



BUSINESS FRAMEWORK

THE 9 TRIANGLES

Tying together your WHY with the HOW and WHAT



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GUIDE VERSION
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Welcome!

The 9 Triangles are at the core of every business, digital or not

Split into three distinct sections (**a company's mission at the top, marketing in the middle, and business functions at the bottom**), businesses that implement these tactics will increase efficiency, improve performance, and organize every aspect of the business to be in line with their goals.

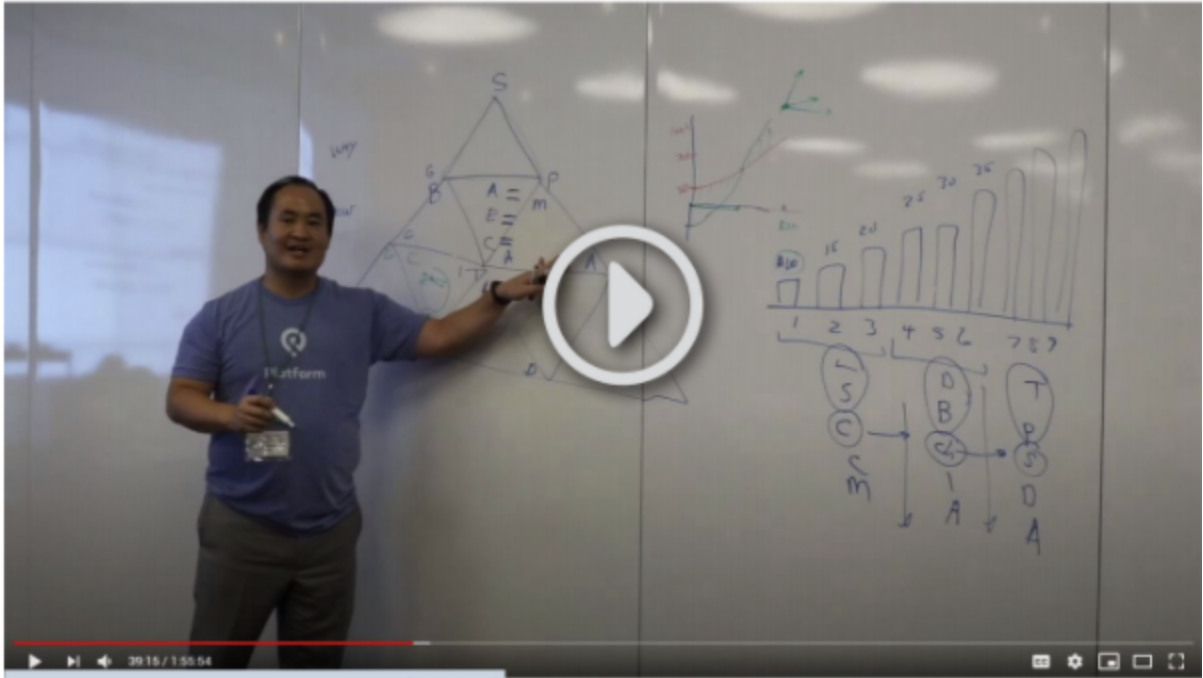
Understanding the 9 Triangles are essential to a specialist. This is your foundation. Work hard to grasp it not just literally, but conceptually.

Let's dive right in and start breaking down what each triangle means.

