



Beyond the Shoe Box

The 4 Levels of an Accounting System

Your books aren't a tax chore — they're the proof a buyer uses to price your business.



Most closet and woodworking owners think accounting is just something the bookkeeper uses to pay taxes — a checkbook with a screen. But when a buyer evaluates your business, they aren't looking at your tax return; they're looking for financial proof that your business is a real, predictable, scalable asset. Here's the accounting maturity ladder — and how each level moves your exit value.

— **Tim Coleman, Founder, Coleman Collaborations Consulting Group**

THE ACCOUNTING MATURITY LADDER

How each level moves your exit multiple

1 Level 1 · The Shoe Box Receipts in a folder Statements never reconciled, profit is whatever's left in checking. Buyers assume the numbers are wrong. Exit value: unsalable.	2 Level 2 · The Checkbook A business with basic books QuickBooks or others, reconciled monthly, a real P&L and balance sheet. Historical only — the bare minimum to talk to a buyer. Exit value: .25x.
3 Level 3 · Management Dashboard You know why you profit Job-costing, gross margin per project and salesperson, budget vs. actuals. A business that can be managed, not just owned. Exit value: .50x.	4 Level 4 · Financial Engine A financial operating system Integrated CRM and accounting, real-time inventory, a 13-week cash forecast, audit-ready. Confidence in future earnings. Exit value: 1x+.
5 Not a Tax Tool Your #1 piece of proof Your accounting system is the single biggest piece of evidence a buyer uses to decide whether you're worth 2x or 5x+.	6 CRM + Accounting Together Two ladders, one story CRM shows how you sell; accounting shows how you make money. Both at Level 3+ earns the highest multiples.

THE LADDER · IT'S SIMPLE MATH

• **Better Books = Higher Multiple**

• **Level Up Your Ladder**

• **Confidence Earns a Premium**

OPTION 1 · \$250

Books Assessment

A one-hour working session to grade your accounting system on the 4-level ladder and see exactly what's capping your multiple.

OPTION 2 · \$750

3 Step Books Upgrade

Three one-hour classes to move your books up the ladder — from clean financials to job-costing to a full financial engine — before you sell.



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Ready to prove your numbers?

Start with the Books Assessment, or commit to the 3-Class Upgrade. Book your session at colemancollaborations.com.