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Frequently Asked Questions Exit Readiness Trilogy™

Build Value ■ Half-Retire™ ■ Exit with No Regrets
Every question answered honestly — no pitch, just clarity.

75%

of owners who sold have regretted
their exit within one year

7.1x

higher offers for businesses scoring 90+
on all 8 drivers

\$2.3M

average net worth added through the
Half-Retire™ process

GETTING STARTED

About Tom & the Exit Readiness Trilogy™

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Who is Tom Jordan and what makes him different from other exit advisors?

Tom Jordan is a **Certified Exit Planning Advisor (CEPA)**, **Certified Value Builder Advisor (CVBA)**, and Master of Science in Financial Services (MSFS). He is the published author of *How to Exit Your Business With No Regrets* and the creator of the **Exit Readiness Trilogy™**.

What separates Tom from most advisors is simple: **he is not a broker**. Brokers get paid when a deal closes. Tom gets paid to get you ready — years before you ever need a broker — so that when the time comes, you walk into the process prepared, not panicked.

"I'm not the person you call when you're ready to sell. I'm the person you call when you want to make sure you're never caught unprepared."

Q

What is the Exit Readiness Trilogy™?

The **Exit Readiness Trilogy™** is Tom's proprietary three-phase system for helping business owners exit on their own terms — with maximum value, minimal regret, and total clarity about what comes next.

Phase 1 — Build Value:

Improve the 8 key drivers that buyers score every business on.

Phase 2 — Half-Retire™:

Systematically remove yourself from the day-to-day. A business that runs without you is worth significantly more to a buyer.

Phase 3 — Exit with No Regrets:

Align personal readiness, financial readiness, and business readiness so the exit happens on your terms — to the right buyer, at the right time, for the right number.

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Who is this for? What type of business owner does Tom work with?

Tom works best with business owners who have built a real business — typically **\$2M to \$30M in annual revenue** — are **2 to 10 years from an exit**, and want to approach it on their own terms. Owners who know the exit is coming but haven't started the preparation. Owners who want to be in the **25%** who exit without regrets — not the **75%** who don't.

Tom does **not** work with owners who are within 90 days of going to market (they need a broker, not Tom), or businesses in financial distress. The Exit Trilogy requires a foundation to build on.

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Is the first conversation really free? What does it involve?

Yes — completely free and with no obligation. The **30-minute Exit Readiness Call** is a genuine conversation about where you are, what your business looks like from a readiness standpoint, and what options exist. Tom reads your Value Builder Score before the call if you've completed it, so the conversation is specific to your situation — not a generic presentation. There is no pitch.

"Come ready to answer honestly. I'll give you honest answers back."

Build Value — The 8 Key Drivers

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What is the Value Builder Score™ and why does it matter?

The **Value Builder Score™** is a 15-minute assessment that scores your business across the 8 key drivers sophisticated buyers use to evaluate every acquisition. After analyzing **80,000+ businesses**, the Value Builder System found that companies scoring 90+ receive offers **7.1× higher** than average-scoring businesses — with identical revenue.

The 8 Drivers: Financial Performance, Growth Potential, the Switzerland Structure, the Valuation Teeter-Totter, Recurring Revenue, Monopoly of Control, Customer Satisfaction, and Hub & Spoke (owner dependence).

Q

What is the ‘Rainmaker’s Dilemma’ and how do I know if I have it?

In a study of 23,158 companies, only **8%** of businesses where the owner is the primary revenue driver have ever received a written acquisition offer. Not a low offer — *any offer at all*.

If you are the primary revenue driver for your business — if most of your customers know *you* rather than the company — you are a Rainmaker. Buyers hedge against Rainmakers with holdback clauses and earnout provisions. Tom worked with one client whose \$12.5M business came with a draconian holdback clause for exactly this reason. The fix is real but takes 12–24 months. Which is why starting early matters so much.

Q

What is the ‘Value Gap’ and how does it affect my outcome?

The **Value Gap** is the difference between what you think your business is worth and what a buyer actually sees. Tom worked with an environmental demolition owner whose preliminary valuation was \$9.3 million. After properly documenting his add-backs and improving two key drivers, his valuation reached **\$12.2 million**. Same business. Same revenue. \$2.9 million created by knowing how to close the gap before going to market.

Half-Retire™ — The Slow Motion Exit

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What exactly is Half-Retire™? Do I have to sell my business to do it?

Half-Retire™ is the process of systematically removing yourself from the day-to-day operations of your business *without selling it*. You keep your income. You keep your leadership role. You stop working 60-hour weeks on things that systems and people could handle.

