

The Power of Hiring

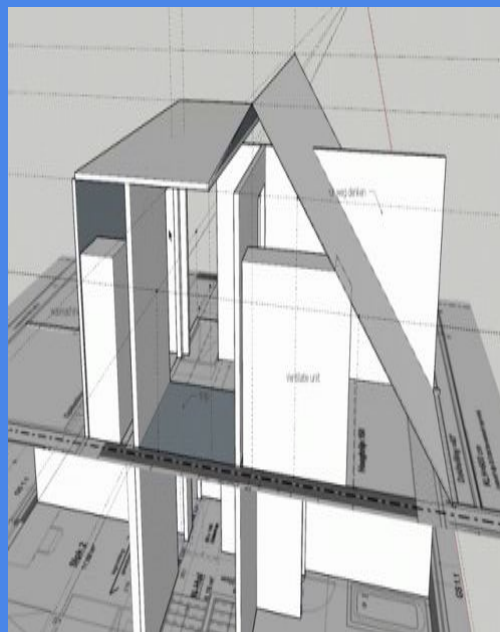
From Burnout to Boss:
The Smart Studio Owner's Hiring Playbook

Dancers Aren't the Only Ones You
Should Be Auditioning

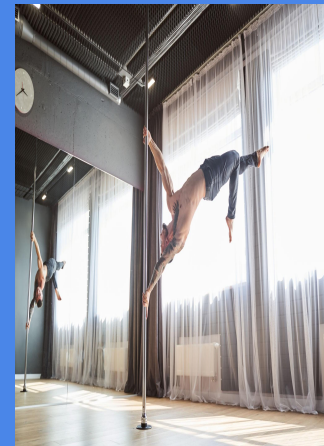
Behind the Desk, Beyond the Barre: Who to
Hire & When



Active State



Expansion
state



Vision state



Should've Could've but I Didn't :(

Most Entrepreneurs wish they would have hired sooner!

MORE THINGS :)

Mini Exercise

Raise your hand if...

- You've taught a combo, sent a tuition reminder, and restocked toilet paper—all in the same 10 minutes
- You've seriously considered putting "CEO / Receptionist / Therapist / Janitor" on your business card
- Your "office" is a rolling suitcase, the front seat of your car, or the back closet between props
- You've answered a parent's text while literally mid-pirouette
- Your idea of self-care is folding studio T-shirts in silence

If this feels *a little too familiar*... it might be time to call in reinforcements. 😊

Because Studio Superhero is not a sustainable job title.

Mini Exercise

RAISE YOUR HAND IF :

- Have you ever cleaned a toilet in tap shoes?
- Did you once cancel date night to alphabetize leotards?
- Have you used a costume box as a desk?

Dan Martell says it well :)

“we don’t hire people to grow our business — we hire people to buy back time out of our calendar,”

Ensuring we don’t build a business we grow to hate

Buy Back Your Time —-- READ IT

Three Key Ingredients

Knowing *When* to Hire: recognizing the right moment to bring in help.

Identifying the Right *Role* to Hire: choosing *who* to hire (the position that will have the biggest impact).

Understanding Your *Financial* Capacity: making sure you can afford your hire sustainably.

Knowing When to Hire

Consistently Overwhelmed or At Capacity: If you're *consistently overloaded* with work – teaching back-to-back classes, doing admin late at night –



Missed Opportunities and Stalled Growth:

Are you unable to launch that new program, add a class, or market your studio due to lack of time? **Identifying new revenue streams but being unable to pursue them** because you're maxed out is a red flag

Decline in Quality or Service:

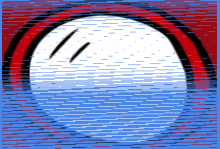
When you're stretched too thin, things start slipping – maybe class quality is suffering, or customer service isn't as responsive as it should be.

