

## Ep #11: Reverse-Engineering Results



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Olivia Vizachero

## Ep #11: Reverse-Engineering Results

You're listening to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast, Episode 11. Today, we're talking all about Reverse-Engineering Results. You ready? Let's go.

Welcome to *The Less Stressed Lawyer*, the only podcast that teaches you how to manage your mind so you can live a life with less stress and far more fulfillment. If you're a lawyer who's over the overwhelm and tired of trying to hustle your way to happiness, you're in the right place. Now, here's your host, lawyer turned life coach, Olivia Vizachero.

How are we doing, my friends? I hope you are so good. I'm great. I am actually getting ready to head to Connecticut, I am speaking at a women's retreat for a law firm from the East Coast. And, I'm really excited to meet a new group of women, get to teach them about all things coaching, how to have less stress, more fulfillment, and it's at a really wonderful spa. So, there's going to be a couple of dinners, a cocktail reception, the all-day training. I'm just really looking forward to it. I'll have to report back and let y'all know how it goes.

Setting that aside, let's dive in to today's topic. In the last episode, I taught you all about the model and how to use it to gain awareness as to what you're thinking about a particular circumstance.

How your thoughts that you're thinking about that circumstance are causing you to feel, how you're showing up or not showing up because of how you're feeling. And, how and why you're creating the results you currently have based on the actions that you're taking. Whether those actions be good or bad, or based on your inaction. I taught you all about how to use the model to gain awareness.

Now today, we're going to use the model in a different way. We're going to work it backwards from the results line, we call it the R-line, up. So, you can learn how to create any result you want to create in your life. That's how we reverse engineer results.

I want you to think of a goal that you have. What's the result that you want to create right now? I want you to be really specific with this. It can be

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tempting to say that you want more clients, or you want to make more money, or you want more free time, or to have more balance. But those results aren't that easy to measure. I talked about that in the episode where I went into defining enough.

I want you to be specific with the goal that you start to think of. If you're thinking of a result that includes any of those words “more or less or enough,” you just want to be more specific than that. Because what constitutes more for one person may not be the same as what you mean by more. So, we just want to be a little bit more clear.

Now from there, once you've identified the result you want to create, you're going to work your way up the model. You're going to put that result in the R-line. And remember, think of five separate lines. The model consists of five interrelated components, circumstances, thoughts, feelings, actions, and results.

Okay, circumstances are neutral, as a refresher. The thoughts that our brain serves up to us about neutral circumstances aren't neutral, they're positive or negative. And, our thoughts cause our feelings. Our feelings are just one-word emotions that we experience in our bodies. Our feelings drive and determine the action that we take or don't take. And then, our action or inaction, produces our results.

So, think of it like each letter on a line: C-T-F-A-R. We're going to start at the very bottom with the R-line. Fill in that R-line with the result that you want to create in your life. Then, we're going to move up to the action line of the model.

Now, depending on what result you want to create, your action line may be really simple. Or, you may need to turn it into a really big paragraph, it'll just depend. If the result you want to create is a little bit more simplistic, your action line might be a little bit simplistic. If it is a more involved result that you're going to work towards creating, there may be a lot of things that go into that. And, it's just going to turn out to be a larger action line with a lot of

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different steps that you're going to need to take and follow in order to make that result inevitable.

That's the question you're going to want to ask yourself next. Ask yourself, "What are all of the actions I need to take to make this result inevitable?" List them all out, be as specific as possible. You really want to use this to create a results roadmap for yourself. So, there's no action too small, be very specific here.

And, you can also ask yourself, "What do I need to *not* do, to make sure I achieved this result." I'm going to use this example a little bit later in this episode, but if you were trying to create the result of making the most efficient use of your time, one of the things you might need to *not* do: Perhaps you need to not check social media throughout the day, or you need to not go chat with coworkers when you should be working on something, right?

So, you are going to want to list the things that you also don't want to do. If you were trying to lose weight, you might need to list: Don't drink soda, or you might include a specific action item, where you say, "I'm not going to buy sweets at the grocery store, so I don't have them available to me in the house, to make achieving my goals easier." Again, ask all the things that you need to do, write those down. Anything that you need to *not* do, include that in your action line.

I also love asking the question here; what are any obstacles that you predict might come up for you as you start to take these actions? If you identify any obstacles, also come up with a strategy to overcome each one of those obstacles, and add it to your action line as well.

Now, identifying the actions you need to take, and taking those actions is a huge part of the battle here. All right? But you also want to make sure you're cultivating the right mindset, because taking action while thinking a bunch of negative thoughts, and feeling a bunch of negative feelings, isn't going to net you your desired results. Your mindset really matters here. You want to make sure you're taking belief-fueled action.

