



SPI Podcast Session #90 – 6 Things Architecture Taught Me About Online Business

show notes at: <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session90>

Pat: This is the Smart Passive Income Podcast with Pat Flynn session number 90! [beatboxing] Neh-neh-neh-neh-nuh-ninety! Neh-neh-neh-neh-nuh-ninety! Neh-neh-neh-neh-nuh-ninety! Neh-neh-neh-neh-nuh-ninety! Episode ninety!

Announcer: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income Podcast where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later! And now your host, on his 31st birthday, Pat Flynn!

Pat: Hey, what's up everyone? This is Pat Flynn and welcome to session 90 of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. Really quick, if you know the name of the tune that I beatboxed in the beginning, you get brownie points. Leave me a comment on Twitter @PatFlynn and kudos to you if you know what that is.

It's December, which means a lot of things. It means the holiday season is here, and of course I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season. It also means my birthday is here, and this year I'm turning the big 3-1. Thirty-one years old, which is fun, because I don't think anything interesting happens at thirty-one...

More importantly, my son's birthday is coming up too, and he'll be 4 coming up in the next couple weeks, and it also means that the next year is right around the corner. It's interesting because you know, whenever we talk about the New Year coming, we start to hear about resolutions and what our goals are for the next year, and this might sound interesting but I have a lot of mixed feelings about that approach.

Why do we have to wait until the New Year until we start to create new goals and become ambitious? We're always like "Yeah, in 2014 I'm going to do this, this is my year! 2014 is my year to get things done!" The reason I have mixed feelings about this is I think we should be thinking like this all the time, right? Not on January 1st, but today. Like, no matter what day it is you're listening to this, you should remember what your goals are and create bigger goals, and decide to commit to them, or recommit to them every day of the year.

I know some people who are like "Yeah, I'll start working on that next year, or once January 1st comes around, then I'll get to it." But you should get to it NOW. Why wait? Why are you always being okay with putting things off? You're training yourself to be okay with that, and you'll just keep putting things off in the future, which is bad.



But on the flip side, I like how, when the New Year comes around for all of us, it sort of resets us. It's an actual specific date that, in our heads, gets us excited to do things that we've been putting off. It's like, okay, what's the happy medium here?

To me, I think it's a mixture of the two. It's having set dates for goals but having them more often. You know, some companies call these sprints. Myself and my team are currently running a sort of sprint system in how we work and what we accomplish, which is very popular in the sort of lean start up method, and agile building and start-ups.

What this means is like, we meet every two weeks to talk about what we want to have accomplished and done by the next time we meet. Again, every two weeks. It's all working toward that big goal that we have set before us, those big projects we want to finish, but it's chunking them down and completing those specific things within those two-week periods or two-week sprints. And so far it's been working out really well. It allows us to see where we're at by the end of the two weeks, so we can adjust and adapt and pivot when we need to. And it definitely is more motivating because we're setting attainable goals with the light always at the end of the tunnel. I think that's really important, if that makes sense.

Before I get to today's main content, hopefully this inspires you to set those big goals and resolutions and projects now, or maybe it's January first. But of course the sooner the better, and then from there working two-week, one-week sprints or whatever you need to do, whatever you feel most comfortable doing. And you're going to have to experiment with it for a little bit.

This could be for your business that you want to start, blogs and websites you want to grow. Maybe it's for fitness goals. Maybe it's for relationship goals. Really, whatever you want. Just wanted to stare that with you before we get started here.

Today we have a solo show, no guests. We had Gary Vaynerchuk on our last episode, session 89, so definitely check that out if you have a chance. But today we're talking a little bit about my history, here. Most specifically, how my education and experience as an architect, or an aspiring architect, helped me in what I do now online, which is create online businesses and streams of passive income.

People often ask me, when they hear my story, "Pat, you went to school for architecture for 5 years! You worked in that industry for several more! But now you're doing this online thing that seems completely unrelated. Do you feel your time in architecture was a waste of time? Has it helped you any? Is there anything you've learned that you could apply now in your online businesses?"