Personal Burnout and No Time Off:

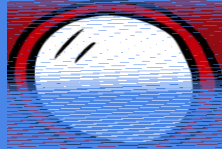
A more personal sign – you haven't had a day off in ages. If you **can't find time for weekends or family** and are up at 2am doing studio paperwork, you're past due for hiring

Needing Skills You Lack

If **you need specialized skills** that you don't have, it might be time to hire someone who does



Reflection questions



- *Am I **turning away students or limiting enrollment** because I simply don't have the bandwidth to serve more people?*
- *Have I been **missing deadlines or dropping balls** – like late emails to parents, delayed costume orders, or neglected marketing – due to being spread too thin?*
- *In the past month, how many hours have I worked and what did I spend time on? Am I **working 60+ hour weeks** and doing tasks at midnight that an assistant or another teacher could handle?*

Actionable Items

Perform a “capacity/time audit”

Choose Your Time Frame

Audit 3–7 consecutive days, including weekdays and weekends if possible.

Use a Simple Tracking Method

Options include:

- A paper planner or journal
- A spreadsheet with time blocks
- Time-tracking apps like Toggl, Clockify, or just Google Calendar

Log Everything You Do

Be specific and honest. For example:

- 8:00–9:00 AM: Answered parent emails, checked costume orders
- 9:00–10:30 AM: Taught Mini Ballet
- 10:30–11:00 AM: Scrolled Instagram (oops)
- 11:00–12:00 PM: Updated staff schedule

Label Each Task (Optional but Helpful)

Tag tasks as:

- **\$10 Tasks:** Low-value (checking email, organizing files)
- **\$100 Tasks:** Mid-value (teaching, billing, customer service)
- **\$1,000 Tasks:** High-value (hiring decisions, marketing strategy, growth planning)

Review & Reflect

- Where is your time going?
- Are you spending too much time on low-value tasks?
- What can be delegated, eliminated, or streamlined?

Why It Matters

Time Audit can reveal

- That you're doing too much admin and not enough growth work
- Bottlenecks that could be solved with a new hire
- Misalignments between your goals and your daily actions

Action Step

After your audit, identify **at least 2–3 tasks** you can **delegate, defer, or delete**—and **reclaim that time** for higher-impact work like curriculum planning, teacher development, or marketing your programs.

GUESS WHAT ?????

Delegation Wake-Up Call (Mic Drop Moment)

- If you **can't figure out who to delegate to** — YOU NEED TO HIRE
- If you **don't think anyone can do it better than you** — *you're the bottleneck....* YOU NEED TO HIRE
- If you're **doing tasks someone else could do for \$20/hour** while turning down opportunities that could grow your business — *you're paying the price in missed revenue....* YOU NEED TO HIRE
- If your answer to "*who handles this?*" is always "**me**" — you're building a business that *only works if you do*. That's not sustainable. YOU NEED TO HIRE

Make the call. Build the team. Reclaim your time.



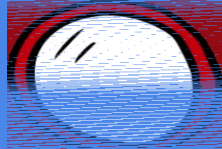
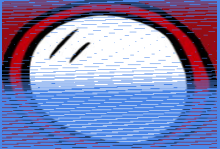
Identifying the Right *Role* to Hire: choosing *who* to hire (the position that will have the biggest impact).

Delegate Low-Value Tasks, Focus on High-Value Work: As the studio owner (and CEO), your time is best spent on strategy, building relationships, and creative leadership – not caught up in minutiae. If you find you're **answering emails and cleaning floors instead of planning growth** initiatives, those tasks should be assigned to someone else. *The goal is to free YOURSELF to do what only **you** can do.*

Identify Your Biggest Need or Bottleneck: The hire you make should address your studio's most pressing gap. For many dance studios, the first hire is often **administrative**. For example, hiring a **front-desk receptionist/assistant** can immediately improve customer service and give you back hours of time (greeting families, handling inquiries, managing registration). Alternatively, if you're drowning in administrative work, an **office manager** might be the right role to take over billing, scheduling, and day-to-day operations. If marketing and enrollment growth are stalled, a **Marketing Coordinator** could be transformational – *this role is more crucial than many realize, driving new student acquisition and retention strategies*. In short, pinpoint the role that would remove your biggest pain point or open up the greatest opportunity (be it an admin, an instructor, a sales/marketing role, etc.).