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Because thoughts, which are the same thing as beliefs... Beliefs are just thoughts that you've practiced believing over, and over, and over again. Those thoughts, your beliefs, create your results. So, you want to make sure you're taking belief-fueled action, that you're cultivating the mindset that will help you achieve the results that you want to achieve.

Keep working backwards, up the model, in order to cultivate the right mindset that you want to have. Start by asking yourself... Once you've identified all of the actions that you need to take, in your A-line... Once you've done that, ask yourself, "What feeling do I need to feel in order to take that action?" In order to follow through, commit, show up, do the things that you listed out in the A-line of your model?

Remember, this emotion is going to be a positive emotion. Because positive feelings, drive positive action, and produce positive results. Okay? So, you want to identify the positive feeling, you would need to feel, in order to take all of the action that you identified.

Then, you want to ask yourself, "What thought do I need to think about accomplishing this goal, in order to feel that feeling? So, the circumstance here is going to be the same thing that's in your R-line. It's going to be the goal that you're setting out to accomplish. What do you need to think about that goal, in order to feel the positive emotion, you've just identified?

Alright, so that's the process of reverse engineering your results. You start with the R-line, figure out what result you want to create, identify all the actions that you would need to take, or potentially not take, in order to make that result inevitable. Ask yourself what's the feeling you need to feel in order to take that action? And, what thoughts do you need to be thinking in order to feel those feelings?

Again, like I said last episode, one thought and one feeling per model. But you can have a bunch of different models that support you achieving this result.

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Now, per usual, we're going to go through some examples, because I really want to solidify how this works in your head. And, the best way to do that is for us to work through examples, so you can see how it works.

But before we do that, I want to explain why I'm so obsessed with the simplicity of this process. It's because it always works. You can pick absolutely any result that you want to create in your life and put it in the R-line of the model, and work this process backwards to figure out what you need to do to reverse engineer your desired results.

And, I can't begin to tell you how cool I think that is. Truly anything becomes possible for you, when you follow this process. I also love it because of the clarity that completing this process provides. It's really mind blowing.

So many people have what can be referred to as “how greed,” or I like to say, they're hungry for the “how.” They want someone else to tell them what they need to do, in order to create the results that they want to have in their lives.

And, if that's you, if you tend to slip into how greed, or you're hungry for someone else to tell you the how, I just really want to assure you, you don't need someone else to give you the how. You can tap into your own resourcefulness, and you can figure out how you can create the results you want, by paving your results roadmap, by working this process backwards, by reverse engineering your desired results. You can decide on the result that you want to create and then work this process backwards from R-line on up.

And, if you get stumped, or you don't know how to do something that you think needs to be in your action line, in order to make that result inevitable, you just add “figuring it out” to the list of actions that you would need to take. So, maybe you need to seek guidance from someone else, an expert in a particular area. Maybe you need to do some research. Maybe there are some things you need to learn.

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Let's just use the example of creating a website. Let's say you were starting your own law firm, and you didn't want to spend the money to hire someone else to do it for you, because you're trying to conserve as much of your financial resources as you can when you're getting started.

I totally get that. I've done the same thing. I've started a couple different businesses throughout the course of my life. I taught myself how to design my own websites, because I didn't have the capital to make that investment, and hiring a contractor to do that for me.

I needed to learn about the different templates that you can use, the different platforms: WordPress, Squarespace, things like that; I chose to go with WordPress. Then, I had to learn the different templates that you can use, and the different software that you can download, in order to make it a little bit easier. Those were things that I would list on my A-line, in order to create the result of designing my own website.

So, if there are things that you're confused about, you just want to put that and include it in the action that you would need to take. And again, tap into your own resourcefulness. Trust yourself that you're capable of figuring this out, I promise you, you are.

Now let's go through some examples. I want to start with an example you're already intimately familiar with, because you've likely already done this process yourself. Let's take the desired result of becoming an attorney. If you wanted to go about creating that result, start by putting that in the R-line of the model, and then working backwards.

Again, ask yourself, what are all of the things that you would need to do in order to make that result inevitable? Now think about it, you've already done this yourself, right? First, you would have to go to college, undergrad. Then, you would have to take the LSAT. Maybe you want to get a certain score. So, you're going to take a prep course before you would take the LSAT. You add that to the action line.

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Then, you get your results back. You decide, “Do I want to take it again? Or am I happy with the score?” Based on that, you start applying to law schools. Maybe you cultivate a list of places you want to go, your easy options that you know are shoo-ins, that you'll get into, some middle of the road options, and then a couple of long shots; that's what I did.