It's funny, because there is actually very little direct correlation between the actual output of work that I do or the kinds of work that I like to do in my office, but probably the only thing of that sort of nature that is the same in my experience in architecture



versus what I do now, is using Photoshop. When I was in architecture school at Cal, I did a bit of Photoshop work to take some of the drawings I did and created and add color to them, or Photoshop people walking through those drawings to give them some scale. Those sorts of things.

One of my all-time favorite things to do was build models of buildings and then take my digital camera and then actually go to ground level and put a camera inside those models and snap photos, and it would create these really cool, life-like looking images, and I would go into Photoshop and add materials and texture to the ground, to the walls, and perhaps add backgrounds like cityscapes or the sky behind the buildings or through the windows. You could really get a very photo-realistic image of this thing you build with your hands.

It's a really cool thing to do if you want to create models with your kids. I think that would be an awesome thing to do! And of course, when I was working I did the same thing. And these would be renderings we'd share with clients and that sort of thing to help sell them on sort of the proposals and design ideas that we had for the work we were doing.

Now, in online business, I use Photoshop a lot still. So that experience did help. I know how to use the tool, but I use it in a completely different way. I don't manipulate the photos in the same way anymore or even use photos all that much. I take images and photos and add text on top of them. That's what I do a lot of. Or I size them down or turn them into banner ads or things like that. I make the file sizes smaller, which is important for optimizing the speed, and the page load time of your site. In all of this, I was very lucky because I am able to quickly create images like this and resize images for my blogging website and those sorts of things.

What I did learn was just how important graphics are when it comes to doing online stuff. Content and text is one thing. Supporting that content with nice graphics, especially now with how popular social media is and how images play a role in what gets shared, that's taking it to the next level. If you don't have that Photoshop experience, that's a barrier for a lot of people. Being able to create the graphics they need for their web properties.

So if you're listening to this and you don't have a graphic designer with you or graphic designing experience, it's okay, because there are a number of things you can do. I would recommend doing these things.

You could hire someone. I know a lot of people who have graphic designers they work with, usually on an hourly basis. You know, if they need something done it's usually not too often, especially after your site is up and running, you need a graphic or, you know, just email this person, BOOM they'll have something back for you in a little bit, whether it's a banner ad, a image for a blog post, stuff for your slide presentations or whatever.



There might be people in your existing network that might be more than happy to do this kind of stuff for you. That's where I would start. I would start with your existing network first, because they're the ones that are going to better understand what your site is about and what you need to do.

You can also hire someone for smaller projects on things like [fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com). It's a site, [F-I-V-E-R-R.com](https://www.fiverr.com), where you can get jobs done for five dollars, or for five dollar increments. It's hit or miss on there, but I know a lot of people who have had a lot of success on [fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com). Of course, [eLance](https://www.elance.com) and [ODesk.com](https://www.odesk.com) are also there as a resource, too, to get some graphic design work and stuff done like that.

You could, perhaps, get familiar with Photoshop or Photoshop-like programs, yourself. You know, Photoshop itself is pretty expensive, although recently Adobe released what they call their Creative Cloud, which is where you can pay monthly to get access to specific products they have, including Photoshop, in case you don't want to spend the hundreds of dollars up front on the complete software suite.

You can get Photoshop Elements, which is sort of a lighter version, I think it's only a one-time fee for under a hundred dollars. I think it's in the Mac Apps store on your desktop, and you can download it off of Adobe. And I believe that will give you exactly what you need.

And then you can use something like [Lydna.com](https://www.lydna.com) to learn the skills that you would need to use that program. YouTube, you can also use YouTube to learn how to do a lot of those things. If you don't have Photoshop or want to use Photoshop or even get Photoshop Elements, there's another tool called GIMP out there, which is a free, open-source tool that's just like Photoshop on the web.

I'll put links to all this stuff, I know I'm throwing out a bunch of links here, but I'll throw out links to all this stuff in the show notes. [SmartPassiveIncome.com/90](https://www.smartpassiveincome.com/90). Those are just some tools you can use to help yourself when it comes to that sort of thing.

