ACROSS THE TABLE

BUSINESS CONSULTING

BUSINESS JOB 09 · EPISODE 9

Notion vs ClickUp vs Asana

Where the work lives, who owns it, and when it is due

Knowledge Article 09

AI Stack Series · acrossthetable.biz

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THE JOB THESE THREE DO

Work in a small business lives in three places: somebody's head, a group chat, and a notebook. None of those can be searched, and none of them survive someone being off sick.

So things get dropped, the same question gets asked four times, and the person who knows how to do something is the bottleneck for everything.

These three fix different halves of that. Two are about tasks. One is about knowledge. Knowing which problem you have saves you buying the wrong one.

WHO EACH ONE IS

Notion — the knowledge one

What it is: Docs, wikis and databases with AI search across them.

Best for: Your company knowledge in one searchable place.

Watch out for: Becomes a junk drawer without structure.

Notion is where information lives — how things are done, what was decided, what the procedure is. It searches across all of it. It becomes a junk drawer without structure, so decide the structure before the team arrives.

ClickUp — the everything one

What it is: Very configurable work platform — docs, tasks, goals.

Best for: Teams who want one tool for everything.

Watch out for: Configuration can become the project.

ClickUp does tasks, documents and goals, and can be configured almost infinitely. That is its risk: configuring it can quietly become the project instead of the work.

Asana — the accountability one

What it is: Projects, tasks and workloads with AI summaries.

Best for: Teams who need visible ownership and dates.

Watch out for: Structure only works if everyone updates it.

Asana is about who owns what and when it is due. Less flexible, which is the point — structure only works if everyone updates it, and simpler structures get updated.

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HOW THEY COMPARE

	Notion	ClickUp	Asana
Best for	Knowledge	Productivity	Cross-functional projects
Ease of use	Beginner	Intermediate	Intermediate
Small-business fit	High	High	High
Larger-business fit	High	High	High
Its main job	Organize company knowledge	Manage tasks and work	Coordinate workflows
Choose this if	Knowledge is scattered	Work and tasks are scattered	Teams need structured coordination
Price	Free tier; paid per user/month.	Free tier; paid per user/month.	Free tier; paid per user/month.

All three suit a small business. The question is whether your problem is scattered knowledge, scattered tasks, or unclear ownership.

HOW A BUSINESS ACTUALLY USES EACH ONE

A business where one person knows everything

Notion. Write down how things are actually done — the supplier quirks, the process, the decisions. The test: could somebody cover for a week using only what is written?

A team that wants one place for everything

ClickUp. Set it up simply and resist the urge to keep configuring. The businesses that fail with it are the ones that spent three weeks perfecting the setup.

A team where things get dropped

Asana. Every piece of work has one name and one date against it. The value is not the software — it is that nothing can sit there owned by nobody.

WHAT IT COSTS

All three have free tiers that genuinely work for a small team. None of this needs paying for until you grow.

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Paid tiers are per person per month and broadly similar. Pick on fit rather than price.

WHERE THIS SITS IN YOUR STACK

Now let's surround your project-management AI with the tools where work actually happens. Fireflies captures decisions from meetings. Those decisions can become tasks in your work-management platform. Google Drive stores the supporting documents. Slack keeps the team communicating. If software development is involved, Jira can manage technical work. Automation helps move information between supported systems. You're creating a path from conversation to decision to assignment to completed work.

The pieces around it:

- Slack — communication
- Google Drive — files
- Fireflies — meeting intelligence
- Jira — software and development work
- Zapier — automation

THE CEO DECISION

- Is your problem scattered knowledge or scattered tasks? They need different tools.
- Will the team actually update it? A task system nobody updates is worse than a whiteboard, because people trust it.
- Who owns the structure? Without one person responsible, all three turn into a mess within two months.
- Could someone cover for you using what is written down today?

APPLY IT TO YOUR BUSINESS

Write down the five things only you know how to do. Not how to do them — just that they exist.

That list is your argument for one of these. If the list is long, start with knowledge. If the list is short but things still get dropped, start with ownership and dates.

YOUR QUICK REVIEW

- ☐ What do only I know how to do?
- ☐ Where is that written down, if anywhere?
- ☐ What got dropped in the last month, and why?
- ☐ Is my problem knowledge, tasks, or ownership?

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- ☐ Who will own keeping this tidy?
- ☐ Could someone cover for me for a week?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Tool	Where to find it	What it is for
Notion	www.notion.com	Your company knowledge in one searchable place.
ClickUp	clickup.com	Teams who want one tool for everything.
Asana	asana.com	Teams who need visible ownership and dates.
Across the Table AI Assessment	acrossthetable.biz/#assessment	Fifteen minutes. Tells you which of the twenty jobs to start with.
The Scaling Edge	acrossthetablebiz.substack.com	Weekly newsletter for owners without a business background.

CONTINUE LEARNING

This is Business Job 09 of twenty. Episode 10 is Give It a Voice — ElevenLabs, Murf and Speechify.

Explore The Scaling Edge and the Across the Table Business Learning library for the rest of the series.

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