You submit your applications. You fill out all the paperwork, do all that good stuff, and you wait. Then, you get responses from the schools. You ultimately will have to select one to attend. Then, you start your 1L year. You go all the way through. Maybe you enter in the summer of your 1L year, or you work for a court, do something like that, try and get experience so you can start to figure out what kind of law you want to practice.

Then, you complete your 2L year. Maybe you do on-campus interviews at that point, if you want to work for a firm; just depends on what you want your experience to be like. You'd be adding all of these things to the A-line of your model. Maybe you decide you want to get involved in moot court or Law Review, add that to the list. You'd complete a summer associate position, if you chose to do that. Maybe you do. Maybe you don't. It's optional. But again, you get to list anything that you want to do to make your result inevitable.

At a certain point, you're going to have to fill out your application for the bar exam. Everyone remembers that. It's not a fun process; I hated it. But you go through that process, too. That goes on the list, add that to the A-line. Then you have to study for the bar exam. Then you have to take the bar exam. Then you wait, and then you find out whether you get your results or not. And then, eventually, once you pass, you have to be sworn in. And that is how you become a practicing attorney.

At some point along the way, you would also need to get a job, in order to be practicing, and you'd have to apply for jobs. Add that to the action line. These are all the little things that you would need to do in order to make the result of becoming a practicing attorney, inevitable. So, you'd list those all out.

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Now, we want to make sure we have the right mindset as we go about taking all that action. So, how would you need to feel in order to do all of those things? Maybe the feeling you would need to feel is committed. Now work one line more up the model.

What would you need to think, about becoming a practicing attorney, in order to feel committed? Maybe it's just a thought as simple as, "This is what I'm going to do. I'm doing this. I can do this." If I were thinking, "I can do this," I would probably feel capable, a little bit different than committed. But, "I am doing this, no matter what," would make me feel committed.

That was a thought, pretty similar to that, when I took the bar exam. I thought the thought, "I'm only taking this once." And, I felt really determined. And, then I took the action of studying for the bar. I took an extra essay course with JD advising. I didn't go out for several months while I studied. I took a couple of months off of work, so I had the time set aside. Those were all the actions that I took, in order to accomplish the result of only taking the bar exam once and passing.

So those are two examples, I guess, I just gave you that you probably have already gone through yourself, if you're listening to this and you're practicing law, so you can start to see how this works as we work from the R-line backwards.

All right, let's go through a couple more examples, now. Let's start with creating the result of managing your time effectively. Okay, so we're going to put that in the R-line of the model. Now let's work backwards: What are all of the things that you would need to do, in order to create that result?

Well, first, you would need to make decisions about when you work and when you don't. Do you work nights? Do you work weekends? What time do you start? What time do you end? You want to be really clear about that, have some boundaries or parameters about when you work and when you don't.

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You're going to want to define what enough work is. Do you have an hours' goal that you're trying to meet? You want to define productive, efficient, and responsive enough. Again, I talked about that, in the episode where I discussed Defining Enough.

Now once you've done that, you kind of have a framework for how you want to spend your time. You have to get into the specifics. So, you're going to control, or for some of you, you're going to have to reclaim control of your calendar. If people are able to schedule for you, you're not going to be able to manage your time effectively. If people have that ability, you're going to want to cut that out.

I have a client, she calls those people "creepy crawlers;" that get into her calendar and really mess up her plan for the day, or her ability to control her time. So, you're going to want to eliminate that so that you're in control, that no one else is in control. You can do this by blocking time on your calendar where you're just unavailable and people can't schedule you. There's different ways to accomplish that.

Okay, now you're going to control your calendar. That might involve, like I said, not taking unscheduled phone calls or not interrupting yourself throughout the day with your inbox. Then from there, you want to plan your schedule accurately.

Most of us do a pretty horrific job of planning our schedule accurately. We normally, significantly, underestimate how long things will take us to complete. So, you want to make sure you're not doing that. At least, double the amount of time that you think it'll take you, in the beginning, until you get good at accurately estimating how long it will take you to complete a task. Plan your schedule accurately.

And then the fun part, honor the plan. Now in order to honor the plan, you've got to start your work on time. You need to work without interruptions, and you need to end on time. Don't engage or indulge in perfectionism, and overwork something to death. You will take as long as you give yourself, so set the amount of time that you need to complete a

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project and then end on time. Wrap it up; doesn't need to be perfect. It just needs to be done.