It's not easy to do right out of the box. You're going to have to spend some time. And I think once you use it, I mean, really that's how you learn these things. You just use it and you figure it out and over time you'll just--you know, for me right now it's second nature, but of course I've been doing this for years. If you have the ability to hire someone or to work with somebody on your team that has that graphic designing experience, it will help a lot. I don't want not being able to do graphics to hold you back.

If you want to simply shrink the file sizes of the images you have, you don't need Photoshop for that. You can do that for free at a site--the one I use when I don't have access to Photoshop is [picsize.com](https://www.picsize.com). All you have to do is upload a picture from your computer or you can put a link to a picture on the web in there, and then specify the size you want, and then it gives you a download of that image, that's usually a fraction



of the size of the original. And it still looks high-quality. It still works really well, and so that will help you with optimizing the page load time of your site if you don't want your images to be huge, especially if you're importing these crazy-big images from your camera.

The one thing I want to mention before I move on is you have to be careful about the images that you actually use on your site. You can't just do a Google Image search and find one that works and place it on your site. You can get into big trouble for doing that, because some of those images are other people's intellectual property. I think most of them usually are when you do Google searches like that.

I've actually written a complete ultimate guide to finding and using images on your website and how to do it safely, which you can find, again, in the show notes. I'll link to it there, smartpassiveincome.com/90.

To sum this part off, the first thing I learned from the world of architecture was how important Photoshop experience is. I use it almost every day now in my business to create logos or to create banner ads or to change things on my website, just split-test things. That, or the ability to provide graphics to support your ideas online. Like I said, you don't have to have that experience yourself. You can hire someone to do those things for you, or learn those things on your own.

Of course, don't let not knowing those things, or being able to do those things, stop you because content is of course something that you can provide right now, and you should be providing right now. And you can later enhance those posts with images and pictures down the road if you wish, which I highly encourage.

Now, #2--another thing that architecture taught me was the value of hard work and getting started on projects now, because if you wait you're going to lose out.

In architecture school, the assignments were very interesting for us students, because unlike being assigned to read a chapter and do homework and get tested on it, it was more like "Okay, here's a project and there's some problem you have to solve with your building or design.

You're going to be working on it, and in 6 weeks' time, a group of architects around the area, working architects, real architects, are going to come in to the studio--and they usually call them the jury, and it's actually like you're being judged--and they come in and watch your presentation of what you've built, what your design solution is, and then review your work and comment on your models and drawings and that sort of thing."

You have six weeks to typically build a model, create plans, some elevations--which are like side-view drawings of your buildings--and then the 3D, photorealistic renderings, or anything else that you need to support you design.



Six weeks, with nothing really due in between, and it was up to us to get the work done. I saw it time and time again--because I basically--I basically lived in architecture studio. Whenever I had my studio courses where I was doing this thing, these kinds of projects, which was once every other semester was this type of thing, I would basically live in the studio. I had a sleeping bag in there, and a mini-fridge, because I was so focused on those projects.

But I'd see people not start their projects and not coming to studio for weeks, and they wait until the third or fourth week to even get started, and their work was never of the same quality as those people who would start immediately, and they would get bad reviews because of it, almost always.

I say almost always because there was always that one guy or that one girl in the class who would just wait until the second-to-last week to get started and somehow, miraculously, they would get everything done and get really good reviews from the jury, which would always just bother the rest of us who were in there most of the time during those six weeks. The thing is, there will always be that one exception to the rule, that one outlier that just throws everything off that just captures everyone's attention and other people see that and they think they can do the same thing, too. Which they CAN'T.

Online it takes a lot of hard work to find success, and a lot of time, but there are exceptions to the rule from time to time, but they are exceptions, remember that, and they are what you hear about most of the time because that's what other people talk about and what happens is other people try to copy and achieve the same results, and as a result their work reflects the little time they actually spent on their stuff, or they expect results right away and they don't get it, and they wonder why? Why aren't I getting the same results as that other person?

Well, that person built a six-figure business in a year, why not me? Because the result is uncommon. And that's not to say we can't do uncommon things, it's just to say--uncommon things are uncommon because they are uncommon. That's also to say we shouldn't give up, or we shouldn't think we are a failure if we don't do those uncommon things.

