house of cards. You stop testing, stop questioning, and start filtering every new idea through the same warped lens. And the real danger is the longer a myth goes unchallenged, the truer it feels.

I've seen companies spend millions chasing an edge that didn't exist, simply because they never bothered to ask customers what they valued. Not in a survey buried in the quarterly report. Not through a sales team's best guesses. But directly, candidly, without the bias of defending past decisions.

Because that's the trap. When your brand, processes and

pricing are built on untested beliefs, you’re not strategizing, you’re gambling.

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Coinbase’s CEO Fired Software Engineers Who Didn’t Adopt AI Tools: ‘We’re Leaning as Hard as We Can Into AI’

The CEO of $77.4 billion cryptocurrency platform Coinbase enforced a recent AI push by firing employees who failed to onboard with new AI tools by a strict deadline.

Coinbase CEO Brian Armstrong told the “Cheeky Pint” podcast earlier this week that he showed his staff how serious he was about AI adoption at the company.

Armstrong said he “mandated” the use of AI coding tools internally earlier this year, and Coinbase employees told him that it would take up to six months to get 50% of the software engineers on staff to use the AI tools.

But Armstrong decided to accelerate that timeline.

Related: The Fastest-Growing Startup Ever Just Surpassed $500 Million in Annual Revenue. Here’s Why It Keeps Growing, According to Its CEO.

He told software engineers to learn the AI tools by the end of the workweek. They didn’t have to use the tools every day; just get familiar with them. Engineers who failed to onboard had to meet with Armstrong on a Saturday to explain why they hadn’t. Those without a good reason were fired.

“I jumped on this call on Saturday, and there were a couple of people who had not done it,” Armstrong said on the podcast. “Some of them had a good reason, because they were just getting back from some trip or something, and some of them didn’t, and they got fired.”

It’s unclear how many employees were fired out of Coinbase’s 4,200-person workforce.

Coinbase CEO Brian Armstrong. Photographer: Bryan van der Beek/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Armstrong said that the firings were related to a broader push to use AI.

“Like a lot of companies, we’re leaning as hard as we can into AI,” Armstrong said on the podcast. “We made a big push to get every engineer on Cursor and Copilot,” he added, referring to two popular AI coding tools that generate code from prompts, edit code, and debug programs.

Armstrong mentioned that though some employees didn’t like his “heavy-handed approach,” it set the tone and provided clarity about the company’s priorities. Now 33% of Coinbase’s code is written by AI, with the goal of hitting 50% by the end of the quarter in September, he said.

Related: Perplexity CEO Says AI Coding Tools Cut Work Time From ‘Four Days to Literally One Hour’

Other companies are also generating comparable amounts of code with AI. Google CEO Sundar Pichai stated in April that Google is using AI to write “well over 30%” of all new code at the company, while Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella stated in the same month that AI generates 20% to 30% of new code at Microsoft.

Many companies in the U.S. are mandating that employees use AI tools. Perplexity, an AI search engine startup valued at $14 billion, made it “compulsory” for engineers to use Cursor or Copilot earlier this year, and saw measurable outcomes. CEO Aravind Srinivas told Y Combinator last month that the AI tools reduced “experimentation time” from “three, four days to literally one hour.”

“That level of change is incredible,” Srinivas stated.

AI coding tools are also gaining popularity. Cursor hit one million users in April since its launch last year and exceeded $500 million in annual revenue by June. Meanwhile, GitHub Copilot reached more than 20 million users last month.

The CEO of $77.4 billion cryptocurrency platform Coinbase enforced a recent AI push by firing employees who failed to onboard with new AI tools by a strict deadline.

Coinbase CEO Brian Armstrong told the “Cheeky Pint” podcast earlier this week that he showed his staff how serious he was about AI adoption at the company.

Armstrong said he “mandated” the use of AI coding tools internally earlier this year, and Coinbase employees told him that it would take up to six months to get 50% of the software engineers on staff to use the AI tools.

The rest of this article is locked.

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https://www.entrepreneur.com/business-news/coinbase-ceo-fired-software-engineers-who-didnt-adopt-ai/496250

How to Avoid the Hidden Risks That Can Show Up in the Final Stages of a Business Deal

Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own.

In any fast-paced sales environment, closing a deal is often seen as the final hurdle. But just before that contract is signed, subtle missteps can create major risks, particularly when client-requested changes go unchecked or processes aren't followed closely.

While these issues often appear within the sales cycle, the potential consequences span across legal, compliance, operations and finance.

Related: Your Contracts Could Be Limiting Your Revenue Potential and Increasing Risk in Your Business. Here's How to Take Control.

When standard processes meet last-minute changes

For many organizations, platforms like Salesforce have helped bring structure and consistency to deal-making. From initial outreach to signed agreement, the path is streamlined and

standardized — especially in industries where contracts are carefully templated and rarely deviated from.

But even the most carefully designed workflows can become vulnerable at the finish line.

A common scenario: A client returns a contract with their edits incorporated, rather than marked. Buried deep in the document, a key clause has been deleted. It may seem minor. It may go unnoticed. But that single, unvetted change can alter legal responsibilities, shift liabilities or remove important protections. One word changed or omitted can carry long-term consequences.