You also want to make sure you evaluate each week. So many of my clients plan, and then it doesn't go according to their plan. Something urgent comes up, they reshuffle their schedule, they take things that are unscheduled. They reprioritize, maybe, something that's not as important but it felt a little bit more urgent. So, you want to evaluate each week what worked, what didn't work, what would you do differently? And then plan for the week ahead, keeping in mind what would you do differently, and make changes as necessary.

All right, that's a lot. That's a big A-line, right? Lots of different actions that you're going to want to take in order to create the result of managing your time. But those are all the things that you're going to want to list out, and then work through, one by one, in order to make that result inevitable.

Now, let's talk about cultivating the mindset you need, to follow through with those actions. How might you need to feel, in order to take all of that action, to follow through? You might need to feel in control. I think there are a lot of different emotions that come up here; capable, committed, competent, determined, motivated, focused, anything like that. But I really love "in control" here.

What would you need to think about time, or managing your time, in order to feel in control? You'd probably need to think a thought, along the lines of, "I'm in control of how I spend my time." Right? So many of my clients think they're not in control of how they spend their time. And, when they think they're not in control of how they spend their time, they don't control their time well. That's the result that they create, because again, our thoughts create our results.

So, if you want to control your time and manage it well, you need to think that you are in control of your time, which you are. You're always making a choice of how you choose to spend your time, whether it feels like it or not,

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I assure you, you are always making a choice, you just want to start to gather evidence for how that's true.

All right, let's use another example. I work with a lot of my clients on developing books of business, whether they're in a small firm, they're in a solo practice, or they're in a big loss setting. We work on creating the result of developing a book of business. What are all of the actions that you would need to take in order to make that result inevitable?

First thing you need to do, you need to get really clear on the services that you offer your clients. Do you have a niche? Do you operate a general practice? What problems do you help people solve? How do you charge? What billing structure do you use? You want to get really clear on what your offer is.

Once you're clear on your offer, who you help, what problems you help them solve, it's going to inform all of the other actions you take in going about developing a book of business. You're going to need to meet people. You get to decide, are you going to meet them online or are you going to meet them in person? And if so, in either way, where are you going to meet them? You want to be very specific about that.

Then, you're going to go out and meet those people in those places, figuring out: Who are great referral partners for you? Who are the direct clients that might hire you? You want to be very specific in figuring all of that out. And then, you're going to go out, and take action, and meet those people. You're going to tell people what you do, very clearly and concisely, so it's simple, and they understand exactly what problems you help people solve.

From there, you're going to add value ahead of time, by teaching people things about the area of law that you practice. Adding value in a way that positions yourself as an expert. They know you know what you're talking about. They learn something from a conversation with you or the content that you put out into the world, whether that's through social media posts, emails that you send out. Maybe you do public speaking, you host

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webinars, anything like that. There are tons of different ways to add value to your audience.

It can even be as simple as engaging with other people's content on social media. I always tell my clients that, "That's a really valuable thing." And most people are on social media for engagement. So, you can add value by just engaging with their content, and they'll probably reciprocate.

So, you want to add value ahead of time to position yourself as an expert, and build your "know, like, trust" factor. People need to know, like and trust you, in order to do business with you. By giving away free value, ahead of time, teaching them things through your content or conversations with them, you're able to build that "know, like, trust" factor.

If you're on social media, you're also going to want to post consistently, all right? And, here's something that I see my clients not doing all that often, that you want to make sure you're doing, in order to develop a book of business. You want to make offers to help people when it makes sense.

So, let's say you're a trust in the state's attorney, and you're having a conversation with someone and they're like, "Oh, man, I've been meaning to have a will drawn up." Or, "I need to have a trust created for my children so my assets transfer."

If they're saying that to you, it makes sense for you to say, "Hey, if you're really serious in achieving that result, here's how you can move forward working with me. Here's how you can reach out. You can get a hold of me here. Here's my email. Here's my phone number," whatever. Make an offer that just says, "Hey, if you're interested, I can help you with that."

Or, "If you're struggling with this problem..." Say you do criminal defense work, "Hey, if you just got arrested for drunk driving, I help with that. Here's my number, set up a consultation." What are a couple more actions you need to take? You're going to have to conduct those consultations with potential clients. That's how you sign clients.

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And, what are a few things that you're going to need to *not* do in order to develop a book of business? You're going to need to not hide; can't avoid meeting people; telling them what you do; adding value ahead of time; or, making offers. So don't withdraw, don't hide in your cave, don't avoid social media. You're going to have to put yourself out there and feel some of the discomfort that comes with doing that in the beginning.

Now, let's cultivate the mindset that's going to drive you to take all that action. What feeling are you going to have to feel, in order to take all of that action? One of the feelings that I like to cultivate, in order to take action to build my business, is feeling compelled. It's a really powerful feeling for me.