Dennis Yu

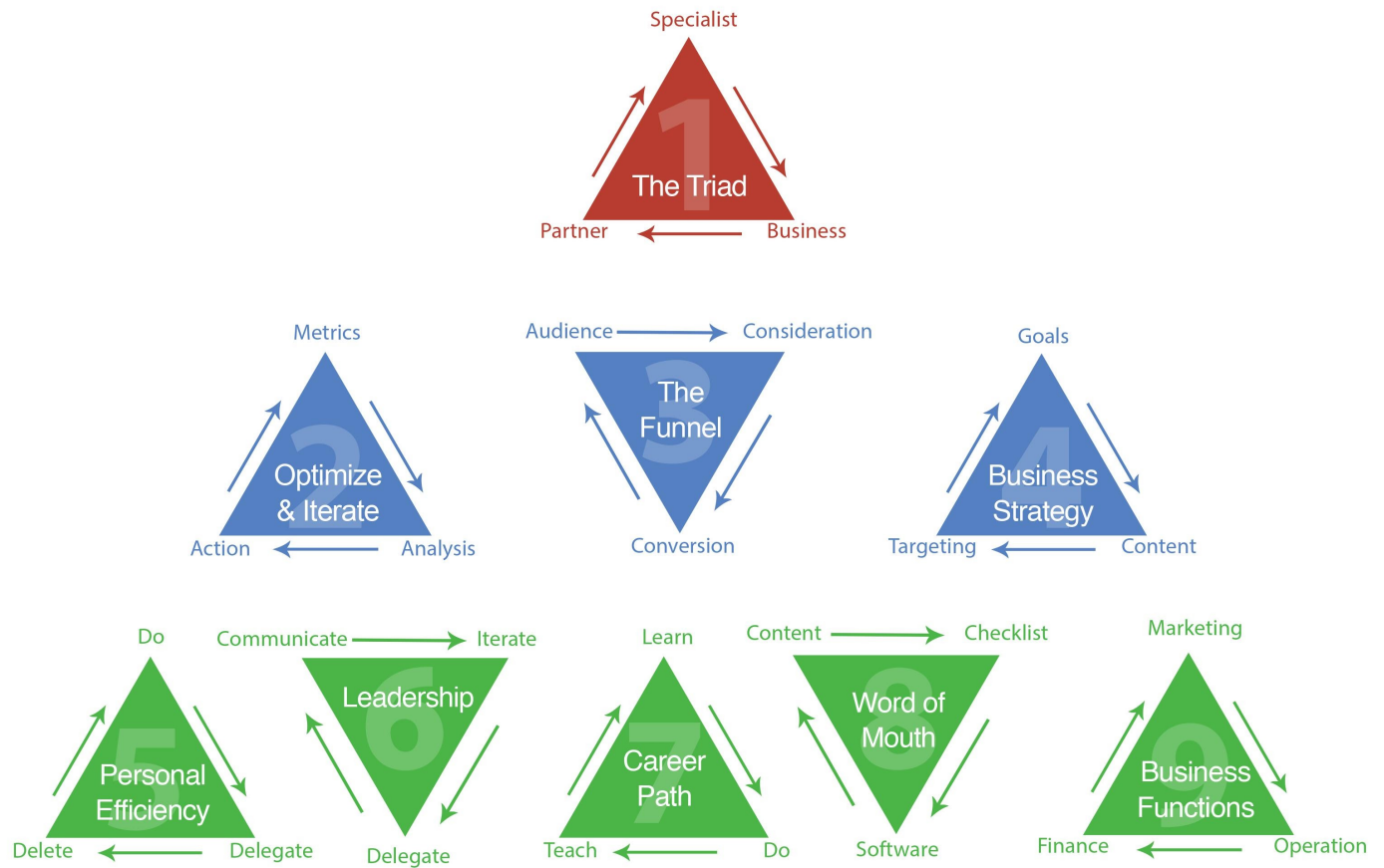
9 Triangles : Specialist : Finance

Watch the full video before going through the rest of the guide:



[Video: 9 Triangles : Specialist : Finance \(1:55:52\)](#)

The 9 Triangles Framework



[Video: 9 Triangles \(58:07\)](#)

9 Triangles Comprise the Mega Framework of Business Triangle



1. The Triad
2. Optimize & Iterate
3. The Funnel
4. Business Strategy
5. Personal Efficiency
6. Leadership
7. Career Path
8. Word of Mouth
9. Business Functions

The top triangle is mission: what we stand for, holding the specialist as our primary concern. (WHY)

- **#SBP**: Specialist, Business, Partner: The Triad

The 3 triangles of marketing hold the middle level. (HOW)

- **#ACC**: Audience, Consideration, Conversion: The Funnel
- **#MAA**: Metrics, Analysis, Action: Optimization & Iteration
- **#GCT**: Goals, Content, Targeting: Business Strategy

The 5 triangles of business anchor the bottom level. (WHAT)

- **#DDD**: Do, Delegate, Delete: Personal Efficiency
- **#CID**: Communicate, Iterate, Delegate: Leadership
- **#LDT**: Learn, Do, Teach: Career Path
- **#CCS**: Content, Checklist, Software: Word of Mouth
- **#MOF**: Marketing, Operations, Finance: Business Functions

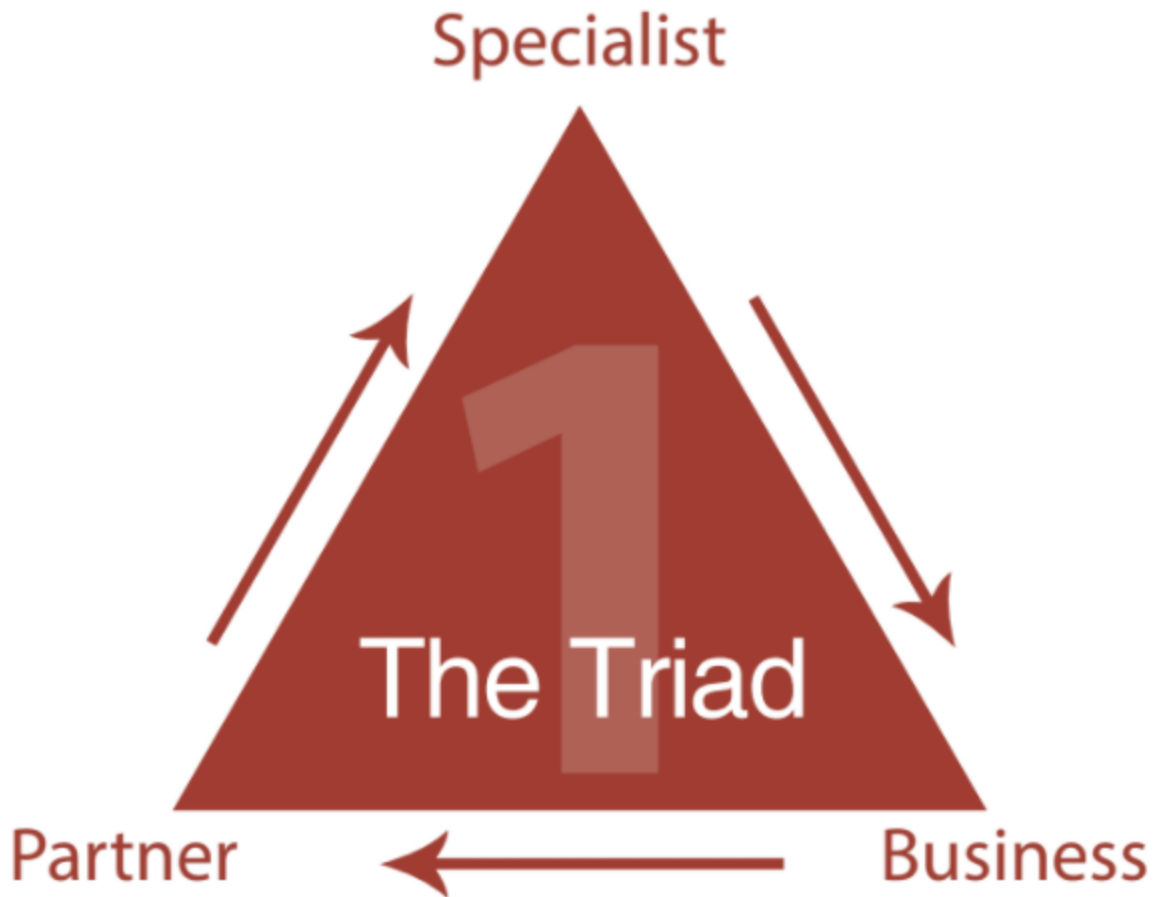
Principle pairings:

LDT >> SBP: learn/specialist, do/manager, teach/partner: practice what we preach = vision

#GCT >> #MAA: goals/metrics, content/analysis, targeting/action: strategy and optimization
alignment = brand

#CID >> #CCS: communicate/content, iterate/checklist, delegate/software: efficiency and
effectiveness = scale

#SBP - Specialist, Business, Partner



The Triad

- Specialists (students and young adults) need work experience to complement their formal education.
- Businesses need marketing help, most effectively delivered by customers turned advocates (word of mouth).
- Partner (school, conferences, and vertical associations) aggregate either students or businesses, but not both.