Of course, it takes doing uncommon things to make uncommon things happen. What I mean by that is taking bold actions and bigger risks into order to get bigger rewards. That definitely is a real thing. But comparing yourself to the outlier is not going to get you anywhere. That's the danger of the medium, and these blogs that share incredible success stories that say they, you know--push button, overnight success stories without actually talking about the real work that was put into things.

That's why I always talk about on the blog how much hard work is involved. And all the successful ventures I've had took a lot of hard work, a lot of time, and for most



companies that experience overnight success, they aren't actually overnight. Once in a blue moon they are, but don't let that be the benchmark. Strive for that, but don't let it--don't feel down if you don't get there like those outliers and don't feel like you're a failure.

Through all of this, I've learned that it's always better to get started now, and expect to put in a lot of hard work. Hard work that's done right does pay off! And speaking of that, because it's really important, and really the whole premise of my entire blog and podcast--it's the SMART Passive Income blog, or the SMART Passive Income Podcast. It's not just make a passive income or earn passive income. It's SMART passive income.

Meaning, to do it in a way that's calculated, that's purposeful and efficient. Efficiency plays a huge role here, too, in what kinds of types of work that you actually do. In architecture, even though we had six weeks per project, I knew that if I was more efficient, I would be able to squeeze 8 weeks of time, or 10 weeks of time, into that 6 week time period.

That's why when--this is a random example--but when building models, we used to use these things called X-Acto Knives. You may have seen them or heard of them before. They're sort of like pencils with a very sharp blade on the end so you can be very precise with where you cut, and use them to cut cardboard and chip board and foam board and other materials for our models.

Before the semester started, after my first year, I purchased a thousand X-Acto blades before the semester started. 1000. I think it was like 20 packs of 50 X-Acto blades each on eBay, because the moment that one started to get dull, I would just throw it away, switch it out for a new one, a new completely sharp one that's never been used before, and continue cutting.

Too many times in the beginning, my first time doing the studio, I'd overuse a blade and the cuts wouldn't be clean, which means I would have to go and sand them down afterwards, or I could even potentially cut myself accidentally, which I've done before because of a dull blade, which takes time away from what I needed to be doing. That was just one of the many examples of how I was learning to become efficient and why it was important, and how important those small things that save a little bit of time now--how important those things are because that time does add up, especially if you're doing something over and over and over again.

How could you apply efficiency to your online business? What small things can you improve on? I've talked about it before and I'll give you some links in the show notes for some episodes on efficiency that I've done.

This is why I also kept my desk extremely clean, and why I had the things I used the most right next to me for easy access and stored away things that I didn't need right away in places they were easily accessible but out of my way. Again, just being



completely efficient. It's something that I've learned over time, because I knew that if I put in 8 weeks of work, or 10 weeks of work, into that 6 weeks of time, I would have better results.

I have models that were much more detailed than everyone because I could spend more time on those than others, because I made myself more efficient. I had better reviews as a result. Not always. Sometimes my design ideas weren't perfect or way off. But at times I'd have more output to share. I would do more things than other people, which at least, in comparison, when people were thinking or the professors were looking from person to person and how much work one person did versus another, I always had way much work than everyone else.

And it was always really good quality, too, because I actually did spend time on it. I actually learned over time that they started to love these little 3D renderings I would do in Photoshop and people started doing them also, but not everyone had the time to do them, because they did take a lot of work. So, actually, I worked--I learned to do this in my third time doing studio. I worked on the 3D renderings first, instead of last. Because even if I didn't finish everything, I had something that made it seem like I was much further ahead than I actually was. It worked out really well.

Of course, I had to do it after I had the plans and the elevations and stuff. But now going to the 3D renderings, instead of working on my model, because I knew I could work on my model faster but I also wanted to get these 3D renderings down and out of the way because I knew they would impress the jury.

It's sort of like, I don't know if you watch Chopped on the Food Network. It's a show where they bring 4 chefs in and they have a basket of random stuff and they have to create meals out of that. Anyway, for a while the judges were loving any dessert--which was the last round. Last round is the dessert round--they judges were loving any dessert that was made using the ice cream maker. So a lot of the contestants, went in like "Okay, I made it to the dessert round. I'm going to use the ice cream maker because I know the judges are really impressed every time someone uses the ice cream machine. Whatever ingredients I get, I'm using the ice cream maker."

