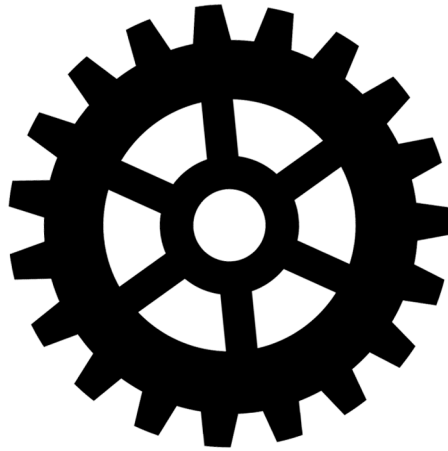


CHAMBERS PIVOT INDUSTRIES
PRESENTS

AMALGAMATE

A MIX OF IDEAS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

SUMMER 2015



GREGORY SCOTT CHAMBERS
EL PRESIDENTE

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DEDICATION

To Wilson the Amazing Border Collie

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In March of 2015 I attended a convention put on by Alan Weiss, Ph.D. A 3 day session that was Keynoted by Weiss, one of the most highly regarded independent consultants in America, and Dr. Martin Seligman, the author of **Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life** and most recently, **Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well Being**.

Attending with me were hundreds of successful business consultants from around the globe, countless Ph.D.'s and numerous authors of books on topics ranging from the spread of infectious disease to selling with Noble Purpose.

My goal was to pick up new ideas for clients and find camaraderie with other consulting professionals. I'm happy to report that both of those results were achieved.

What follows is a collection of 12 ideas broken into 3 Chapters that were inspired by the week in Atlanta. Some of them will have a direct application to your business and some you will file away for future use. Included is a series of visuals to help facilitate understanding.

It might be hard for you to imagine, but I drew most of the graphics all by myself.

Don't let their beauty distract you.

BUSINESS MECHANICS

10% Is the New Breakeven



"Do you know we spend one-third of our
lives asleep in meetings?"

(Copyright© 2012 Cartoonstock)

One of the advantages of a conference are the random conversations you find yourself having at lunch, during breaks and after 5 at the hotel cantina. On day 2 I found myself with a consultant from Boulder, CO who specializes in coaching owners of Small to Medium

Enterprises (SME) and a second consultant from Seattle, WA who specializes in operational efficiency after a career working for Boeing. The gist of the conversation was the economic outlook for the near future but it quickly turned to an existential question of why business exists.

I'm blaming the guy from Boulder.

That said, it is a great question.

At a simple level, your business generates the cash that creates your wealth.

Yet, at a spiritual level, True Wealth is more about having self-directed time than money. The ability to go where you want, engage in the activities you want, whenever you want is the definition of True Wealth.

The opposite of that having someone else controlling your happiness.

The "10% growth is the new breakeven" quote above is offered up by a consultant that focuses on increasing profit. It's an arbitrary number he uses to illustrate his point that if you're not growing you're regressing toward the mean.

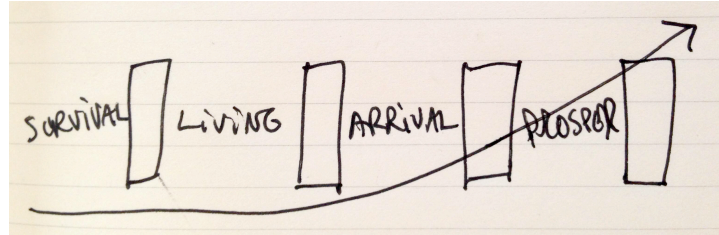
I'm suggesting that you take his maxim further. You need to decide what your personal spiritual breakeven is, based on maximizing your True Wealth.

You have the opportunity to use your business as the means of providing the cash you need to maximize your True Wealth. Maximize it in the way that makes sense for you. There is no set measure for True Wealth. It's not your neighbor's car, your eccentric Uncle Max's vacation home, or the latest smartwatch. They have no impact on your happiness.

10% growth is not only the new breakeven for your business, it's the new breakeven for measuring the growth of your True Wealth.

Forget Where You Came From

A business travels through multiple stages on its way from birth to prosperity. Unfortunately, not all business owners make the same transition. Consider this image based on the work of Alan Weiss Phd.:



On the left is a business unit that struggles for **Survival**. In this stage a business will take any opportunities that cross its path. Then, at some point it becomes a living, breathing organism illustrated by the block.

In the **Living** stage it is able to sustain its existence and starts to form a personality and earn early recognition.

Once that business gets established, it's common to say that the business has "**Arrived.**" It's a going concern that now has the benefit of being selective in the opportunities it takes on. It is no longer concerned with survival and produces profits and wealth.

In the far right stage, the **Prosper** stage, a business experiences its own gravity. New opportunities show up unannounced and market differentiation is achieved.