#SBP

We bring all three together.

Think: LinkedIn meets Match.com or Uber for marketing services. The market model requires standardization to scale certifications, checklists, ratings.

We fill this missing piece that none of them do:

Businesses don't want to optimize their marketing any more than you want to work on your car— they want someone else to do it. Nor do they feel responsible or have time to train up students, so they hire interns. Schools don't want to hire students directly. Students don't want to create training or work menial jobs.

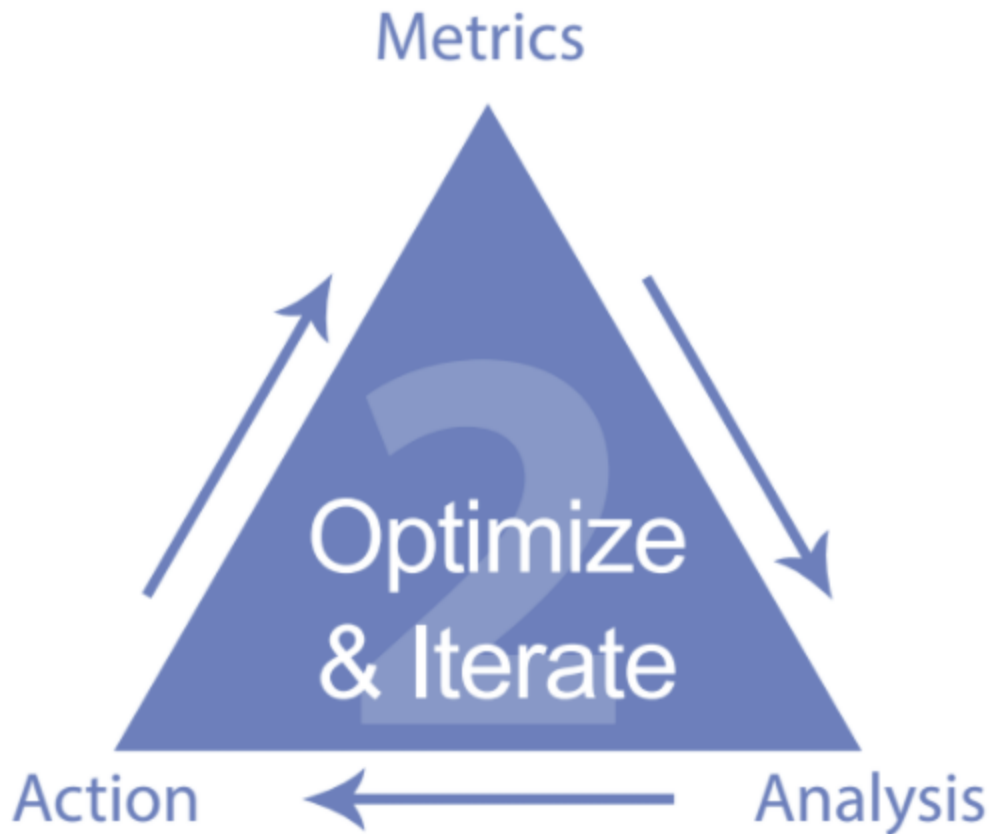
This triangle is your “why”, or what your business stands for. For us, our “why” is to create jobs for young adults. Figure out your “why” and understand how partners and other businesses can help you live up to it.

See Simon Sinek’s “[Start with Why](#)” on YouTube.



[Video: 9 Triangles - The Triad - Specialists, Businesses, Partners \(0:54\)](#)

#MAA - Metrics, Analysis, Action



Optimize & Iterate

- **Metrics** are key indicators to the health of your business. These aren't just dashboards, reports, etc. they're the metrics you attach to your funnel to measure your success.
- **Analysis** requires mostly human intelligence to understand WHY a particular metric went up or down by breaking each metric into further components until we discover the underlying reason, then possible remedies.
- **Action** follows analysis, whether automated (campaign optimization, email sequences, etc) or human (content creation).

#MAA

This triangle is key to project optimization. The rapid cycling through MAA requires short communication at each step, taking minutes, not hours. A hospital emergency room does triage to prioritize who gets seen first: then scans, diagnoses, and treats (MAA). Metrics must always be in pairs, usually quantity versus quality, with the exception of profit. We can break down any metric into further components until we discover the underlying reason.