And that's why for a while, if you followed that show, you would see every episode, each week, for a really long time, everyone was using the ice cream makers.

Anyway, efficiency, starting things now, that's the big lesson I learned in architecture then, that I apply now with the projects that I do. I have become incredibly efficient because I like to spend most of my time with my kids during the day. So that's why I want to become efficient. Also, because I know I can get more stuff done, obviously.

The third thing I want to talk about, going back to architecture. One thing I took with me from architecture school and corporate life that actually negatively affected my online business and life was this: with architecture, there can always be



something else done to improve it. The hardest thing about architecture was putting our pencils down in drawing or stop gluing that last thing on there. You could always make your models better. Something could always be done better. Another rendering to support our design solution could be made. Our models could always be done with more detail. There was no real end, like "Okay, I'm done. Like, it's obvious, look at this, I'm done." That is not the case in architecture, ever.

And the same thing happened in the corporate world. That's why architects spend 60-100 hours week in the office, because there could always be more done to improve the projects they're working on to make the drawings look better and easier for the contractors to use. Something can be made more clear at all times, and we were always looking to improve our internal library of plans and drawings, things that--there was never going to be an end to that.

And so when I got laid off in 2008 and started my own business, I had the exact same mentality. "I could always do more. I can always do more." There's always something next or something else I should do in my online business, and I know a lot of you experience this, too.

It's one of the negative aspects of starting your own stuff and not working for someone else, and having time to go home and get away from the office where you're just away from all that stuff. There is always something more you can do, and if you're working from your home it's just a few steps away to that computer.

There's always another blog post to write. Something else to split-test. Always a way to improve conversions. New stuff coming out all the time that we can use to do some really cool stuff. Emails that are never ending. It's so tough. If you're working by yourself, you don't have a family, you catch yourself working 100-120 hours a week just because you can.

And if you do have a significant other or a family, you can do what I did when I first got married. And I tell this story all the time because I know a lot of you do this too and it's so, so dangerous. You can be having a conversation with someone and you're sort of, kind of there when you're talking to them, you nod your head, but then in the back of your head you're thinking about that email you have to answer or how your sales page is doing or maybe you're very young in your online business venture and your ideas are just taking over every aspect of your life. It's so dangerous because we do online business and build a passive income portfolio to have a life, but we find that it becomes our life, and it takes us over sometimes. It's so dangerous.

And I actually dedicated an entire episode to this and how I was able to work toward solving this issue doing a number of different things which stemmed out of, actually, a very heated conversation with my wife about this whole ordeal. Because she caught me! She knew I wasn't there when I was talking to her, back in the day, which I'm so happy she called me out on.



Anyway, now I'm on a schedule, which is important. I have a physical space where I work and do work things only, and when I'm not in there, internally I can get away from all that stuff. Yeah, I mean I highly recommend you listen to that episode. It might be one of the most important episodes you will ever listen to, if you haven't listened to it already. It's episode 47, maintaining a balanced life, smartpassiveincome.com/session47. I highly recommend that you check that out. It can be one of the most important episodes you listen to.

I appreciate my wife so much, that she helped me learn that lesson that I want to tell you here, because there are way more important things other than your online business that you need to focus on to do. You have to create boundaries and create schedules in order to make that happen. Don't forget about them because yes, you can do more in your online business, but you have to put it down sometimes. You have to be able to understand that you're blessed because there are more things you can do. You have the opportunity to work for yourself and you deserve a break.

Not like you're falling behind or like you're never getting anything done because there's no finish line. Your break is the finish line for the day or the week or whatever. so don't forget about those other important things in your life. Maybe it's your family. Maybe it's your body--I mean, it should be your body. you should always take care of your body. That, in and of itself, will help you become more efficient at things.

