TRANSFORMATION PLAYBOOK · 24 PAGES

After the First Check.

The honest playbook for what to do with your first $10K assignment fee — taxes, LLC, banking, reinvestment, first hire, and the 90-day plan for turning one deal into a sustainable business.

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A PERSONAL NOTE

Congratulations. Now don't waste it.

You just cashed your first assignment fee. Whatever the number was — $3,000, $10,000, $25,000 — that check is the receipt for months of cold calls, rejected offers, and moments you almost quit. It's the proof that this business is real.

Here's what almost nobody tells you: **the first check is where 60% of new wholesalers actually fail**. Not before it. After it. They spend it, forget about taxes, celebrate too hard, take three months off the phones, and by the time they come back the pipeline is cold and they can't remember what worked.

This ebook is the 24-page antidote — 11 chapters covering every decision you're about to make with that money. Taxes. LLC. Reinvestment. Debt. First hire. The 90-day plan for turning ONE deal into a real business.

Read it once. Then make one decision from each chapter this week. Momentum after the first deal is worth more than the check itself.

— Tracy

WHAT'S INSIDE

11 chapters. 24 pages. Every decision after the first check.

CHAPTER 01

The first 24 hours after your first check

Before we get to taxes and LLCs, we start with the moment itself. The check hits your account. Now what?

Do this within 24 hours

1. Do NOT go on a spending spree. Not a car, not a watch, not even a nice dinner over $200. Buy your spouse flowers. Buy yourself a meaningful book. Keep celebration under $500 total. The gurus tell you to celebrate big — the operators know the check is fuel, not a prize.

Move it to a savings account THAT NIGHT

Do not leave $10K in your checking account overnight. Money in checking gets spent on things that seemed reasonable at the time. Move 100% of it to a separate high-yield savings account within 24 hours. You'll allocate it deliberately over the next week.

Write down what worked

Right now, while it's fresh: write down the lead source, days from first contact to signed contract, days from signed contract to close, and the top 3 things that almost killed the deal. This becomes your playbook. You'll forget these details in 30 days.

The first-check high lasts about 4 days. What you do in those 4 days sets the tone for whether deal #1 turns into a business or stays a lucky story.

CHAPTER 02

The tax reality — set aside more than you think

Wholesalers get destroyed by taxes in Year 1. Why? Because as a self-employed 1099 earner, **your assignment fee is taxed twice**: income tax + self-employment tax (~15.3%). Nobody withholds anything for you. You owe it all in April.

The number to set aside

If you're in a low tax bracket	25–30% of the check
If you're in a middle tax bracket	30–35% of the check
If you're in a high tax bracket (or have a W-2 too)	35–40% of the check
Safe rule for beginners	35% — the extra becomes a savings buffer

Quarterly estimated taxes

The IRS wants quarterly estimated payments, due April 15, June 15, Sept 15, and Jan 15. If you skip these and pay only in April, you'll owe a small penalty (usually $50–$200). Not the end of the world your first year, but set up quarterly payments before Year 2.

State tax adds another layer

Every state except FL, TX, WA, TN, WY, NV, SD, AK, NH has state income tax on top of federal. Add 3–10% to your set-aside depending on state.

Get a CPA before Year 2

A good CPA who understands real estate saves you 3–5× their fee. Cost: $600–$2,000/year. Value: legal deductions you didn't know existed. Mileage, home office, cell phone, software, marketing spend — all deductible. A generic H&R; Block person misses half of them.

DO NOT touch the tax money. Once it goes into the tax savings account, treat it as gone. It will feel like it's yours for 6 months. It isn't.

CHAPTER 03

The LLC decision — when, how, whether

Every YouTube guru tells you to form an LLC on Day 1. That advice sells LLC-formation services. It doesn't help you.

The honest answer

You do NOT need an LLC to do wholesale deals. You can wholesale in your personal name. What an LLC provides is: (1) liability protection if a deal goes bad and someone sues, (2) a business bank account and clean books, (3) some tax flexibility later.

When to form one

Before your 2nd deal: yes, get one. Cost: $50–$500 depending on state. Takes 5 days.

Before your 1st deal: optional. If you're anxious about liability, do it. If you're broke and worried about $500, skip until check #1 clears.