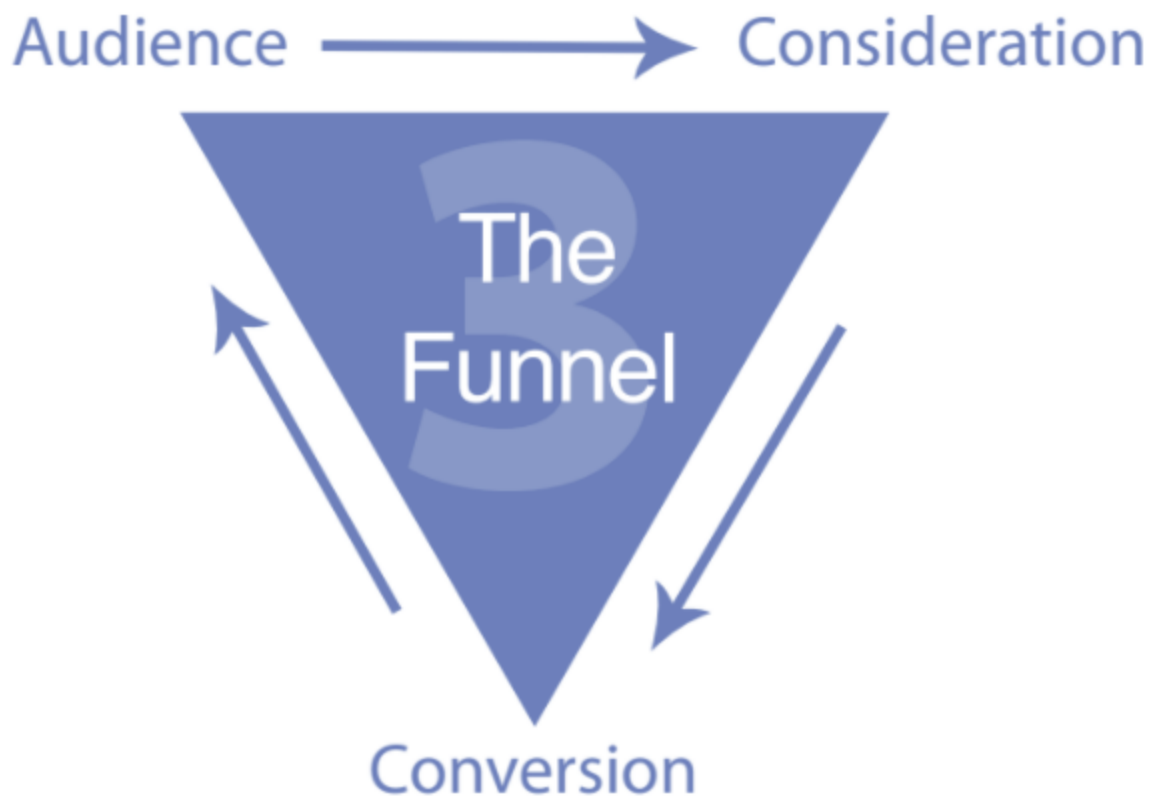
Ever heard the quote "Don't let perfect be the enemy of good"? This idea is the base of MAA. Rather than wasting time trying to create one perfect version of something, we've found it's better to take incremental steps towards achieving the final product.

This way, instead of taking one huge stab at a project, you're rapidly iterating and taking many smaller stabs at it. If something is wrong, it can be addressed in the next iteration because you didn't wait until the last minute trying to make it perfect before showing anyone.



[Video: 9 Triangles - Optimize and Iterate - Metrics, Analysis, Action \(01:41\)](#)

#ACC - Awareness, Consideration, Conversion



The Funnel

- **Audience** is the sum of awareness across all channels: mobile, web, social, email, and nondigital (hard to measure). When we aggregate user lists, we can create message sequences for our customers and prospects, definable in our technology.
- **Consideration** is the sum of trackable interactions across these channels: reviews, likes, tweets, and so forth.
- **Conversion** is an interaction with an attached dollar value, direct or derived.

#ACC

This is the marketing section of the 9 Triangles.

Regardless of your industry, you have to have people go through The Funnel to get them to convert. Conversion success is predicated upon upstream power in audience and consideration, measured via circles of influence. Therefore, existing businesses must identify their top fans and activate them, growing audience sizes. Increase yield by finding the right combinations of content and targeting at each funnel point. We can measure the value of a brand by the sum of positive and negative experiences across all users.

Think of the roadblocks that people might encounter along the way and eliminate them. Map out their journey from initial impression all the way down to buying your product/service and make it as simple as possible.

When you think about the customer's journey down the funnel, recognize that inbound marketing is going from the bottom of the funnel upwards. By sharing content and educating audiences freely, your customers will do the work for you and travel down the funnel.



[Video: How to combine Awareness, Consideration, and Conversion \(1:01:57\)](#)

#GCT - Goals, Content, Targeting



Business Strategy

- Goals = metrics = strategy = optimization, since business goals must be quantifiable and actionable. A business' goals must reflect a true mission to inspire customers to genuinely identify and share. Start with why.
- Thus, content production is an on-going validation of mission and values, delivered to audiences.
- Targeting takes 3 forms: what (search keywords), where (print, TV, traditional), and who (people-based targeting). While we need all three types, the most sustainable is people-based targeting: personalized marketing based on what someone has done and who they are. People-based targeting via core audiences and lookalikes has owned, earned, and paid components.

#GCT

When it comes to creating and carrying out your business strategy, follow this triangle.

Who are your best customers and how do we get more of the same?

Organize customers into personas, which courses content production.

Database marketing (or personalization) is delivering the right message to the right user at the right time.

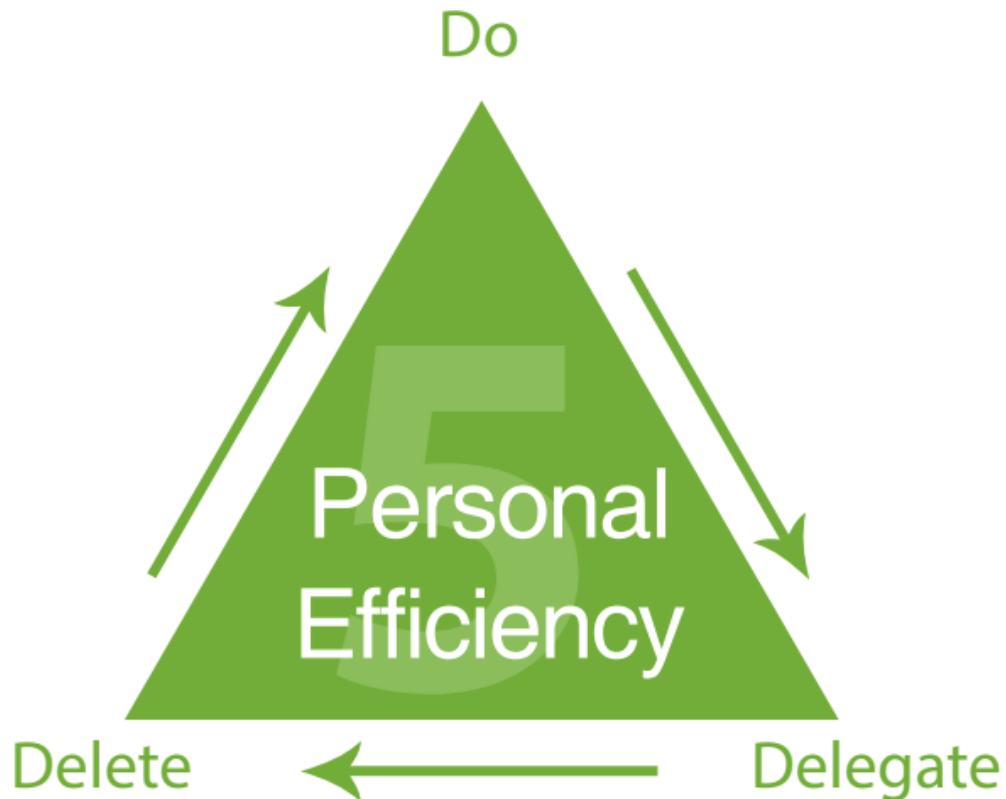
Marketing automation is automating these personalization sequences, but it requires having each component of GCT in place.