The challenge for business owners and their business unit managers is that they aren't changing their mindset as the business moves between stages. The business may be in the Arrival stage but the owners and managers act like

they're stuck between Survival and Living.

Literature is filled with characters like Ebenezer Scrooge who built a prospering business but didn't change behaviors to reflect their newfound prosperity. Be aware of your mindset and your actions compared to where your business is. If your business is in the Living stage, don't be stuck in the Survival stage. You need to help your managers with the same transition because otherwise, you're holding your business back.

To diagnose whether or not you're holding your business back because either you're stuck in a regressive mindset or your mindset is too aggressive, is to determine what stage your business or business units are in. Start with the business as a whole and then narrow your focus into each business unit while referencing Weiss's chart.

It's important not to lump in new business units with the business as a whole. The art of Survival requires a particular mindset, but in order to Prosper your business manager will need to change their beliefs, add new friends, alter their image and maybe even change their self talk.

No bah-humbug needed.

I Want That

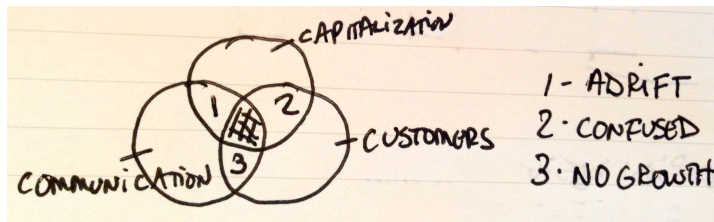
Today there is a lot of cash in the system looking for opportunities. The press is full of Mergers and Acquisitions news. I just saw a 2015 stat that shows trillions of dollars available for either Strategic or Financial deals. The investment banker even used the word “frothy.” Those dollar amounts get executive’s minds racing and cause their eyes to wander. And like my youngest would say whenever he saw a toy commercial, “I want that.”

Here’s a shocking statistic that was quoted in the same report: over 80% of mergers and acquisitions fail to meet expectations. I dug it up and that stat was from a 1999 KPMG report. A McKinsey report from 2010 reported similar findings of 66-75% failure rates. Considering the dollar amounts and livelihoods of the professionals involved, it’s sobering.

I want to share this thought from Constance Dierickx, Ph.D. “Consider the tendency for people to be overconfident when forecasting. What will it mean if you are overconfident by even 5%? You’re far better off challenging yourself now than wishing you had done so later.”

To help challenge yourself she offered up the 3 most important elements of a Successful Integration:

Communication, Customers, Capitalization.



Moving through the graphic, (1) if you have Capital and Communication but fall short when bringing along your Customers, the merger will go Adrift. No traction.

(2) If you have Capital and a focus on the Customers but haven't Communicated the goals of the merger clearly, the integration will suffer from Confusion. It will lose sight of the strategy.

(3) And if you have the Customer strategy and tactics figured out and have Communicated clearly and purposefully, but you are missing the Capital required to fund the integration, there won't be Growth. Something I'm intimate with.

With this framework in mind, you can run a diagnostic on your M&A activities at any time. To do that, rate your firm on a scale of 1 to 5 in each area: Communication, Customers and Capitalization. Use 1 to signify "we haven't thought of this" and 5 if you can say, "I'm supremely confident in our efforts here."

Add up the 3 scores. Out of 15 points total, if you're below 12 consider bringing on a Project Coordinator to keep you on track.

The Project Coordinator serves one role. To keep integration activities on track. A functional outsider that understands the expectations, recognizes any shortfalls, and addresses these areas:

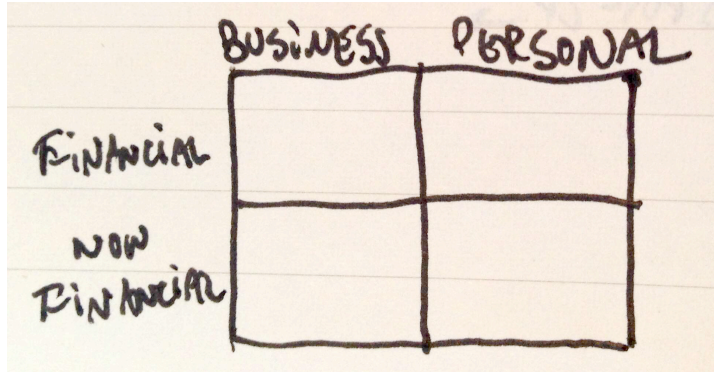
IT | Accounting | HR Policies | Sales | Legal | Risk

Your competitive advantage in the marketplace isn't because of your team's ability to enter into a Merger or Acquisition. Your advantage will come from your ability to keep both sides of the deal on track to beat the averages that hold competitors back.

Life is About Outcomes

Let me share a concept that I was exposed to by Phil Symchych, the Business Wealth Builder. The core of his practice centers on the question, “What does your Personal Balance Sheet look like?”

The balance sheet he refers to has 4 quadrants. Financial, Non-financial, Business and Personal.