Single-member LLC vs Multi-member vs S-Corp

For 90% of new wholesalers: **single-member LLC taxed as a sole proprietorship**. Simplest, cheapest, best for years 1–2.

S-Corp election: makes sense once you're clearing $60K+/year in wholesale income — saves ~$3–5K/year in self-employment tax. Talk to a CPA before electing.

The state to form in

Form the LLC in the state where you actually wholesale. Ignore the "form in Wyoming/Delaware for privacy" advice — that's for high-net-worth investors, not for beginners. Adds cost and complexity with zero benefit to you.

One LLC per business, not one per property. You're wholesaling, not holding assets — you don't need separate entities per deal.

CHAPTER 04

The business bank account — the boring decision that matters most

You now have a check that came from your first deal. If it went into your personal checking account, that's fine for month one — but before deal #2, you need a real business bank account.

Why this actually matters

1. Legal separation. If you ever get sued and can't show your business is separate from your personal life, an LLC won't protect you (this is called "piercing the corporate veil").

2. Clean books at tax time. Every dollar in and out is business. No sorting through 2,000 personal Venmo charges looking for the one that was a skip-trace subscription.

3. Credibility. Wire from "Tracy Perrin" looks amateur. Wire from "iSpeedToClose LLC" looks professional. Sellers and title companies notice.

What kind of account to open

A checking account at a small business-friendly bank. Recommended: Relay, Novo, Mercury, or a local community bank. Avoid the big 4 (Chase, BofA, Wells, Citi) — their fee structures are hostile to small operators.

The 3-account setup

Business Checking	Operating account · marketing spend, VA payment, tools
Business Savings — Taxes	35% of every check auto-moves here
Business Savings — Reserves	1–2 months of operating expenses, untouched

Set up automatic transfers so the moment a check hits, 35% goes to Tax Savings automatically. Removes decision fatigue.

CHAPTER 05

The rule of thirds — where your money actually goes

The math on $10,000 the day it hits:

Third #1 — Taxes	$3,500 (35% off the top, before you touch anything else)
Third #2 — Reinvest	$3,500 (marketing, tools, lead-gen for the next deal)
Third #3 — You	$3,000 (personal use — savings, debt paydown, quality of life)

Why the third for YOU exists: because if there's no personal payoff, you'll burn out. Wholesaling has to feel worth it. That $3K might go to paying down a credit card, replacing brakes on your car, taking your spouse on a weekend trip, or into a Roth IRA. The point is that some portion of every deal actually improves your life.

Why the reinvest third is non-negotiable

New wholesalers rationalize spending the reinvest-third on personal wants ("I'll do it out of the next deal"). Then the next deal takes 4 months. By then the marketing budget is gone, leads dried up, and you're back to square one. Don't do this.

What happens when the checks get bigger

As you scale (Year 2+, checks are $15K–$40K each), the ratios shift:

Taxes	35% — unchanged
Reinvest	Drops to 20–25% as marketing runs efficiently
You	Grows to 40–45% — this is the payoff

The rule of thirds is training wheels. Use it in Year 1. You'll customize it in Year 2 once you know your real marketing ROI.

CHAPTER 06

Reinvest or pay debt? The math beginners get wrong

You have $3,000 of "your third". You have $8,000 of credit card debt at 22% interest. What should you do?

The math

Paying off $3,000 of 22% debt saves you $660/year in interest — guaranteed return. Investing that same $3,000 into more marketing MIGHT return $5,000–$15,000 (great deal) or $0 (dead campaign). The debt payoff is certain. The marketing return isn't.

The honest recommendation for Year 1

If you have any high-interest debt (18%+ APR credit cards, personal loans, payday loans), **pay that first**. Because: (1) the return is guaranteed, (2) it reduces mental load, (3) it improves your credit for future business financing.

If your debt is low-interest (student loans at 4%, mortgage at 5%, car loan at 6%), **reinvest into marketing instead**. Your business growth rate should beat those interest rates 3–5×.

The wholesaler's debt ladder

Any 18%+ APR debt	Pay off first, before anything else
10–18% APR debt	Half to debt, half to marketing
Under 10% APR	Prioritize marketing — the business grows faster
Tax debt (IRS)	Always pay first — they take your license, house, and dignity

Never take out MORE debt to fund marketing. The 22% credit card that funds your Google Ads campaign is how wholesalers end up worse off after a "great year".

