

Inspireity

Inspiring Business Performance®



PEARLS *of* WISDOM

Lessons Learned From 30 Years of Building a Business

The Inspireity® Guide to Business Performance

ENTREPRENEURSHIP
It's a spirit that drives small
and midsize businesses

MOMENTUM
Pour gas on the fire to drive
growth and success

OBSTACLES
Where you'll find pitfalls and
how to overcome them

Most business owners live lives of quiet desperation as they carry the weight of the enterprise day in and day out.

At Insperty, we understand what it means to take everything you've saved, borrow as much as you can get your hands on and pour that into an idea. And for that, you get a 16-hour-a-day job and don't eat for two years.

We know how you feel. We've saved and borrowed and sweated the details. We've spent the past 30 years growing our company while holding tight to our original mission: to help businesses succeed so communities prosper.

As we celebrate our 30th anniversary, we've compiled some "Pearls of Wisdom" that we've learned over the years.

We hope you enjoy them and that, like us, you feel the same passion for your business that you felt on that very first day.



Paul J. Sarvadi
Chairman and CEO
Insperty



PEARLS *of* WISDOM

Lessons Learned From 30 Years of Building a Business

From *startup* to *exit*, businesses go through phases of growth, and there are challenges to each of them. As we mark 30 years of building a human resources company, the Insperity® leadership team is offering its tips for navigating the life cycle of a growing business.



STARTUP

As an entrepreneur, you see a need in the marketplace, and starting a business is exhilarating and frightening all at the same time. In the beginning, it's all about having enough money to keep the doors open. It's a time for being deliberate. A good concept doesn't necessarily make money; you have to focus on the business model.

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The biggest challenge in every business in this early stage is the financial viability. Grab all the money you can get your hands on and then some, because you are never going to have enough in the startup phase.

RICHARD RAWSON
President



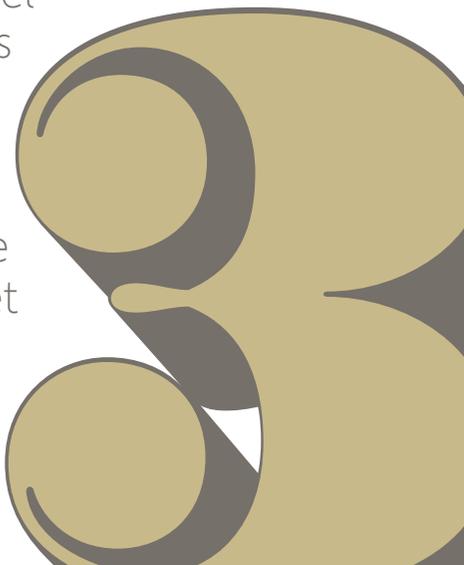
In the early days there are many hurdles to overcome. But you slug it out, you don't always know what you are doing, but you don't quit. You have to *focus on the vision*. Great visions overcome big obstacles.



JAY MINCKS
Executive Vice President
Sales and Marketing

You've got to get the flywheel going as fast as you can. Keep your eyes on the prize, and don't let all the distractions get to you.

SCOTT EASTIN
Regional Vice President
Sales



As much as you want to get it right the first time, every time, things are going to go wrong. There will be errors made. Own up to them, and show your customers how you're preventing them in the future.

LINDA JONES
Director, Corporate Communications



You have to believe in what you deliver. It's really powerful when you can say, "There is no one who could deliver this the way that we do," and believe it.

STEVE ARIZPE, *Executive Vice President and COO*



[Empower your employees](#) and managers to do their jobs. Particularly as your organization grows, you can no longer be in the same level of details.

SUSAN BARR

Managing Director, Corporate Human Resources

GROWTH PHASE



Having the infrastructure in place to facilitate growth is key. Do you have the right senior leadership in place to grow, and how will you finance the growth? There's a lot of complexity around the growth phase. A well-developed HR strategy and a growth-minded company culture make job seekers more likely to choose your company over the competition. You want a productive workforce, a team willing to give its all with a vested interest in the success of your business.



