



# Member Guide

How to get the most out of Cook's Best Of Library™

This site is thirty years of collected, curated and authored material - from Intuit, Netflix and Mozilla, and from the coaching practice since - with a search box in front of it. Your membership opens all of it, plus the rooms where it gets argued about live.

*Ten minutes with this guide will save you a good deal more.*

## HOW IT WORKS

### Start with a question, not a search box

The box on the front page is not a keyword search. Describe the problem in your own words - messy is fine, and a full sentence works better than two nouns. *"My CFO and my VP Sales give me different numbers for the same quarter"* will find more than *"reporting"*.

Results come back in two groups: things Jim recommends, which link out to where they live, and documents held here, which are searched by every word inside them. That second group is why a phrase buried on page four of a deck is findable at all.

## THE VOCABULARY

### The eight Zones

Everything is filed into eight Zones. They are the same eight everywhere on the site, so the badge on a search result and the Zone you browse are the same idea. Open one to see what Jim would hand you first.

| Zone                 | What lives there                                                                                              |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Strategy & Planning  | An integrated set of choices about how to get from here to there. Planning systems, roadmaps, horizon models. |
| Decision Making      | How to make high-quality decisions at high velocity. Thinking in bets, constraints, the priority equation.    |
| Leadership & Culture | Values, behaviours and expectations. Crisis leadership, challenge culture, coaching moments, 1:1s.            |

|                                                 |                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Communication & Influence                       | Storytelling, powerful questions, board communication, the SECS Talk and Islands of Safety.                |
| Benchmarking & Metrics                          | The data. Compensation, SaaS benchmarks, IPO metrics, finance team sizing.                                 |
| Board & Investor Relations                      | Leading your board, fundraising, IPO readiness, governance, diligence.                                     |
| Best Of Podcasts, Books, Presentations & Videos | The medium rather than the subject: talks, recordings, and the PlayBook Editions on 20 foundational books. |
| Best Of CFO + Ops + AI                          | Running the place, and what AI is doing to it. Finance, product, devops, and the Future CFO writing.       |

## THE COLLECTION

### What's in there

| What you'll find     | What it is                                                                             |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Newsletter posts     | Every Cook's PlayBooks post, from June 2024 on.                                        |
| Best Of Active Links | Thirty years of collected links worth keeping - other people's work, curated.          |
| Cook's PRO's         | One-pagers. Practice, Repeat, Own - a framework you can run this week.                 |
| PlayBook Editions    | Jim's take on 20 foundational business books.                                          |
| Held documents       | Frameworks, benchmarks, decks and notes stored here and searchable by their full text. |

Your membership opens all of it. Some items were always public; the PRO's, the PlayBook Editions, the benchmarks and most of the held documents were not.

## YOUR OWN SHELF

### Keep what's worth keeping

Every result has a star. Starring puts it on your own shelf, which is the single most useful habit on this site: the library is large, and the twenty things that matter to you are not the same twenty that matter to anyone else.

Find your shelf under your picture in the top right corner, at **My Library**. Everything you have saved and everything you have uploaded lives there.

## CONTRIBUTING

### Add your own

**Add Best Of Document** on My Library takes a PDF, a deck, a spreadsheet or a note. You choose who sees it, and the choice is real:

- **Only my private library** - you, and Jim as the administrator. Nobody else, ever.
- **The shared member library** - every signed-in member and coaching client can find it and open it. Not public.
- **Cook's Coaching Client Community** - other coaching clients only. Offered only if you are one.
- **Open to the public library** - goes to Jim for review first, and stays private to you until he releases it.

*Give it at least three tags. An uploaded file has no searchable text of its own, so tags are how you - or anyone you share it with - find it again in a year.*

## WHAT YOU'VE ASKED

### Your Journey

**My Journey**, also under your picture, is the record of every question you have asked and every Best Of you have opened, plus which Zone you keep returning to. It is worth reading occasionally. People are reliably surprised by which Zone they actually live in.