Maybe it's just look up every once in a while and enjoy life around you and where you're at. I mean, so many people I know who have these amazing passive income portfolios and they're big travelers. They travel to these exotic places, which is really cool, but when I ask them sometimes how they're enjoying the area, they say "Oh, I've just been working in my hotel room. I haven't really had time to look around."

I'm like, are you serious? Dude, you got to enjoy life sometimes and be 100% outside of your business.

But then when you're in your business, you have to be 100% in your business, too. You deserve that. And the people around you deserve that. And your business deserves that.

Moving on to thing #4 that I learned from architecture that I apply now. This is a big one for me, and I hope you realize how big this one is for you, too. To set this one up, I want to ask you a question, and I really want you to think about what the answer to this question is.

In the building that you're in right now, at this very moment, who designed it? If you're not in a building you're in right now, think of the last building you were in. Maybe you were at work or at the gym or a cafe or whatever. Who designed that building that you were just in?



My guess is you have absolutely no idea, and you've probably never even thought about that until I just asked you. But the thing is, like, those buildings--we spend most of our time in those buildings. They are there to protect us, they shelter us from the elements. It's where we live, it's where we eat, breathe, sleep, or where we raise families. It's what we sometimes call home. Yet we have no idea who designed that home or that building, and it's a very sad thing when you think about it.

There are only a handful of architects out there with recognizable names. Even to the general public, most people wouldn't even be able to mention a famous architect. I'm thinking of Frank Lloyd Wright, Frank Gehry, I. M. Pei. I mean, I wanted to be the next Frank Gehry, and I was willing to put in the hard work to get there. Hard work to get that recognition that I knew I could one day get and deserved, that probably a lot of other people deserve, too. It's just--that's the nature of this business, and when you're getting into it, you're essentially--at least to everyone else outside the industry--a nobody.

I mean, the work that you work on, even if it does get recognized, the work you do is always for someone else until you are that boss. Usually you're working for your boss, or your higher ups, or the name of the firm, not necessarily you. So when I was laid off, and I created my online business helping people pass the LEED Exam--yes, the LEED Exam is nothing compared to putting up an actual building or putting up a Guggenheim by Frank Gehry or Falling Waters by Frank Lloyd Wright. But to the people who used my study material and passed the LEED Exam, I was their Frank Gehry. I was their Frank Lloyd Wright at that time.

For all of you listening, you know me! It's PAT. You know me as Pat Flynn, and when you share this podcast or the blog with others, it's Smart Passive Income by Pat Flynn. When I've met some of you at conferences, you shake my hand and tell me you love the show and you feel like you know me, and I just--I love that! I'm so incredibly blessed and grateful to get that recognition that I was going to work 40+ years to get, and it wasn't even guaranteed then.

And with an online business, and especially a personal brand, you can directly affect people's lives in a way that you will absolutely be remembered. And I love that. That's why I collect thank you letters, hand-written thank you letters. I have a whole box of them right here in my office, because it's that gratitude that pushes me forward, and more importantly confirms that whatever I'm doing actually matters here.

And that it's working to change other people's lives. That was the coolest thing about this online business--you can be recognized and thanked for the hard work that you put in. when you effect people's lives, yours directly will be affected in return.

I just--I love that! Because I worked so hard as a drafter and it was always for somebody else. And even if those projects got built, which a lot of them did, I was six



levels deep and my name wouldn't matter to anybody. So being able to start an online business of your own and affect somebody's life, that's awesome. So take advantage of that. Not for the recognition but for the ability of you as you to effect somebody's life.

Another thing I learned was that you have to make things happen on your own. More specifically, if you know you deserve to get paid more, then you need to do what it takes to make that happen. This is a story I'm going to tell from before I started doing online business, before I got laid off, but it starts immediately after I passed the LEED Exam, which is the test I eventually turned into that study research for people in architecture.

Anyway, I was making \$38,000 a year as a senior drafter. \$38,000 a year. I put in so much hard work to get promoted from entry-level drafter, which was about \$30-\$32,000 a year to senior level drafter a couple of years before that, and then I passed this test. A test that not everyone else in the firm took and I took specifically because I knew it was going to help my resume look better, and I took classes I didn't need to take. I did a lot of jobs that were way beyond my job description. And I knew, I just knew, that I deserved more than \$38,000 a year.