Be nimble. You have to be flexible to change and be ready to make those changes.

LINDA JONES, *Director
Corporate Communications*

You need to have realistic goals. The growth never happens as fast as you want it. Exercise a lot of *patience* and maintain *optimism*. If you really believe in your product or service enough to bring it to the market, it will happen. You need to have that *perseverance* as an entrepreneur.

STEVE ARIZPE, *Executive Vice President and COO*





You have to find a balance between your growth and your profitability so you don't blow through all your capital. Make sure the marketplace wants what you're doing, and don't grow just for the sake of growth.

SCOTT EASTIN

Regional Vice President, Sales

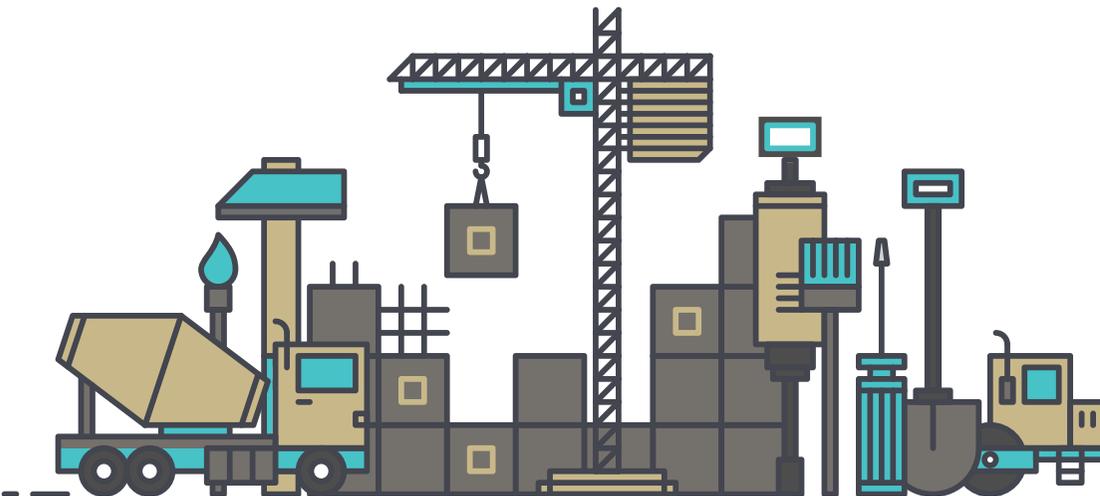
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Determine your growth strategy, set goals to achieve it, get your organization aligned and committed to it, and let people run.

KATHY JOHNSON

Senior Vice President, MidMarket Operations





GRAINS OF The essential elements to every phase of business TRUTH

*Focusing on these HR elements can reap
real rewards for your business.*



COMPANY CULTURE

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Culture is like the oil in the engine that makes it all run smoothly but effectively. It's where you get the power. If you don't have oil in the engine, everything breaks down and locks up and you can't move.

PAUL SARVADI, *Chairman and CEO*

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Communicate your culture frequently; if you don't, it will change into something you don't want it to be.

KIM SCOTT, *Director, Corporate Compensation*

BUILDING YOUR TEAM

A talented, engaged employee who shares a passion for the business is incredibly valuable. A business needs to manage the retention of these special employees the same way it manages its bank accounts – by keeping unexpected outflows to a minimum. **TOM GEARTY**, *Regional Vice President, Sales*

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ALIGNING YOUR ORGANIZATION

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This is the most critical factor in creating a high-performance organization. You won't get where you want to go if your people don't have a clear idea of the goal and aren't committed to it.

