



Sustainable Small Business Growth in 2016



In order for your small business to be wildly... or mildly... successful, it is important to grow the company. A company that grows at a steady pace increases its chance of success. For some small businesses, growth will be successful. For other small businesses, their growth plan may be a complete failure.

You might ask: "Why shouldn't all companies on a growth path be successful?" That does seem logical, doesn't it? However, without well developed planning and attention to details, you cannot assume that your, or any other company, can achieve sustainable small business growth.

It seems that if a company is growing that should mean guaranteed success, but that is not always the case. Just because your company is growing does not mean it will achieve sustainable growth. Just [what is sustainable growth?](#) It is basically the amount of growth your company can sustain without having to incur or increase your debt. For instance, a manufacturing company might need to purchase expensive equipment to increase production so sale can increase.

Carrying too much debt is never a good thing. There really is no magic formula or 15-step checklist to follow that will guarantee your growth will be successful or even sustainable for all time. But, there are critical areas which successful growth leaders focus their attention. Following their lead in the 7 key areas below will vastly improve your chances of successful growth that will be sustainable for your small business.

7 Rules for Sustainable Small Business Growth

- **Purpose:** Most company leaders that have achieved sustainable growth know that it takes far more than just a promise of achieving financial rewards to fuel aspirations and ambitions to achieve sustainable growth. It takes a strong sense of purpose – a higher calling – than just a desire to make more money.
- **Exceptional Marketing Intelligence:** Any small business that wants to grow successfully must have the ability to recognize, then adapt, to any changes in the marketplace. Many small business owners and leaders get a bit myopic when it comes to what is happening in the world

around them. Growth leaders see the bigger picture and analyze how opportunities or threats on the horizon can be used to fuel sustainable growth.

- **Effective Growth Planning:** This is probably the biggest influence on the success of growth. It is the greatest predictor of whether or not a small business will grow. To be effective, a growth plan need not be overly formalized or complex. But, it must be put in writing, communicated throughout the company and updated on a regular basis. All players within the company need to understand the organization's plan and vision, as well as their part in making it all happen.
- **Customer Driven Processes:** We are operating in a customer driven world. Each one of your company processes needs to be reviewed from the customers' point of view. Are your existing processes meant only to benefit the company? They should be focused on providing better, cheaper, faster products and services for your customers.
- **Embrace Technology:** Everything in today's marketplace is based in some way on technology, so quit fighting it. Growth leaders don't let the ups and downs of the technology industry get in their way. Technology can improve production and staff productivity. It can reduce unnecessary steps in your company processes that can help you deliver to customers more quickly. Do the math and see how quickly you can recoup your investment in the newest technological advances.
- **Rock Star Talent:** Growth leaders understand that they are only as good as the people working around them. The ability to recruit, hire, train and retain only the best employees can mean the difference between success and failure for any small company on the growth track.
- **Visualize the Future:** So few small businesses take time to routinely consider the future. Successful growth leaders are diligent in paying attention to macro forces in changes affecting the world in which we live and do business.

If you are ready to begin a sustainable growth plan for your own small business, there is no time like the present. Make 2016 the year you choose to move your company forward with plans for steady growth. Before you begin, take note of the seven 'rules' above to get you off to a good start. Although there is no magic list of steps to get you where you want to go, I recommend that you start by looking at the future.

Envision what you want the company to look like when it is 'all grown up'. Then, double back and analyze your company as it exists today. Finally, plan for what it will take to move your small business from today to where it is you want to go. If you need help determining how to get your small business from Point A to Point B, [give us a call](#). We'd be glad to help you create your compass to getting your sustainable small business growth to where you want it to be.

VISUALIZE --- ANALYZE --- STRATEGIZE

Your Company's Way to Success in 2016

The 'Designing Strategies' e-newsletter is brought to you compliments of Terri L Maurer, owner of Maurer Consulting Group. MCG is a strategic marketing and management consultancy working with small businesses to put their companies on track, focused on growth and success. In addition to working directly with small business owners and managers, Terri is a well-known author, publisher, trainer and keynote speaker. For help putting your firm on track, contact Terri to discuss which barriers are preventing your firm from moving forward in a strategic manner. She can be reached by telephone at: 330.283.3999 (cell) or via email at: tlmaurer@maurerconsultinggroup.com. For more information on MGC services, [visit our web site](#).