These kinds of last-minute revisions, particularly when delivered in a seemingly complete, clean format, present a serious risk. The issue isn't malice; it's momentum. At this stage, the client is often ready to get the deal done.

That's why the most important defense against risk isn't about slowing down the sales team; it's about reinforcing the systems and habits that allow them to move quickly without sacrificing accuracy.

The power of proactive training

Mitigating these risks starts with consistent, practical training that goes beyond product knowledge. Teams need regular reminders of where and how deals can go off track. At Associa, the world's largest homeowners association management company, we have quarterly regional calls for our sales leaders and legal department, which are essential to create a space not only to share updates, but to talk through real-world challenges. These sessions often surface emerging trends, like new types of redlines or recurring client requests that require broader alignment.

Our annual leadership summit adds another powerful layer of

connection and alignment. Over the course of nearly a week, leaders from more than 300 branch offices and sales leaders come together in person for immersive training, open Q&A sessions and collaborative problem solving. It's an opportunity to cover not just what's changing, but why certain policies and processes matter. Accessibility during these events is key — salespeople need direct access to legal, finance and operations leaders who can clarify expectations and help prevent common errors.

Related: 6 Mistakes to Avoid When Creating Client Contracts

Standardization is your safety net

Beyond training, standardized deal checklists are a critical tool for catching oversights. Whether responding to an RFP, hiring a vendor or onboarding a client, these checklists prompt teams to confirm legal review, double-check key sections of a contract and ensure no critical terms have been deleted or altered.

These aren't just administrative tools; they're guardrails. When the pressure is on to finalize a deal, checklists force a pause for essential verifications. Did the client send back a PDF instead of a redlined Word document? Has anyone reviewed the terms that were modified? Has legal approved the final version? These questions matter — and the checklist ensures they're answered before the deal closes.

Standardization also removes ambiguity. When everyone uses the same process, it's easier to spot when something is off. That consistency protects the business while enabling the sales team to move confidently.

Cross-functional collaboration is

key

It’s also important to remember that protecting the business isn’t the job of any single team. While these risks may emerge during the final stages of a deal, they require coordinated vigilance from legal, compliance, operations and leadership alike. Sales teams shouldn’t be expected to be the final gatekeepers of every nuanced legal clause, but they should know when to flag something and who to bring in when they do.

The most resilient organizations cultivate this kind of shared accountability. They break down silos, making it easy for team members to get answers quickly and escalate when needed. Whether through workflow automation or simple communication channels, the goal is the same: to make it easier to do the right thing than to make a mistake.

Related: 6 Ways to Save Your Shirt

Audit before you act

Finally, before any changes are made to existing systems or processes, it’s essential to audit what you already have. It’s a simple principle, but one that’s often missed in the rush to improve or adjust.

A thorough audit helps reveal weak points, whether it’s outdated templates, unclear handoff protocols, inconsistent training or information communication. In one instance, a contract signed casually over dinner — meant in good faith — lacked basic protections like defined services or pricing terms, which later led to avoidable complications. Without this step, well-intentioned updates can accidentally introduce new risks. But with it, your team can evolve your processes with confidence, building on a solid foundation rather than layering fixes on top of blind spots.

Closing a deal is the culmination of hard work, strategy and

relationship-building. But it’s also one of the most delicate moments in the business lifecycle. Without the right safeguards in place, it’s all too easy for a last-minute change to slip through unnoticed.

By investing in recurring training, implementing standardized checklists, fostering collaboration across departments and auditing your processes before making changes, you can significantly reduce vulnerabilities and empower your teams to move quickly, confidently and in alignment with your long-term goals.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/growing-a-business/closing-a-deal-dont-skip-these-safeguards/495545

Restaurants Are Throwing Away Billions of Gallons of Water — This Startup Said Enough

Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own.

Life is full of minor inconveniences. Most people see them as annoyances, but entrepreneurs see opportunities. Small frustrations can spark ideas that lead to big solutions, and many of the best companies are built by solving problems others overlook.

That’s exactly what Dylan Wolff has done with his water conservation startup, CNSRV.

A cooler way to thaw

Wolff, a Southern California native, was introduced to the issue that now dominates his life through a bartending friend.

“He told me the restaurant wasn’t serving drinking water to customers unless they asked for it – a policy to conserve water. But in the back of the house, in the kitchen, they were running the faucet for 10 hours a day to defrost frozen food. That’s over 4,000 gallons of water straight down the drain.”

This isn’t an isolated issue. Every year, billions of gallons of water are wasted in the U.S. food industry during the defrosting process. One turkey breast can take 5 hours of running water. It seems like small potatoes, but when you multiply that across every restaurant in America, the environmental cost is staggering.

After this epiphany, Wolff immersed himself in the wondrous world of food defrosting. He found that restaurants use three main methods: refrigerating the food, microwaving it or running it under cold water.

The fridge method takes days to defrost, creating an “inventory nightmare”, and we all know that microwaved food isn’t quite the same. That leaves the cold water method, which would be perfect if not for the thousands of gallons wasted each day.