CHAPTER 07

Doubling down on marketing — turning $3K into $30K

You now have ~$3,000 for reinvestment. This is where the compounding starts. Deployed well, that $3K should generate your next $10K–$30K in deals over the next 90 days.

The single most important question

Which lead source produced your first deal? That's the one to double down on. Not switch away from. Not diversify from. Double it.

Most wholesalers make the mistake of switching to a "better" channel after their first deal. This is wrong. The channel that worked for you is the one you understand. Scale what's working before adding what's new.

Practical spend allocations

If you closed via driving-for-dollars	$500 more skip-trace + $2,500 into cold-call dialer & VA setup
If you closed via direct mail	Reinvest all $3K into more mail volume, same list
If you closed via referral	$0 on paid ads · $3K into meetup fees, thank-you gifts, referral fees
If you closed via SMS	Full audit of DNC compliance first · then $2K into volume
If you closed via PPC	Same campaign, +$3K budget. Do NOT change ad copy.

The read-The-Marketing-Machine chapter

This ebook assumes you've read *The Wholesaler's Marketing Machine*. If you haven't, download it free from the iSpeedToClose library. It has the full CPL/CPD math per channel — exactly the numbers you need to figure out your reinvestment ROI.

Rule of thumb: your next $3K in marketing should generate your next signed contract within 45 days. If it doesn't, something in the funnel broke — not the marketing itself.

CHAPTER 08

Your first hire — probably NOT what you think

Every guru tells you to hire a VA on day one. This is bad advice for most new wholesalers.

You don't need a hire yet

You need one deal per month before you hire anyone. Why: (1) you don't yet know which tasks to delegate, (2) you can't afford ongoing $500–$1,500/month expenses on 1 deal in the pipeline, (3) hiring the wrong person is 3× more expensive than doing it yourself.

When to hire your first VA

At **2 deals/month sustained for 2 months**. That's roughly $6K/month gross. You can support a $500–$800/month Filipino VA doing skip-trace, list-scrubbing, lead qualification, and inbox management.

What to hire for — the priority order

Hire #1 — VA for skip-trace + lead qualification	$500–$800/mo · 20 hrs/wk
Hire #2 — Cold-call VA (if you're outbound-heavy)	$800–$1,500/mo · 30 hrs/wk
Hire #3 — Acquisitions manager (US-based)	$3,500–$6,000/mo · handles seller calls end-to-end
Hire #4 — Dispositions/marketing	$2,000–$4,000/mo · handles buyer side

Where to find good VAs

OnlineJobs.ph is the industry standard. Post a job for 3 days, review 20+ applicants, video-interview the top 5, hire your top 2 for a 1-week paid trial before committing to either.

The wholesalers who scale hire slow and fire fast. The ones who fail hire fast and fire slow.

CHAPTER 09

The second-deal trap — why deal #2 is harder than deal #1

Nobody warns you about this: **the second deal is statistically harder than the first**. Not because the market changed, but because of what happens between them.

The 4 things that go wrong

1. You take your foot off the gas. Deal #1 closed. You breathe. You take 2 weeks off the phones. Your pipeline goes cold.

2. You raise your standards. The first deal was $8K. Now $8K feels too small. You start passing on similar deals — but the $25K deal you're waiting for takes 4 months to show up.

3. You spend money you don't have. The next check feels guaranteed, so you make lifestyle decisions based on it. It isn't. It's earned, not owed.

4. You get overconfident. You skip steps in your process. "I don't need to re-run comps, I know this ZIP." You miss things you didn't miss on deal #1.

The rule that fixes all of it

Do everything you did to close deal #1 — again — the same way — for the next 90 days. Same call volume. Same lead source. Same process. Same standards. Deal #2 will show up, usually in weeks 3–6 after deal #1 closes.

The wholesalers who close 6 deals in Year 1 didn't do 6 different things. They did the same thing 6 times.

CHAPTER 10

The 10 money mistakes that kill first-year wholesalers

Every one of these has killed a wholesaler I know personally. Learn them once. Never make them.

1. Spending the check before setting aside taxes

The single biggest killer. You'll owe $3–4K in April. If you spent it, you're now in tax debt at 8% + penalties.

2. Buying a car with the first check

The classic. New wholesaler celebrates with a $500/month car payment. Then deal #2 takes 4 months. Now they're broke AND have a car payment.

