

RUN YOUR CONTRACTING BUSINESS WITH  
LESS STRESS AND MORE SUCCESS<sup>SM</sup>

THE **7-POWER**  
**CONTRACTOR**<sup>SM</sup>



**A L L E V I**

# The 7-Power Contractor<sup>SM</sup>

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MORE SUCCESS<sup>SM</sup>

AL LEVI

Appleseed Business, Inc.

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Al Levi / Appleseed Business, Inc.

10632 N. Scottsdale Road, B-563

Scottsdale, AZ 85254

[www.appleseedbusiness.com](http://www.appleseedbusiness.com)

[info@appleseedbusiness.com](mailto:info@appleseedbusiness.com)

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# Building a Dream, Not a Frankenstein

IS THERE A SHORTAGE of information out there on how to be successful in the contracting business? Nope!

There are plenty of great books, great trade associations, great online forum websites with active chat rooms, and a load of very talented industry consultants.

The problem is: How do you decide what information to listen to and how to make all the different information work together to get where you want to go?

These two issues come up again and again on the initial consulting calls I offer in my training and consulting business. These free 30-minute calls are a way for me to give back and honor all of the great mentors that have come into my life, not only for what they did for my business but also for helping me get my life headed in a better direction. If not for my mentors, I'd still be in a dark basement turning wrenches late into the evening!

That's right. Before I was a consultant, I was a contractor, just like you.

Visiting with you and others like you around the country, in big cities and little towns, and across a bunch of different trades, helps me keep my finger on the pulse of the contracting world and, in the process, spot new trends—good and bad.

## INFORMATION OVERLOAD

One frightening trend I see is toward “contractor information overload,” the result of the continuous consumption of business advice and information from too many different sources.

Let’s face it. The Internet is one powerful tool for knowledge. But how do you know if you’re talking to an expert or a knucklehead? (You don’t!)

Even if you’ve been wise enough to get one-to-one consulting or join an industry education group or association, contractor overload is just a few taps away.

The problem is once you have that information, what do you do with it all? You’re left wondering: Which thing gets done first? How do you get it in place at your company and keep it in place? Can you pull pieces of information from multiple places and make them all work together?

And then there’s the question of what to do with that really good information that is downright contrary to other (supposedly) good information! One thing’s for sure: everybody’s got an opinion. Whether or not those opinions are truly useful is another story altogether.

## BUILD A DREAM, NOT A FRANKENSTEIN

The negative effect of contractor overload became screamingly obvious to me after speaking with a contractor who said he was working with four different consultants and had been gathering advice from other consultants and industry groups for the past 10 years! He also wanted me to know that he was actively participating in an educational trade association.

My question to him was: “How is this approach working for you?”

He said, “We’re speaking because it isn’t working well at all and I know I’m still missing a lot of critical pieces, but I don’t know where to go next.”

I explained, “All the information and programs you now have



don't necessarily go with one another because they were created apart from one another. You're busy building a 'Frankenstein!'"

Think of it this way: Would you put a Hemi engine in a Mini Cooper and expect it to perform properly? Assuming you could wedge all 426 cubic inches in there you'd be lucky to go 500 feet before the car shook apart, and if you did manage to get it going, you'd go deaf driving down the highway. The point is while they're both impressive individually in their own ways, combining them won't get you where you want to go because they are not designed to work together.

For example, we have specific scripts for customer service representatives and dispatchers that are not only in their procedure manuals but also integrated with the technician and other procedure manuals. *So everything works together.*

The key to overcoming contractor information overload is to find ways to filter effectively. But it's not always easy to discern the helpful information from the not helpful. This is actually a big problem because to build a dream instead of a Frankenstein, you'll need to make sure that whatever pieces you're pulling together will fit together perfectly. In other words, you need a *system*.

In fact, I'm betting one reason you are here is because you're hoping to find a total system for success that can be adapted to meet your needs *and* live up to your expectations.

Well, this book is designed to help you do just that.

## THE 7-POWER CONTRACTOR: DEFINITION

A 7-Power Contractor is similar to being a five-tool player in baseball, an athlete who excels at hitting for average, hitting for power, base-running skills and speed, throwing ability, and fielding ability.

A 7-Power Contractor is a leader who is in command of the seven major areas that require their attention as an owner—leadership and planning, operations, finance, selling, marketing,

staffing, and sales coaching.

The good news is becoming a 7-Power Contractor is not nearly as hard as becoming a five-tool baseball player. All that is required is a desire to succeed, a commitment to getting organized, and a willingness to follow the program.

## WRITTEN BY CONTRACTORS, FOR CONTRACTORS

The contents of this book come directly from people who know what is required to succeed not only because we have achieved success ourselves, but also because we've helped thousands of other contractors run their businesses with more success and less stress. I was raised in my family's plumbing, heating, and cooling business and it was my desire to leave the business—*without* leaving my two brothers and my dad in the lurch—that drove me to figure all of this out, and focus full time on teaching others what I had learned, the basics of which are outlined in this book.

Over the past 20 years, I've taught these concepts to contractors in a dozen or more industries—plumbing, heating, cooling, electrical, cabinetry, handyman, condominium building, roofing, home insulation, and even photography—so I know that if you work at them, they will work for you, too.

That said, to make it easier to trust the information you're getting here, I thought it might help to hear it from someone else who is like you, has tried it before, and has had success.

That's why I've invited a few of my clients to share their stories—the good, the bad, and the formerly ugly. All agreed to participate because they want you to know you can trust what you will learn here has value, and it can work for you, too.

Together we'll show you the path to building the dream company you've always imagined. We're happy you're here.

Let's begin. (No more Frankenstein.)

# About the Author



**Al Levi** is a business consultant, teacher, author, *and* a former contractor who worked for 25 years in every aspect of his family's Long Island-based HVAC/plumbing business. The systems Al put in place enabled him to sell his share of the business to his brothers and retire before he was 50.

Al now helps other contractors learn to run their businesses with less stress and more success through consultations, workshops, webinars, and his long-running column in *Plumbing & Mechanical* magazine. An avid golfer who also does yoga and tai chi, Al resides in Scottsdale, Arizona, with his wife, Natalie.

For more information about Al's programs, send an email to [info@appleseedbusiness.com](mailto:info@appleseedbusiness.com) or visit [www.appleseedbusiness.com](http://www.appleseedbusiness.com).

*The 7-Power Contractor* book is slated for release on April 5, 2016 but [you can preorder it on Amazon now](#).