Your goals drive your content, your content drives your targeting, and your targeting drives your conversions.



[Video: 9 Triangles - Business Strategy \(01:48\)](#)

#DDD - Do, Delegate, Delete



Personal Efficiency

Do it now or don't do it at all. More time tomorrow is an illusion, as opportunities and corresponding tasks increase.

Delegate where you have resources that can reliably execute, whether virtual assistants or a Specialist. But still be responsible.

Delete is your most common option to keep "inbox zero". So don't skim; read thoroughly enough once that you can recall or search later.

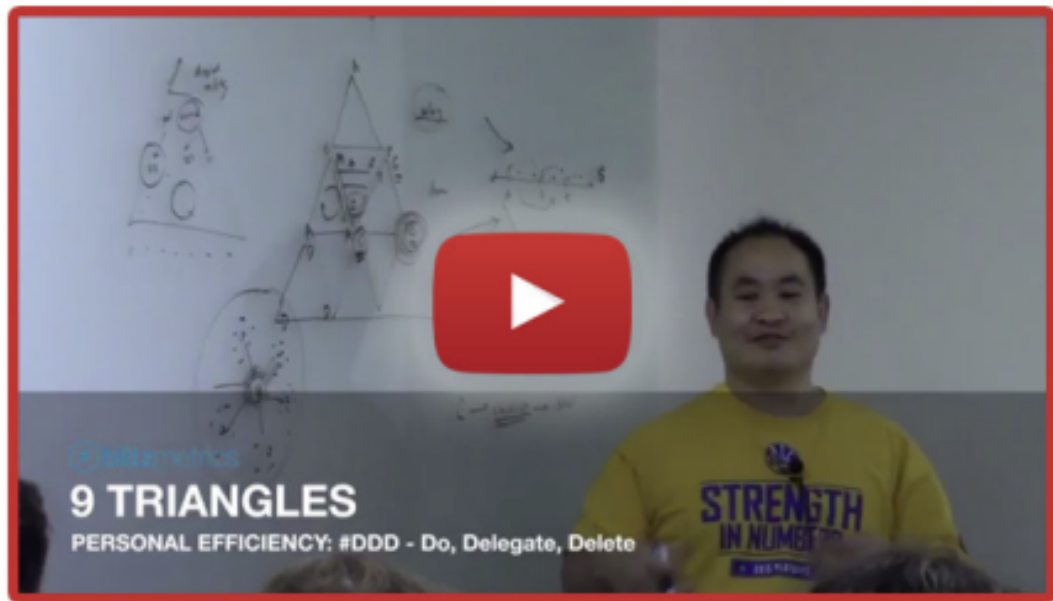
#DDD

This triangle is all about doing the most with the time you have.

You must manage your inbox and task list before you can help others do the same.

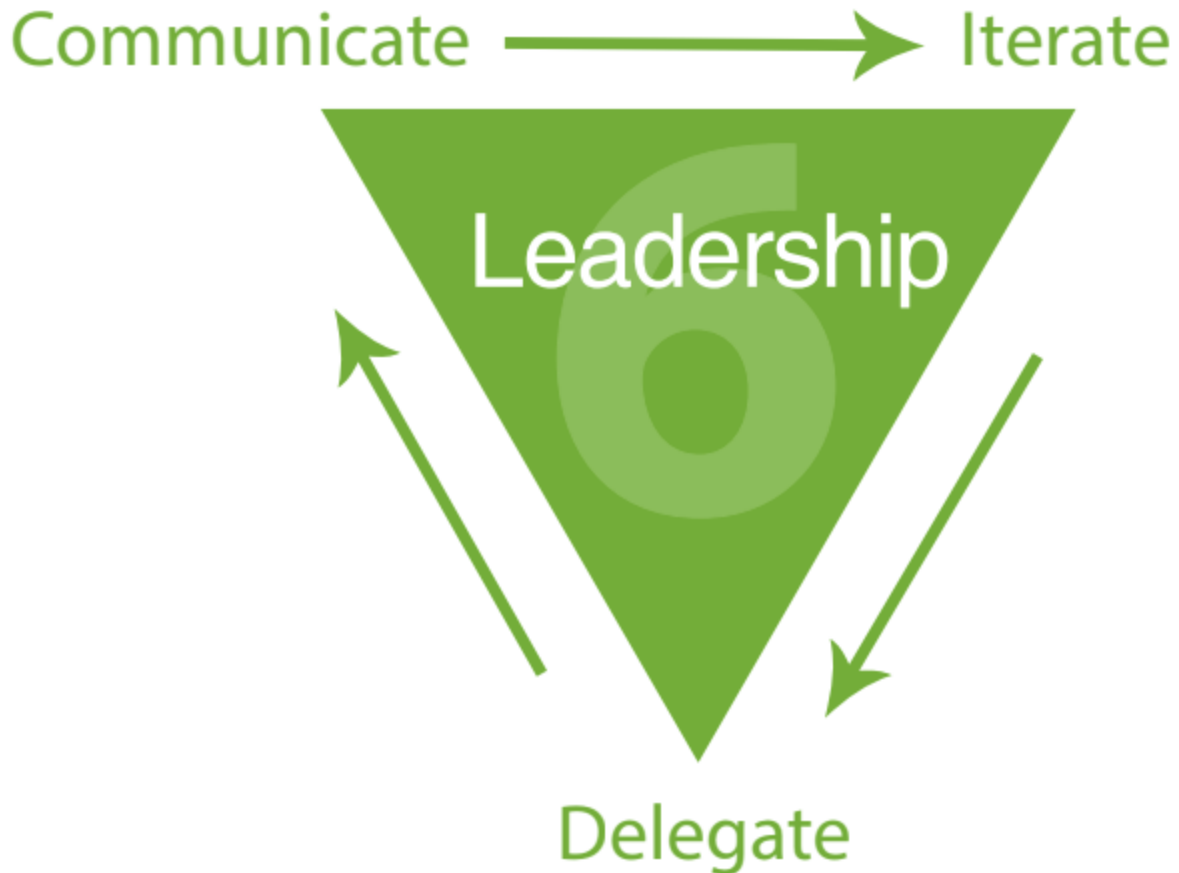
A clear inbox creates breathing room for exploring new ideas, while clutter prevents creativity. Mastering personal efficiency allows you to be proactive instead of reactive— be more powerful. By doing fewer things, you can start to do them better.

