Trade Finance in Ten Podcast: Episode 9 Summary

The Three-Legged Stool

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1. Why Today's Topic is Important

Running a startup alone feels overwhelming because you're carrying sales, operations, and infrastructure all at once. Without basic systems in place, more work and future hires only increase stress and cash pressure. Building simple structure early is what allows the business to grow without burning you out.

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2. Key Takeaways

- A stable business requires balance between three legs: sales, operations, and infrastructure
- You need someone to take on each of the three legs, or automate it
- Accounting software and field management software are day-one necessities. If you don’t add them up front, it can cost you a lot of non-billable time down the road.
- Fast billing and consistent follow-up help drive cash flow
- Large owner draws and personal budgets can hurt business growth, especially if there is little reinvestment
- Doing everything yourself is not strength — it's often the bottleneck that will limit future growth

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3. Action Steps to Consider

- ☐ Think hard about who is responsible for each leg of the three-legged stool (sales, operations, and infrastructure), and ask:
  - What is missing?
  - What can I automate?
  - What will I need to fund or hire for in the near future, and what can I afford?
  - How can I fill in any missing gaps right now?
- ☐ Determine what you are doing that may be creating bottlenecks, either now or in the future, and come up with a plan to overcome that.
- ☐ Review your personal and business budgets and determine what you could cut, and what that money could be better used for to help grow your business

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