You don’t have to sell your business to Half-Retire. But the business you build through this process — one that runs without you — is worth significantly more when and if you do decide to sell. The average owner who completes this process adds **\$2.3 million** to their net worth.

"What if you could work just two half-days a week, doing only the work you genuinely love — would you sell your business?" Most owners say no. They don't want to exit. They want relief. Half-Retire™ is how they get it.

Q

What is 'Picasso Work' and how do I identify mine?

Picasso Work is the 2–5% of your week that only you can do — the work that uses your specific genius, took 30 years to develop, and creates disproportionate value when you do it. Everything else is delegatable.

The exercise: write down every task that consumed 30+ minutes of your time last week. For each one, ask: does this require *me specifically*, or does it require someone with my level of authority? Everything in the second category belongs on your delegation map.

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What is the '4 Degrees of Delegation' and why does typical delegation fail?

Degree 1:

Investigate and report back — I'll decide.

Degree 2:

Investigate, recommend, and I'll decide.

Degree 3:

Decide and tell me what you decided.

Degree 4:

Decide, act, and only tell me if there's a problem.

Most owners delegate at Degree 1 and call it delegation. The shift to Degree 3 is where real independence begins. The shift to Degree 4 is where freedom begins.

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Erik sold 20% above appraisal after Half-Retiring. How?

Erik owned several bridal stores. When he tried to sell, buyers kept walking — the business only ran when he was in the building. After the Slow Motion Exit™ process, he rebuilt the business around systems rather than himself. He sold for **20% above the appraisal**.

"I was able to quickly and easily sell because the business ran well without me." — Erik

Exit with No Regrets — Clarity, Terms & the Close

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Why do 75% of owners regret selling? Isn't getting a good price enough?

According to the Exit Planning Institute, **75%** of owners who sold profoundly regretted it within one year. Very few got a bad price. Most got exactly what they asked for financially — and discovered it wasn't what they needed personally.

The regret almost never comes from the transaction. It comes from the *personal preparation gap* — never having answered: Who am I when I'm not the owner? What do I do the Monday morning three months after closing, when the excitement has faded? Tom asks this question first. Most advisors never ask it at all.

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What is the PREscore™ and what does it measure?

The **PREscore™** (Personal Readiness to Exit Score) measures readiness across three dimensions most exit advisors never examine:

- **Financial Readiness:** Do you have enough from the sale to fund the life you actually want?
- **Business Readiness:** Is the business genuinely ready for a buyer without you?
- **Personal Readiness:** Do you know who you are after your name comes off the building?

In a study of 1,511 companies, the owner's psychological readiness and exit motivations significantly affected business value. The PREscore surfaces what's actually true before you're inside a deal and it's too late to change it.

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What is the Freedom Point™ and how do I calculate mine?

The **Freedom Point™** is the precise number — invested prudently — at which work becomes a choice rather than a necessity. Most owners have never calculated it. When they do, the result is often surprising.

Dean Carpenter (Houston commercial landscaping) had planned to work until 70. Tom's Freedom Point calculation showed the math worked at 61. He had crossed his Freedom Point years earlier without knowing it. He sold within 18 months for **45% above his most recent valuation**.

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Why do 50–80% of signed deals never close?

Between 50% and 80% of business sale deals that are *signed by both parties* never successfully close. The most common reason: due diligence. Most sellers aren't prepared for the depth of what buyers request. The scramble creates doubt. Doubt kills deals.

The sellers who close deals smoothly are the ones where the answer to almost every buyer question during diligence is: *'Here's the SOP for that.'* Getting there takes 18–36 months. Which is exactly why Tom says: **the time to call me is not when you're ready to sell. It's now.**

Q

What are the 7 exit paths most owners don't know they have?

- **Third-Party Sale** — Highest price potential. Requires the most preparation.
- **Management Buyout (MBO)** — Smoother transition. Often lower price.
- **ESOP** — Significant tax advantages. Complex structure.
- **Family Succession** — Highest legacy potential. Lowest financial return.
- **Strategic Acquisition** — Often the highest multiple.
- **Recapitalization** — Sell a stake to PE, continue for 4–6 years, sell the rest. Often the largest total outcome.
- **Slow Motion Exit™** — Half-Retire and choose your timeline with maximum flexibility.

Only **20%** of businesses that go to market with a third-party sale in mind actually complete one. Tom maps all seven against your personal and financial goals in Phase 3.

Your Next Step

Let's have a real conversation. No pitch. Just clarity.

Tom offers a complimentary 30-minute Exit Readiness Call —
a genuine look at where your business stands and what the path forward might look like.

■ **Book Your Complimentary Call at calendly.com/20minuteswithtom**

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