Look at David Allen's "[Getting Things Done](#)".



[Video: 9 Triangles - Personal Efficiency and Leadership \(0:58\)](#)

#CID - Communicate, Iterate, Delegate



Leadership

Communicate frequently and reliably, even if just to say you don't know, but will get back to them. Frequent, small touches beat the perfection that never happens.

Iterate via MAA rapidly to allow "many shots on goal" versus procrastination disaster.

Resolve external dependencies first, so delegate before it becomes an emergency for someone else.

#CID

In order to be an effective leader, you need to understand how CID works.

Personal effectiveness comes before organizational effectiveness since you must practice what you preach. The greater your responsibility, the more you must initiate communication across the team. Even if you communicate clearly and in advance, if delegation fails, the leader is at fault.

Thus, you cannot delegate what you haven't clearly defined and know how to do yourself.

By following these steps, you'll begin to recognize the importance of communication, as iteration and delegations are really just subsets of it.



[Video: 9 Triangles - Personal Efficiency and Leadership \(0:58\)](#)

#LDT - Learn, Do, Teach



Career Path

Learning is being able to pass a quiz or be able to discuss a topic. The school system can create false confidence.

Doing is hands-on execution with provable results: working on cars versus talking about cars. Doing implies checklists and certifications, like what you'd expect of mechanics and doctors.

Teaching isn't possible without learning and doing first. Know it forwards and backward to be able to help others.

#LDT

Progressing in a career is all about learning, doing, and teaching.

You can't become the CEO of a company if you haven't first learned the necessary materials, done what you said you were going to do, and have taught it to others by being a role model and an effective manager.

Mastery in your area of expertise attracts more clients (lighthouse approach) and more staff to follow you.

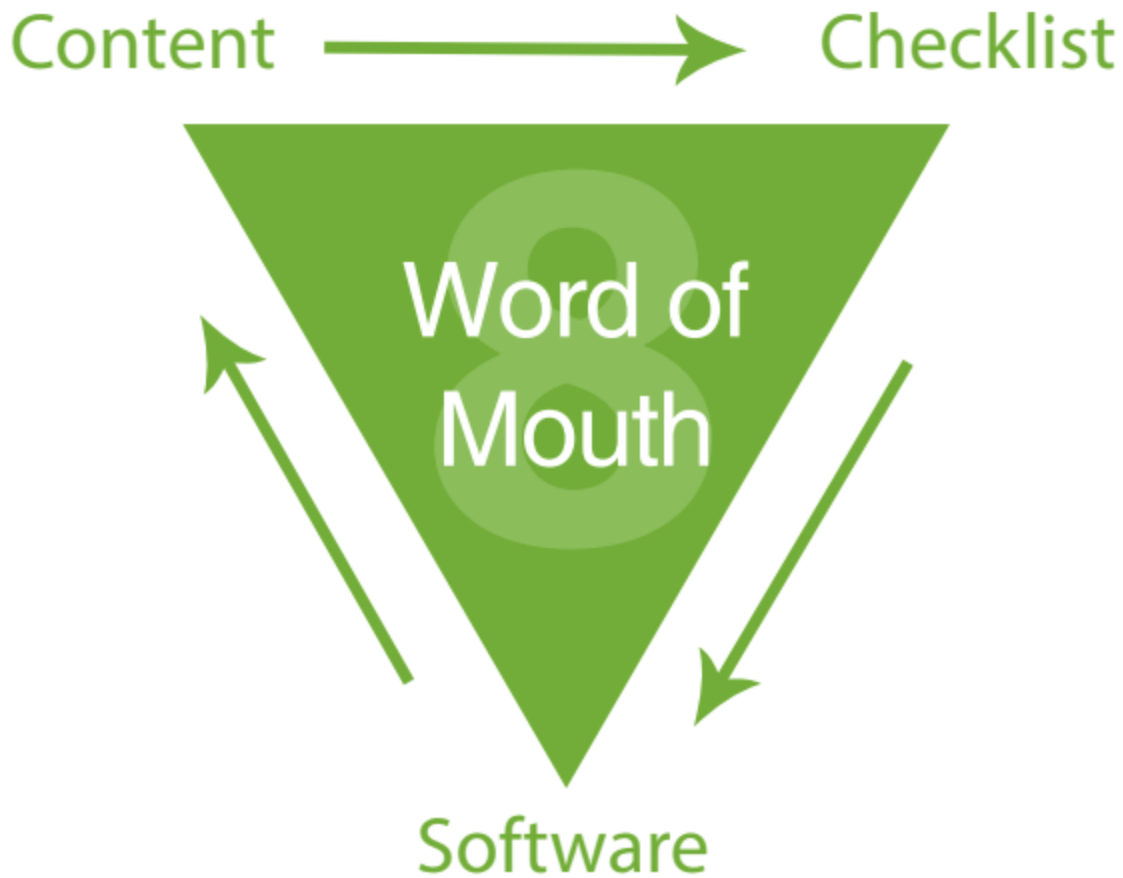
Servant leadership requires you to help others to also advance yourself. Hence, a leveling system enables progression.

Repetitive execution may appear mundane, but actually creates knowledge depth and makes you much faster. What took days now takes minutes!



[Video: Career Path - Lear, Do, Teach \(01:26\)](#)

#CCS - Content, Checklist, Software



Word of Mouth

Content that's powerful is a product of your direct execution. It's unique, plus reinforces your personal branding while elevating your client.