“I spoke with as many people in commercial kitchens as I could, and kept hearing the same thing,” Wolff says. “It’s just the nature of the business.”

Undeterred, Wolff turned words into action, meeting with health departments to fully understand the code and reverse-engineer a solution. Working with his partner, Brett Abrams and Tim Nugent, head of R&D, he developed an early prototype that uses a proprietary defrosting method combining water

agitation and precise temperature control.

That prototype would become the *DC: 02*, a defrosting machine that cuts thawing time in half using 98% less water than traditional methods, and improves food quality, all while saving thousands in utility expenses.

Related: I Interviewed 5 Entrepreneurs Generating Up to $20 Million in Revenue a Year — And They All Have the Same Regret About Starting Their Business

Efficiency meets affordability

When Wolff started, there were hardly any players in the defrosting industry, and none with a completely portable technology.

“There are alternatives, but they’re $35,000 blast chillers that need a dedicated 220 outlet and a lot of kitchen space,” Wolff says. “We’ve built something that uses the space they’re already defrosting in, plugs into a standard 120 outlet, uses little power, and completely optimizes the process.”

For customers who don’t care about water savings, Wolff jokes that he can “Trojan horse” it in.

“They’ll care about the improved quality and saving time,” he says.

They’ll also care about new rebate programs from municipalities in Southern California ($800 per unit) and Tampa, Florida ($1,000 per unit).

“The Metropolitan Water District has a program that provides grants to innovations in the water conservation space,” Wolff explains. “I received that grant, along with the third-party validation of our technology that came with it.”

For consumers, that means when you buy a DC:02, you’ll get a

check back from the Metropolitan Water District. Wolff envisions this resonating with smaller restaurants and grocers, who benefit personally from the savings while contributing to the larger cause of water conservation.

Related: 7 Water-Saving Strategies for Your Business

Though passionate about the environment, Wolff has no formal training in sustainability or water conservation. What he does have is a background in product development, management, and an entrepreneurial drive. He bootstrapped CNSRV through its early stages, raising capital from friends and family before catching the attention of venture group Burnt Island Ventures, which provided the funding to take the next step.

“I always knew I wanted to do something entrepreneurial,” Wolff says. “I just needed that spark—the problem to solve. This was a serendipitous intersection of my strengths in business and my passion for sustainability. Finding this solution is exactly where I want to focus my time and energy.”

Life is full of minor inconveniences. Most people see them as annoyances, but entrepreneurs see opportunities. Small frustrations can spark ideas that lead to big solutions, and many of the best companies are built by solving problems others overlook.

That’s exactly what Dylan Wolff has done with his water conservation startup, CNSRV.

A cooler way to thaw

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Elon Musk Asked Mark Zuckerberg to Join OpenAI Buying Bid, According to Court Filings

Looks like the cage fight is off for good.

In August 2023, Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk and Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg were fighting on X and making plans for an IRL "cage match" brawl. Two years later, it was revealed that the billionaires could have become business partners.

According to court documents seen by CNBC, Musk asked Zuckerberg to help him buy OpenAI in an early 2025 takeover bid for $97.4 billion, the outlet reported late Thursday. OpenAI said that when Musk and xAI were "trying to form a consortium of investors to finance a takeover," they approached Zuckerberg with a letter of intent.

Related: Sam Altman Says Elon Musk Is 'Clearly a Bully' Who Likes to Get in Fights with Rivals

In February, Elon Musk made the surprise offer to buy OpenAI and its assets, but Altman turned him down. When asked about the bid that month at the Paris AI Action Summit, Altman told Bloomberg: "Elon tries all sorts of things. I think he's probably just trying to slow us down."

The filing is part of an ongoing court battle, which was initiated last year by Musk, who helped cofound OpenAI but

left in early 2018 after clashing with Altman. He has since filed lawsuits against Altman and OpenAI, accusing them of undoing the founding principles of the non-profit company by working to maximize profits for Microsoft, a key investor that's poured billions into the company.

OpenAI has filed a counterclaims case, which a judge recently said can continue.

Related: OpenAI CEO Sam Altman Thinks We're in an AI Bubble Because Investors Are 'Overexcited' About Artificial Intelligence

Musk started a rival AI company, xAI, in 2023.

The statement in the filing also noted that Meta is "spending heavily" in its own AI research and has been "offering pay packages of $100 million or more to leading AI researchers and attempting to poach OpenAI employees."

The number of court filings is vast: In November 2024, xAI also filed a separate, 107-page complaint against OpenAI, accusing the ChatGPT-maker of "aggressively recruiting employees with offers of lavish compensation" and spending "$1.5 billion on personnel for just 1,500 employees."

Musk is the richest person in the world, with $364 billion at press time, while Zuckerberg is No. 3, with $260 billion, per Bloomberg's Billionaires Index.

Maybe the next cage match will be a tag team.

Related: Elon Musk Accuses ChatGPT-Maker OpenAI of Being a 'Market-Paralyzing Gorgon': Lawsuit

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