Hire for Complementary Skills: The best hire is someone who brings skills or strengths that **complement yours**. For instance, if your passion is teaching and choreography, consider hiring someone who excels at organization and customer follow-up (so you don't have to). If you're not tech-savvy or marketing-minded, hiring a person who lives for social media and community outreach can fill that gap. *Think about the skill sets that would make your team well-rounded, and go after those.....* This ensures your hire is not just extra hands, but adds new capabilities to your studio.

Cultural Fit and Vision: Don't forget – in a dance studio, personality and culture matter. You want someone who shares your studio's values and vibe. Whether it's an energetic front-desk person who makes every parent feel welcome or a teacher who embodies your teaching philosophy, **Hire for attitude and alignment** with your mission. Skills can be taught, but passion for your studio's vision is priceless. Keep this in mind when defining the role and evaluating candidates.



Reflection questions

*Which **tasks do I most dread or consistently procrastinate** (e.g. bookkeeping, marketing, cleaning, follow-up calls)? Could these tasks be turned into a job for someone else?*

*What is the **one area of my studio that, if improved or given more attention, would yield the greatest growth**? (Is it better customer service, more classes, stronger marketing, smoother operations?) Which role would directly target that area?*

*If I could wave a magic wand and **delegate one large chunk of my responsibilities** to a capable person, what exactly would I hand off? (The answer could be “all front-desk duties” or “teaching our beginner classes” or “managing social media” – this clarity points to the role you need to hire.)*

Actionable Items

Define your ideal next hire.

Take the top tasks or responsibilities you identified and **write a draft job description** for the role. List 3–5 key duties this person would handle and what success looks like in the role (e.g., *“increase enrollment by 15%”* or *“ensure all admin emails are answered within 1 business day”*). This exercise forces you to get specific about the role you need. *For example:* if your job description is heavy on handling registrations and parent inquiries, you’re looking for an **Administrative Assistant**; if it’s focused on teaching overflow classes and leading the competition team, you need another **Instructor**. Having this clarity will guide your hiring process and help you communicate the opportunity clearly to candidates.

Understanding Your Financial Capacity to Hire

Finally, the practical dollars and cents: You might recognize you need to hire and know the role you want – but **can you afford it?** Hiring is an investment, so let's ensure you understand the costs and have a plan to sustain a new employee.



Actionable Items

Calculate the True Cost of an Employee: It's not just the hourly wage or salary – factor in payroll taxes, workers' comp, benefits, and other employee-related costs. On average in the U.S., **wages account for roughly 70% of total employee cost, with about 30% extra going to benefits/taxes**, so it's wise to budget **at least 1.25–1.3 times the base salary** for a realistic total cost

(For example, if you plan to pay an instructor \$2,000/month, the real cost might be around \$2,600/month after taxes and any benefits.) Knowing this number is crucial for planning.

Review Your Financials (Know Your Numbers): Take a hard look at your studio's current finances. How steady is your monthly revenue, and what are your existing expenses? A good practice is **regularly reviewing your profit-and-loss statements to track labor costs vs. revenue** – this analysis can reveal if you have the financial room to hire another employee.

For instance, How much of your revenue is payroll?

25- 35% is what I am seeing in most people

Actionable Items

Project the ROI of a New Hire: Hiring should come with a return on investment, either by **increasing revenue or increasing efficiency** (which frees your time to increase revenue). Try to **forecast how much more income your studio could generate with the new hire on board.....**

For example, if hiring another teacher allows 3 new classes per week with 10 students each, estimate the additional tuition per month from those classes.

Or if an office assistant frees 15 hours of your time monthly, ask: *how could I use those 15 hours?* Perhaps to launch a new workshop, or convert more inquiries to enrollments – activities that bring in money. Be conservative in your estimates and account for ramp-up time (a new hire might take a couple of months to get fully productive).

The key question: **Will the hire eventually pay for themselves (and then some)?** If your projected added revenue (or the value of time regained) outweighs the cost of the hire, that's a strong green light to proceed

Ensure a Financial Cushion: Even if the math says a hire will pay off, you need the cash flow to handle the expense *now*. Make sure you have some savings or buffer to cover the new salary for three months, because costs come before the returns.