So instead of waiting for my year-end review--this was March of 2008 when I passed this exam--instead of waiting until my year-end review in December or November, whenever, I approached my boss and basically laid it all on the line, and said "Here's what my job description says. Here's a list of things I do above what's in my job description." It was literally like two pages long of things extra that I did. "Here are the tests I took, these are my scores, here are some people you can talk to that know I've worked my butt off to help this firm. Here's how many hours I work every week. I feel that I deserve a raise."

And I said if I didn't get the raise that I know I would deserve, I would leave and work someone else because I knew there would be a ton of other firms out there in the area that would be more than happy to pay someone like me a higher salary.

This is crazy! I'm not typically the person to do this, but I had to do it. I just knew I deserved it. And when I did this--I mean, I had to go all-in. I just had to. Not only because I knew if I was like "Ooh, um, you know, I work really hard and I think I deserve a raise..." That's not confident. That's not going to get me anywhere.

I knew what I deserved and I fought for it. And if they said no, then that's not the place for me to work. I had to accept that that was going to be a possibility when I show my cards here.

You know what happened? They said yes! And it wouldn't have happened if I didn't ask and presented what I knew was right. So they actually said they would review my paperwork and talk to a few people and get back to me by the end of the week instead of the end of the year. And by the end of the week, I was called into the office, told I



was not only going to get a raise but a promotion, too, from senior drafter to job captain.

I was SO stoked! I was the youngest person in the firm to get promoted to job captain at this point. So stoked! So I went from \$38,000 a year to nearly double that--\$60,000 a year. More responsibilities, which I was happy about, and that's when I was on such a good streak and everything was going perfect, that I decided to propose to my girlfriend, and she said yes to me.

Now, of course, a lot of you know how the story goes. I get the raise, I propose, she says yes, we start wedding planning, and then literally a few months later the economy in the US goes down the toilet, they keep me as long as possible and my job goes down the drain with everybody else, which then became the reason why I got into online business in the first place and the rest is history. And of course, if you'd like the full details of that story and how it all happened, you can pick up my book Let Go. You can find that on your favorite device at PatFlynn.com/letgo.

Actually, I cool side note, just recently I was emailed by a youth minister. Actually this past summer he emailed me. He read Let Go, my book, and he decided to theme one of his adventure trips with senior high students after my book! So he had these t-shirts printed with the cover of my book on them, and the theme of their little adventure event was called Let Go. He sent me a few pictures of his retreat and it was so awesome to see these kids smiling and wearing their t-shirts with the book cover on it--blue for the boys and pink for the girls--so cool!

I mean, this is exactly what I'm talking about, this kind of impact. And I'm not just--I'm just one person. And so are you! And you are just one person, too. But when you work for yourself and you focus on providing value, you are one person that can make a difference, and it can take a rippling effect from you onto others. And then with these students, onto even more people who you wouldn't have ever reached before.

If I had stayed an architect, it may have taken me years, dozens of years, to get to a point where I could have this kind of direct impact and be appreciated, which in turn motivates me even more to get back and deliver even more. And to affect the young ones especially, the high school kids in this example and I know there are a number of kids out there who listen to the podcast. The youth professionals I've been able to help on GreenExamAcademy.com. The kids out of high school who are now working in protection services thanks to securyguardtraininghq.com, so forth. I mean, it's incredible!

And I want to bring up something that happened in a fairly recent interview with Andrew Warner from mixergy.com. I know a lot of you know and listen to Andrew Warner. Probably the most amazing interviewer I know, and I get a lot of inspiration from him. Fantastic show--again, mixergy.com.



I was invited onto his podcast and he asked me a question, a really great question about doing what I do now versus creating something bigger. I think he mentioned, you know, "Why not think bigger than what you do now?"

For example, spreadsheets. Everyone uses spreadsheets and it helps out the entire world, why not try to create the next spreadsheet? What impact, Pat, are you making with these small little niche projects? And my answer was "I may not be changing the entire world, but I'm changing somebody's world, and as a result I can be appreciated for that! I can cater to them, and they can thank me back. I can get noticed because of the things I provide and directly affect people's lives." Sure, in a small way.