KATHY JOHNSON, *Senior Vice President, MidMarket Operations*

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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Finding and cultivating leaders is an important component of growing a business. Even if somebody doesn't see themselves as a leader, give them a chance to lead. Provide a goal, but don't tell them how to do it. Just tell them how you'll measure success, and give them a chance to lead.

CHARLIE HARTLAND, *Vice President, Market Development*

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Great leadership is built on the foundation of trust – trust that each person is doing their best to be successful, to take care of their employees and their clients.

JAY MINCKS, *Executive Vice President, Sales and Marketing*

MEASURING PERFORMANCE

Many times, businesses don't make the connection between the performance of people and the financial performance.

PAUL SARVADI, *Chairman and CEO*



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Stay customer-centric. Keep your clients and your prospects first; provide them with value every time you communicate, and be relevant in your communication by knowing what's important to them.

ROSS ASTRAMECKI
Senior Vice President, Sales



Keep an eye on competition and what's happening out there. When you do that, it becomes really easy to see that if you sit back and relax, the whole world can pass you by. Things are moving really quickly.

SAM LARSON
*Senior Vice President
Innovative Technology Solutions*

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PAUL SARVADI
Chairman and CEO

The three things that usually cause the demise of a good business are complacency, arrogance and greed.



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The mindset to success is to remember that there's so much more ahead of you, so much more you can do, so many more mountains to climb – that is what keeps you excited.

JAY MINCKS, Executive Vice President, Sales and Marketing

ESTABLISHED PHASE

It's enticing to want to take a break and enjoy the success that's put you here. But complacency can lead to

the demise of a good business. Take your eye off the ball and the next thing you know, there's a better company beating you in the marketplace.

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Many businesses fail to recognize the value of human capital. They become good at selling to their market, at delivering on their sales promises, at managing their finances and their cash flow – but [thinking about talent](#) is just not something they devote enough time to.

CHARLIE HARTLAND
Vice President, Market Development



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Momentum is such an important thing to have on your side. And when you do, you've got to pour gas on the fire and continue that momentum, build on that momentum and let that help drive success.

PAUL SARVADI
Chairman and CEO

Once a company is well established, it's time to start strengthening its competitive advantages and create new ones wherever possible.

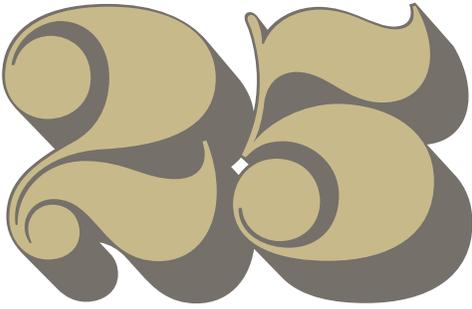
TOM GEARTY
Regional Vice President, Sales

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Companies can't stay still. They're either growing and developing or they're declining. It's all about consistent, predictable growth. Think about how fast to grow, what the formula for growth is, where the stress points are that come from growth; then mitigate those factors.

EXPANSION PHASE





Don't overextend yourself. Make sure you have the resources and bandwidth to take on any new venture.

SAM LARSON
Senior Vice President
Innovative Technology Solutions



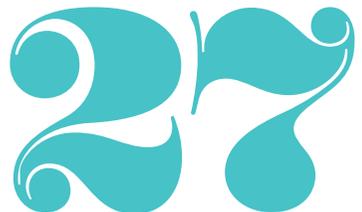
Ask yourself if you have the right systems and the right people in place to facilitate your strategy. If you're fortunate enough that the business just takes off – without the systems and people in place – it can be disastrous.

KENNY RANDLE
Regional Vice President, Sales



You've got to *let people run*. Not walk. You've got to let them run if you're going to have a company that is going to continue to expand.

RICHARD RAWSON
President



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A lot of owners aren't prepared. You have to decide what you want to do with the business and plan for it. *Smart owners have exit strategies.*

KENNY RANDLE

Regional Vice President, Sales

EXIT

You've built this business from the ground up. Why would you want to exit? Some entrepreneurs don't – and won't. But for others it could be a matter of making a profit, limiting loss, moving on to the next project or retiring to enjoy the fruits of their labor. [An exit strategy](#) is a key element of the overall business plan.