A common approach is to have at least 3–6 months of the hire's salary set aside or covered by current profits, so you're not in a crunch if growth is slower at first.

Essentially, **don't bet your studio's rent money on a new hire** – cushion the risk. If after budgeting you see you can pay the employee comfortably and still stay in the black, you're in a good position to hire.

Actionable Items

Consider Scaled Options:

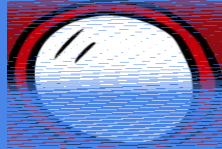
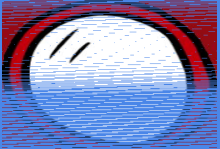
If a full-time hire is financially out of reach right now, remember that **hiring isn't all-or-nothing**.

You have options to scale the commitment.

For example, you could **hire a contractor or consultant** for specific tasks (higher hourly rate, but you pay only for limited hours and typically no benefits) this can be great for things like accounting or digital marketing.

Or, you might **start with a part-time employee**. Part-timers can carry much of the same load at a fraction of the cost, and it's a lower-risk way to assess if the role truly needs full-time.

Many studio owners start with a part-time office assistant or Saturday front-desk person. As your studio grows and the revenue rises, you can gradually increase their hours or move to full-time. The takeaway: *lack of huge funds doesn't mean you can't get help* – just scale the hiring to your budget.



Reflection questions

- Do I have a **clear picture of my finances** (monthly revenue, expenses, profit)? Have I reviewed my P&L statement recently to see what resources are available for a new hire?
- What would be the **total monthly cost** of the role I want to hire (including taxes, etc.)? Can my studio's current cash flow **comfortably cover that cost**?
- *How might this hire **increase revenue or efficiency**? Can I estimate, even roughly, how many new students, classes, or retained customers it would take to **break even on their salary**? (For example: "If a part-time admin at \$1,000/month helps me enroll 5 extra students at \$200 each, they effectively pay for themselves.*

Actionable Items

Run the numbers before you run the job posting.

Calculate your prospective hire's cost on paper:

Write down the anticipated salary and add ~30% to cover taxes and benefits overhead.

Next, sketch out a simple forecast of how this hire could *boost income* or *save you time*. Maybe you project an additional \$1,500/month in new tuition from extra classes they enable, or you determine that freeing 10 hours of your time is worth \$X in new business.

Compare these figures. **If the expected gains outweigh (or reasonably match) the costs – and you have the cash flow to support the hire through the initial months – you can move forward with confidence.**

If not, consider adjusting the role (maybe part-time to start) or revisit in a few months after improving your financial buffer.

CONCLUSION

Hiring strategically is one of the **best investments** you can make in your dance studio's growth.

By **knowing when** you truly need help, **choosing the right role** to amplify your business, and **making sure the finances add up**, you set your studio up to flourish in the long run *without burning yourself out*.

Remember, almost every studio owner who has taken the leap will tell you they **wish they hadn't waited so long** to hire – in hindsight, you *won't* regret getting an extra set of hands when you need it (and in fact, you'll likely wonder how you ever managed without!

Hiring is about multiplying your efforts and reclaiming your time, so you can focus on what you love – whether that's choreographing the next show or envisioning a second studio location – rather than sweating every small task alone.

JUST SOME THINGS

“I once asked a studio owner why she hadn’t hired help yet, and she said, ‘Well, I was going to—but then I had to design the recital T-shirts, order 300 trophies, fix a clogged toilet, and find a missing jazz shoe in lost and found... and I just never got around to it.’”

The punchline?

If you don’t make time to hire, you’ll *always* be too busy to hire.

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” — African Proverb
Perfect for driving home the mindset shift from “solo hustler” to “team builder.”

“The biggest bottleneck in your business is between your ears.” — Dan Martell

“Don’t hire to grow your business. Hire to buy back your time.” — Also from Dan Martell

“Hire people not to do your job, but to do the jobs you *shouldn’t* be doing.”