So then, let's ask ourselves, what's the thought you need to think in order to feel compelled? The thought I need to think about developing business, in order to feel compelled, is the thought, "There are people, out there, who need the services I offer." Whenever I think that thought, I absolutely feel compelled. And then, I take all of the action, that I just listed for you, and it makes the result of building a book of business inevitable.

Let's use a simple example of taking a vacation. That's a little bit more straightforward. So, you put taking a vacation in the R-line of your model, right? What do you need to do in order to take a vacation? Well, maybe you need to research locations, lodging, flights, look all of that up. Put that in your A-line.

Then from there, you eventually need to book the trip, and schedule the time off. Maybe, you need to delegate your work, communicate to team members or clients that you're going to be out of the office, so people know to expect your absence; probably want to put up an out-of-office message.

And then, what are some things that you're going to *not* want to do? Going to have to *not* work on vacation, in order to actually take a vacation while you're away from the office.

I always tell my clients to plan time for when they come back, to catch up on what they missed while they were out. Some people just hit the ground

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running and don't give themselves a buffer of a few days to acclimate to being back in the office. So, it feels like a fire drill when they get back into town, right? You don't want to do that. Make sure that you plan accordingly, to give yourself a little breathing room upon your return.

Now, what's the feeling you need to feel, in order to take those actions, to create the result of taking a vacation, where you actually take a vacation? You might need to feel deserving. What would you need to think about the circumstance, taking a vacation, in order to feel deserving? Probably a thought as simple as, "I deserve to take time to recuperate." Or, "I work really hard. I deserve a break." That would make you feel deserving. And then, you'd follow through take, that action, and create that result.

All right, last example. Let's say you wanted to lose a couple pounds. I've had a lot of people tell me that they gained a little bit of weight during COVID. We have been living a little bit more of a sedentary lifestyle than a lot of us are used to. So, if that's the result that you want to create for yourself, let's work backwards.

What are all of the actions that you would need to take, in order to make that result inevitable? So, you're going to define the amount that you want to lose, let's just call it ten pounds, and figure out what you would need to do in order to create the result.

Maybe you need to eat specific meals, that puts you at a calorie deficit, nothing too extreme, but eat less than what you burn; that support your health and weight loss goals. You probably also want to drink a ton of water, and get a certain amount of sleep, to support a healthy lifestyle. Perhaps you want to exercise or hit a specific step goal for the day.

Flesh that all out; be as specific as possible. You might want to decide how often you're going to work out, if you're going to work out as part of this initiative. What days? What times? How long? Where? Making a lot of decisions ahead of time in order to simplify this process for you, so you have a simpler plan to follow, in order to make your results inevitable.

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Now, there might be some things you want to *not* do. Right? Maybe, if you're watching Netflix, you don't sit on the couch while you watch Netflix. Maybe you walk on the treadmill while you do that. Or, you don't drink soda, or Doritos™, or Oreos™, anything like that, some of the “junk” foods that may not support your goal of losing 10 pounds.

Now, what's the feeling you need to feel, in order to follow those actions, to follow through with that? Probably a feeling like committed, or determined, something like that. What would you need to think in order to feel committed or determined? You'd probably need to think the thought, “I'm doing this, no matter what,” about the circumstance of losing 10 pounds. And then, you'll feel committed; then, you'll follow through with that action; and then, you'll create that result.

All right, that is the process of reverse engineering results. You can put anything that you want to in the R-line of the model, and just work it backwards. Identify all the action you need to take, any actions you need to avoid. List that all out. Figure out the positive emotion you need to feel, in order to take that action, and the positive thought you need to think about your goal, in order to feel that feeling. And then, follow through with the action, start taking it one at a time, step by step.

Ultimately, it will make your desired result inevitable; you will accomplish it. And, if you reach a stumbling block, like I always tell you, just evaluate what worked, what didn't work. What would you do differently? Answer those questions from curiosity, not from judgment. Then, take action; audit and adapt, right? Once you evaluate, that's an audit, adapt your plan and then take more action; act-audit-and-adapt over, and over, and over again.

That's how you get to where you want to go. Figure out what your results are, and reach out to me. I'd love to hear how you've reverse engineered your desired results, and how you use this process to make the goals that you want to achieve inevitable.

All right. I will talk to you in the next episode. Have a beautiful week.

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Thanks for listening to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast. If you want more info about Olivia Vizachero or the show's notes and resources from today's episode, visit [www.TheLessStressedLawyer.com](http://www.TheLessStressedLawyer.com).