As you exit, do so with a legacy of customer service that will be admired and replicated by those who wish to emulate the success you enjoyed.



LISA LEBLANC

Director, Employee
Administration Development

When you grow a business as an entrepreneur, this has been your baby. You want to make sure you're leaving it in good hands. What's your process in identifying who you'll hand the reins to? It's a big decision when it's your reputation and your brand. The last thing you want – when it's been your blood, sweat and tears – is to see that compromised in any way.

STEVE ARIZPE, *Executive Vice President and COO*

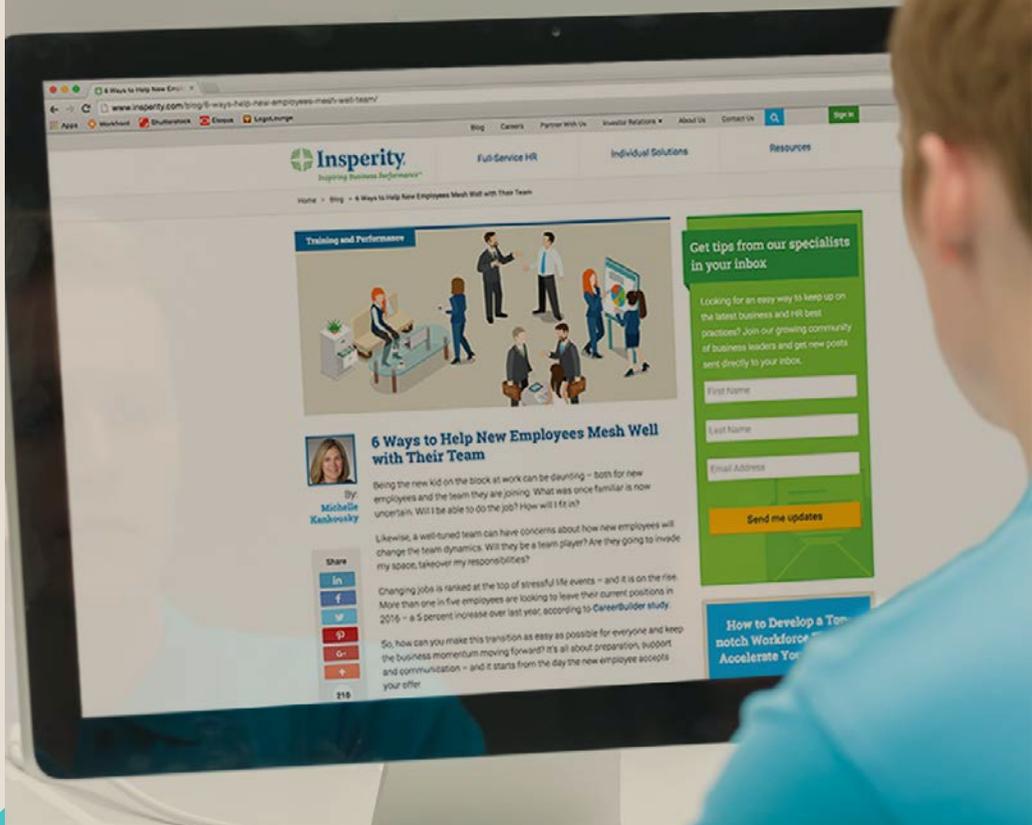


It takes
PERSEVERANCE
to
SUCCEED

Entrepreneurs are famous for their perseverance. They just do whatever it takes – it's a mentality that is a requirement; it's not optional.

PAUL SARVADI
Chairman and CEO

Ready For More Inspiration?



Get great advice from our HR thought leaders on the Insperty blog.

insperty.com/blog

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