## ASKING ACROSS EVERYTHING

### Member GPT

On the members' area there is a second box that behaves differently. Instead of returning a list, it reads across every Best Of and answers in words, citing what it drew on. Use it when you want the argument rather than the document - "*what does Jim think about hiring a first VP Finance?*" - and follow the citations when you want the source.

## THE HALF THAT ISN'T A FILE

### The live rooms

Membership is not only a library. It is also:

- **Monthly Deep Dives** - one Best Of a month, argued properly, live with Jim. Scheduled in advance so it survives a busy quarter, and recorded either way.
- **Rapid Response Rooms** - when something breaks in the market, the room meets that week. Jim ran these through the SVB collapse, the Covid shock and the SPAC craze.
- **Member proposed, member led** - bring a topic to either format and lead it. Jim co-moderates.

*Every recording and transcript is kept in your own library afterwards.*

## THE WRITTEN HALF

### Discussions

**Discussions** in the top bar is where the Best Of's get argued about between the live rooms. Anyone can start one, and there are two kinds: a thread hanging off a particular Best Of, and a thread you start from nothing.

Open any Best Of and press **Discuss** - beside Read and Keep - and you land in the conversation about that document, or start it. That is usually the easier place to begin than a blank page: the document is already in the room.

## WHO ELSE IS IN HERE

### Member Directory

Every paid member and coaching client, with their picture, role, company and bio, searchable by any of those. It is the answer to "who here has done this before" - which is most of what a community is for.

## ONE TO ONE

### Messages

You can write privately to any other member, from their name in a discussion or from their card in the directory. Nobody else can read those messages - not other members, and not Jim.

*There is no way to browse for strangers to contact: you reach somebody by having read what they think, which is the right order.*

## BILLING

### What it costs, and when

\$750 a year paid up front, or \$79 a month on a twelve-month membership - \$948 across the year. Both renew as another twelve months. Your renewal date is on your account page, behind your picture.

*Cancelling takes the library away and leaves everything you saved. If you come back, it is all still there.*

## THE OTHER THING JIM DOES

### Thinking about coaching?

1:1 and executive team advisory is separate from membership and scoped on a call - there is no button that buys it. If you want to talk about it, there is a link on your account page, or send us a

request.

## HOUSEKEEPING

### Your account

Your picture - or your initials until you upload one - sits in the top right of every page. Click it for your tier, when it renews, your profile, help, and the two links above.

**Fill in your profile.** A photograph and two lines about what you do. Your name, picture, role and company appear in the Member Directory and beside anything you post or contribute, and the bio is what tells the next person why you are worth reading. Your email and mobile number are never shown to other members. If you would rather not be listed at all, there is a **Hide me from the Member Directory** switch on your profile - your name still appears on anything you post, because a discussion where you cannot see who is speaking is a worse thing than a directory.

**You never need a password.** Ask for a six-digit code by email any time — it works on any device and in any browser. If you would rather have one, set it on your account page - it is a convenience, not a requirement.

## HELP

### If something is wrong

**Report a bug or send feedback** sits in the menu under your picture, on your account page, and on the help page. A sentence is enough. It goes logged with a reference rather than landing in an inbox, and it is the fastest way to get something fixed. Questions, ideas and requests go the same way.

Billing, access that looks wrong, or anything this guide doesn't cover goes through the same form. Every request is answered - most of them the same day.

## CORPORATE NETWORKS

### If your work computer won't open the site

Some company networks block or inspect outside sites, and this one can get caught in that. It is not your account, and nothing is broken at our end - the same sign-in works from your phone or from home.

The quickest test: open **cooksbestof.com** on your phone with wi-fi off. If it works there but not on your laptop, it is your company's network. Ask your IT team to allow **cooksbestof.com** and **www.cooksbestof.com** through the web proxy - the full wording to send them is on the help page. Everything here reads properly on a phone in the meantime.