Checklists simplify step-by-step execution, as well as the communication of that execution. More practice helps us refine our checklist processes, via client and Specialist suggestions.

Requests that are most common prioritize software development, which is automation of manual efforts.

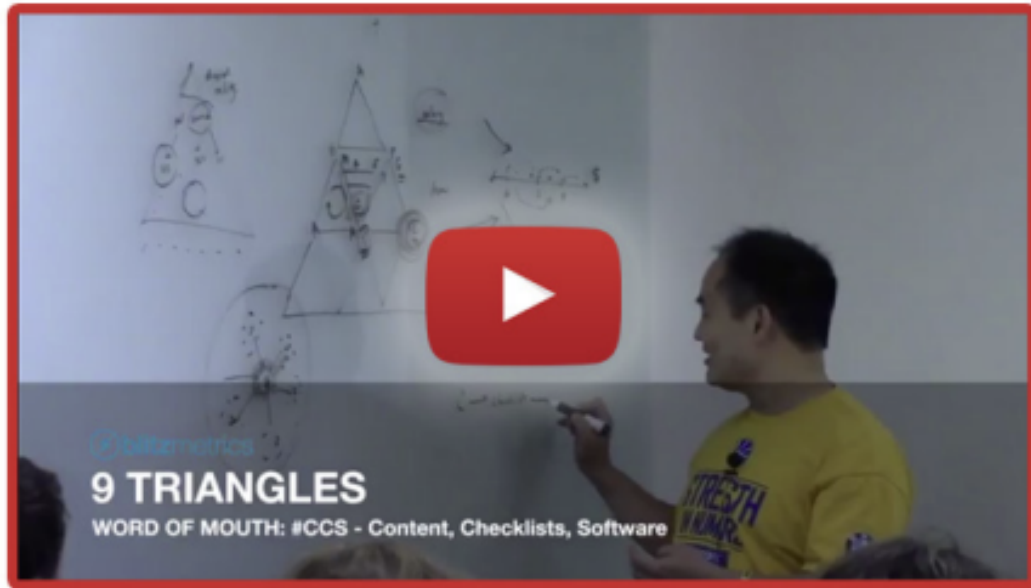
#CCS

Using content, checklists, and software ensure you're maximizing your reach.

Once you have other people creating content for you, whether it be through Yelp reviews, blog posts etc. you gain more authority. People trust what their friends are saying about you more than what you're saying about yourself. But before you automate any of this, you first have to know how it works. That means creating and using these checklists internally as proof of your methods.

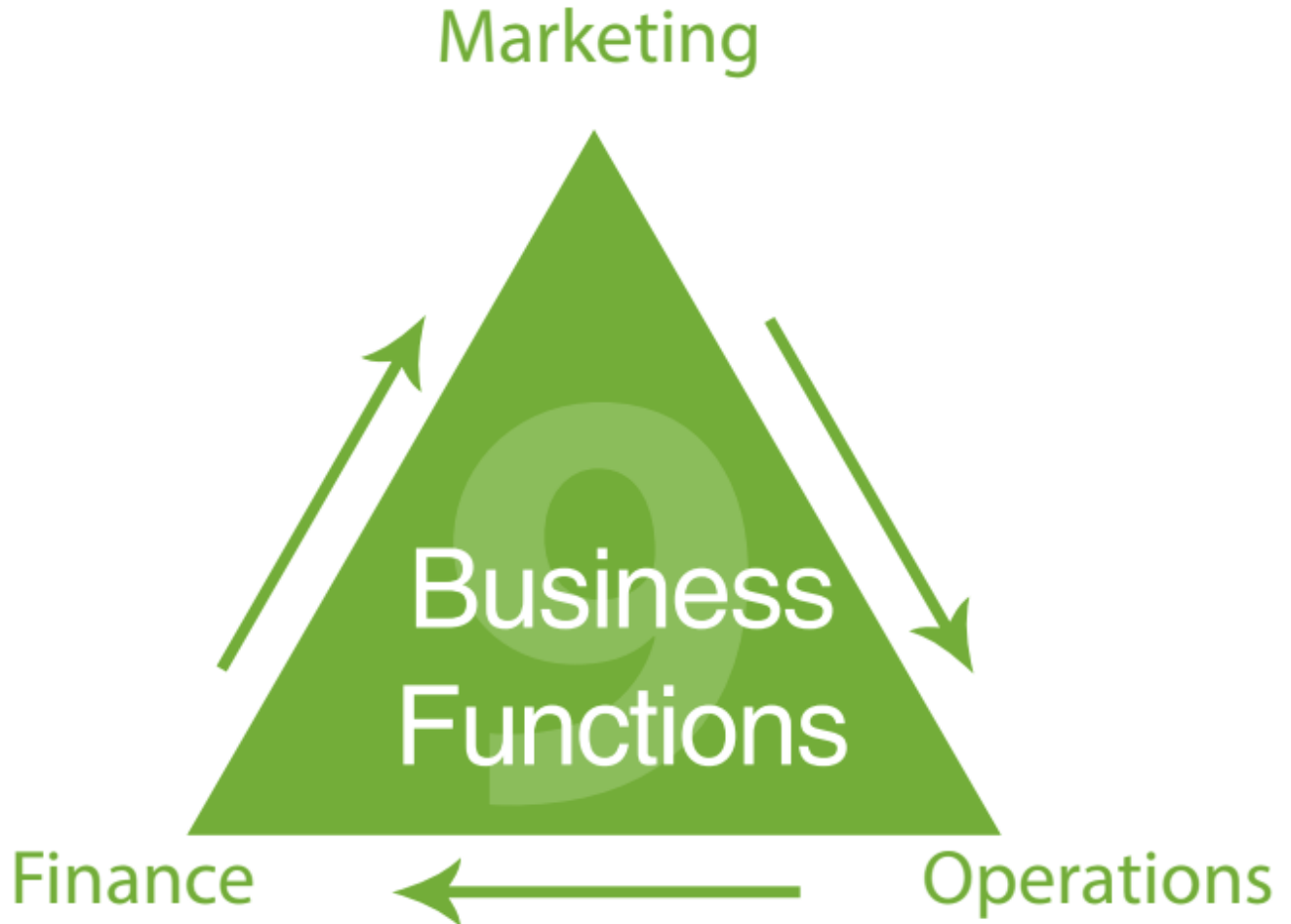
As we verticalize (build up leaders in many areas of passion), we'll adapt the software to fit these areas. Properly viewed, we have no competitors, since the most successful "competitors" will help us produce content. We'll interview them, share it across our footprint of sites, and they'll promote our content. In this ecosystem, everyone is a potential partner, client, or Specialist.