But--and I didn't say this in the interview, but I should have, I should've said "Tell me, who goes out of their way to send an email to the designer of Excel. Who even designed it? Sure, Microsoft, maybe, whoever. But who at Microsoft? Where do I send my thank you letter to the person who designed Excel? What's that address where I can send my hand-written Thank You note?"

I have no idea! But every time I go to my inbox, once a week, I get a least one or two hand-written thank you notes from people, and I would much rather take that and affect people's lives this way. Because it does make a difference. You can make a difference, a big difference, in somebody's life.

And if you're too scared or you don't think so or you feel like you have to wait to get started--it's not you who's really hurting here, but those who could benefit from the experience, knowledge and hard work and determination you have to offer to provide some sort of solution to somebody's problem or pain.

Finally, I want to finish off with one more lesson I learned from my architecture background that I do now in my online business, and that's this--there are different levels of happiness. If I wasn't laid off back in 2008, I probably would still be happy. Architecture was my everything for a while, and I landed my dream job out of college, and if I was still doing architecture I would still be happy, but I wouldn't know what it would be like to be this happy! I wouldn't even be able to fathom what it would be like.

And so, I'm so thankful for being laid off. And I don't say that to suggest that you should try to get laid off or quit your job. I say that because it's sort of, I guess you could say, it opened my eyes to what else was out there. It tested me. It pushed me further than I would have pushed if I was interested in online business and I still had my job.

It gave me an opportunity to use the skills I had and to drive my hardworking nature for something else. And it turned out so much better. Better than I could ever have imagined. To think that I was on this path in the beginning to be an architect and that's



all I was meant for, like--it's almost a little silly to think about, right? To take that guess when we're little, that path we're on, as the absolute right path for us?

Some people do that. some people know exactly what they're supposed to be when they're so young and they do whatever it takes to do that and they crush it. It's like they were meant to do that from the beginning and they just somehow knew and it worked out for them and BOOM, they're just amazing at it.

But to assume that the path that you set out on when you were little or in high school is the absolute right one for you--it's hard to think that that's always going to be right. It's almost like we try--like what we do is we end up trying hard to make that path that we set for us right for ourselves, instead of the other way around. We should at least explore what else is out there to see if something else was a better fit, or maybe that path that was okay that we liked that we're on now, maybe there's a better one. And it took me getting laid off to see that.

What is it going to take for you to see that, or explore? Actually open your eyes to what's out there? And hopefully this episode or my work does that for you, or somebody else's work does that for you. Instead of working hard to make what we're doing work for us. To make the path that we set on a long time ago to be right, how about exploring what our options are and seeing what's right from there?

I mean, I'm so thankful for my layoff to allow me to discover these new things, and I hope this podcast, my message here for you, they will at least inspire you and open up your eyes and give you the drive to explore a little bit beyond what you think you were supposed to do.

Remember, it's always going to be a little bit uncomfortable. Even, maybe, a lot uncomfortable. But that's how you know. That's how you know it's going to rock and it means something. If it was comfortable then it's not risky and there's a certain degree of risk that needs to be taken. Take those risks, be smart about it, of course, that's really important. Be smart about it.

Get help, get inspired by others, and connect with other people doing the same thing. And most importantly, believe in yourself. Because if you don't think you can do something, you won't. You just won't. Whether you think you can or you can't, your'e right.

With that said, I hope you enjoyed this pep talk. I hope my past experiences have inspired you and educated you in some way. Thank you all for the birthday wishes. I appreciate them so much! And if you wanted to leave me a quick little gift, go on over to iTunes and leave me a review, an honest one. And I look forward to reading it and I appreciate you so much. I'd love to hear your comments.



And again, the links and resources mentioned in this episode, and the ability to leave comments are at [SmartPassiveIncome.com/session90](https://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session90).

You guys are awesome, thank you so much. I'll see you in the next episode, episode 91. Peace.

Announcer: Thanks for listening to the Smart Passive Income Podcast at www.smartpassiveincome.com!