3. Hiring a coach before Year 2

$5K–$25K coaching programs sold to Year-1 wholesalers rarely pay for themselves. Your money is better spent on marketing. Coaches make sense once you have a working business to optimize.

4. Skipping the LLC too long

By deal #3, if you still don't have an LLC and business banking, you're carrying real personal risk. Fix it.

5. Buying every SaaS tool

You need: a CRM, skip-trace, a dialer, DocuSign. That's it. Everything else is a distraction until deal #10.

6. Assuming assignment fees are all profit

$10K assignment fee = ~$5K profit after taxes, marketing overhead, and fixed costs. Never plan finances on the gross number.

7. Not tracking every dollar in/out

You need clean books from Day 1. QuickBooks Simple Start ($30/mo) or a well-maintained Google Sheet. Doesn't matter which. Just track.

8. Refusing to pay quarterly estimated taxes

Small penalty, big compounding stress. Just do the quarterly payments.

9. Trying to 'save on taxes' by not deducting legitimate expenses

The opposite is more common — under-deducting because you're scared of an audit. Track everything, deduct everything legitimate.

10. Quitting your W-2 too early

Not before consistent 2 deals/month for 4 consecutive months. Anything less and you're back to job hunting when the pipeline hiccups.

CHAPTER 11

Your 90-day post-first-check action plan

One deal is a story. Two is a pattern. Four is a business. Here's the 90-day plan to get from #1 to #4.

Week 1 — Financial setup

Day 1–2: Move all money to savings. Set aside 35% for taxes.
Day 3–4: Open business checking + business savings (Relay or Novo).
Day 5–7: File LLC (if you don't have one). Cost: $50–$500.

Week 2 — Marketing double-down

Day 8–14: Reinvest your marketing third into the SAME channel that produced deal #1. Do NOT switch channels. Same list, same script, same everything — just more volume.

Weeks 3–6 — Volume

Same call/mail volume you were doing before deal #1 closed. This is the biggest trap — most new wholesalers slow down. Don't.

Weeks 7–8 — Deal #2 closes (typically)

If you kept the funnel running at pre-deal-#1 volume, deal #2 shows up in this window. If it doesn't, the funnel dropped somewhere — look at your data.

Weeks 9–12 — Deal #3 in flight

By now the process is muscle memory. This is when confidence starts compounding. Keep the exact same system running.

Realistic 90-day outcome: 1–3 additional deals closed, plus 2–5 signed contracts in the pipeline. That's the number that means you have a business — not just a story.

ONE LAST THING

Deal #1 is proof. Deal #4 is a business.

The first check is a huge milestone. Actually paying yourself from a real deal — that never gets old. But it isn't the finish line. It's the starting line.

The wholesalers who last are the ones who resist the urge to celebrate the win, and instead **quietly repeat what worked**. Same channel. Same script. Same math. Same discipline. For long enough that one deal becomes two, four, twelve.

Your Year 1 goal isn't 100 deals. It's **4 deals with a repeatable system.** If you hit that, Year 2 becomes 12+ almost automatically.

When you close deal #4, send the story to **hello@ispeedtoclose.com** — I read every one and I'll put you on the Year-2 planning waitlist.

— Tracy Perrin

Founder, iSpeedToClose

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iSpeedToClose has everything you need for the 90-day post-first-check plan: financial dashboard with automated tax set-asides, per-channel ROI tracking, hire-when-ready recommendations, and the same drip sequences that produced deal #1 pre-configured for deals #2, #3, and #4.

*Start a 14-day free trial at **ispeedtoclose.com** — no credit card required.*

KEEP READING

Your next reads

You just finished a piece of the playbook. Here are the next three books in the Library — each one hand-picked to build on what you just learned.

01

The Wholesaler's Marketing Machine

Seven lead-gen channels ranked by cost, speed, and quality.

28 pages · Read at https://ispeedtoclose.com/marketing-machine

02

The Cash Buyer Black Book

Build, vet, rank, and retain 30–50 verified cash buyers.

21 pages · Read at https://ispeedtoclose.com/blackbook

03

The Hands-Off Wholesaler

Hire, train, and trust your first VA — taught like I would to my son.

36 pages · Read at https://ispeedtoclose.com/hands-off-wholesaler

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