Checklists separated out by difficulty naturally create a leveling system.



[Video: 9 Triangles - Word of Mouth \(03:20\)](#)

#MOF - Marketing, Operations, Finance



Business Functions

Marketing drives sales. Content marketing, not cold-calling, drives sales at low cost, provided you have demonstrated expertise over time.

Operations is the production of your product or service, whether for yourself or the client. Reliable delivery is the french fries at McDonalds.

Finance manages the money in and out, determining where we're profitable vs losing money – by person, project, or product.

#MOF

Every function in any business can be separated into either marketing, finance, or Operations.

All businesses have these 3 core functions.

Anything that's not marketing or finance is operations since it's running the business. Yet marketing is increasingly the most important of these functions– it's unique and cannot be outsourced. You know your company better than any agency ever could.

But without strong marketing, there are no sales. Hence, the need for young adults to help firms not by doing marketing, but by amplifying their marketing efforts (word of mouth).



[Video: 9 Triangles - Business Functions \(0:54\)](#)

Workshop - 9 Triangles



[Video: 9 Triangles \(58:07\)](#)

Principle Pairings

At this point, you may have noticed these triangles all work together and build off of one another.

Let's outline some of the principle pairings found within the 9 Triangles Framework.

LDT – SBP: learn/specialist, do/manager, teach/partner: practice what we preach = vision

While nobody truly stops learning, doing or teaching, we progress through phases where one of these is dominant.

Specialists must first learn as apprentices to become certified-- qualified to begin doing work successfully.

The formal education system paired with on-the-job training transitions specialists from school to self-supporting income in their dream job.

Doing projects in the real world requires coordination, whether project management or people management (hire/fire authority).

Running a project or running an agency means you have to train up others on what you know.

You do that by generating content as a built-in part of your operating process, which reinforces your own understanding.

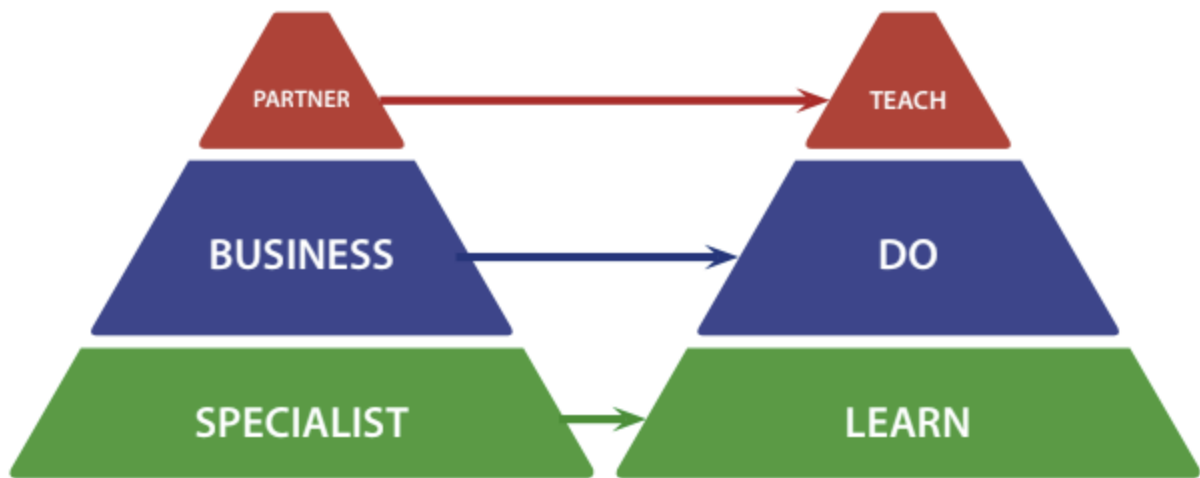
Thus, being a partner and teaching are synonymous.

The success of your clients and specialists speak more loudly than any words you have to say.

You build a career path for yourself by helping others, who then train others on what you taught them.

Schools, conferences, and professional organizations grow by providing clear value for their members.

So the triad of specialist, business, and partner is based on everyone collaborating on training and process.



GCT – MAA: goals/metrics, content/analysis, targeting/action: strategy and optimization alignment = brand

Goals are S.M.A.R.T., reflecting not just financial performance, but mission performance.

Lives changed, smiles created, marathons completed-- how big are these audiences and how many are engaging?

Strong metrics and analysis will pinpoint the optimizations that will drive greatest impact to campaign and business performance.

Strategy is how we go about achieving our goals, which makes it synonymous with business optimization.

Machines will eventually handle all campaign optimization, forcing us to abandon channel specific expertise and to focus on content.

The machines will tell us which audience segments are performing, which courses our content efforts.

But machines (or technology) will never be able to produce our content, though they may help us gather it.

Over time, a business builds up their audience pools, associated content, and complexity in audience/content delivery sequences.

This is the intellectual property that creates long-term, differentiable value, also known as a brand.

CID – CCS: communication/content, iteration/checklist, delegation/software: efficiency and effectiveness = scale

Every communication, no matter how small, is a content opportunity adaptable for sharing.

A “how to” shared with a teammate can be a blog post or any content.

Take an [Enneagram test](#) to discover which of the 9 personality types you are.

DDD – CID: personal and project level coordination= agency operations

Cost, quality, scope: pick 2.

We believe the burning need for competent digital personnel far outstrips the open positions for “social media marketers”.

Businesses large and small want to grow– increase revenue and decrease costs, which happens to intersect with social.



What's Next?

You have gone through the 9 Triangles Course!

Now take the quiz to receive the badge!

[9 Triangles Quiz](#)

Then move on to Personal Branding