If True Wealth is self-directed time, then the thought of focusing on desired Outcomes and not Tasks to speed up actual results makes sense. Let's take a fictional desired outcome and use the 4 grid questions.

The CEO of a \$20MM firm says “I want to be the dominant player in this market.” It's an outcome but it's intangible and doesn't fit the grid yet. To translate it into a Business/Financial measure, we convert “dominate” to a measurable metric of “75% market share.” That allows us to put a dollar amount on the delta, which we estimate as an additional \$2.4MM in sales a year. So far, so good.

Now, before we jump into the tactics and tasks required to get there, Symchych suggests we pause and consider the outcomes in our 4 grids.

	BUSINESS	PERSONAL
FINANCIAL	\$2.4MM \$240K	Biz Value? Debt?
NON FINANCIAL	Culture? Growth? Competition?	Achievement Pride? Legacy?

In grid square 1, **Financial and Business** we enter the figure we worked up, \$2.4MM in top line growth and \$240K EBITDA improvement. The desired outcome.

In grid square 2, **Financial and Personal**, we pause and consider why the target is important to our pursuit of true wealth. What will the \$240K earnings mean personally? An increase in business value? Increased income to pay off debt? Cash to invest in a new venture?

In grid square 3, **Non-Financial and Business**, our outcome of “dominate this niche” gets translated into many of the non-tangibles that come from such a quest. Culture, Growth, and Competition come to mind.

In grid square 4, **Non-financial and Personal** we find the touchy feely aspects of the effort. It answers the “Why bother?” question. As in “Why bother doing this?” Responses sound like Achievement, Pride and Legacy.

Ultimately, using a tool like this allows you to consider if your desired outcome builds on your strengths. Those of your firm and yourself.

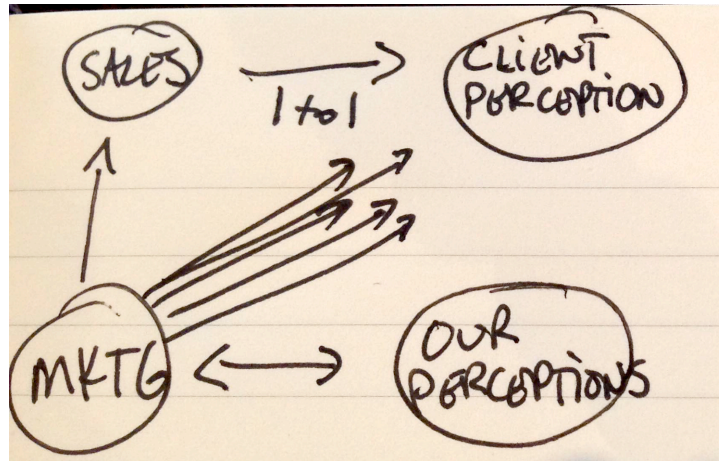
We go through all of this because the exact alignment of Outcomes and Strengths increases the speed of results.

Good stuff.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Your Perception Controls Your Customer's Reality

Take a quick peek at this graphic inspired by Alex Goldfayn of the Evangelist Marketing Institute.



Let's use this graphic to frame our conversation. Anchor it. In the graphic I'm making a few assumptions.

First, looking at the top of the graphic, Sales is primarily a One to One activity. The most powerful conversations you have with your customers happen in these One to One situations.

Second, moving to the lower left, Marketing is primarily a One to Many activity. In marketing, your team promotes your value both internally and externally, to the Staff, the Sales team and the Customers.

Third, moving to the lower right, you'll see Perceptions. Specifically, Your Perceptions. It all starts with you. How you see, hear, feel and interpret your company and your company's place in the market.

Working with those assumptions, the graphic is sending us a message. At each arrow, an specific idea takes form.

Our Perceptions Control Our Customer's Reality.

Evidence of the power of perception showed up earlier this year while reading the article, **“How to Raise a University's Profile: Pricing and Packaging,”** New York Times, 02/08/2015

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/08/education/edlife/how-to-raise-a-universitys-profile-pricing-and-packaging.html>)

Read this excerpt:

“Mr. Trachtenberg convinced people that George Washington was worth a lot more money by charging a lot more money. Unlike most college presidents, he was surprisingly candid about his strategy. College is like vodka, he liked to explain. Vodka is by definition a flavorless beverage. It all tastes the same. But people will spend \$30 for a bottle of Absolut because of the brand. A Timex watch costs \$20, a Rolex \$10,000. They both tell the same time.”

**What are your perceptions about your company?
How are those perceptions shaping your customer's reality?**

Outcomes Not Outputs

Your team of marketing professionals are expert communicators. Plying their trade in semantics. They love the discussion around the differences found in words like Outcomes and Outputs. To an industry outsider, those words may be synonymous to results. When it comes to the real world however, if your firm is selling Outcomes but charging for Outputs, it's going to cause real problems. For one client, this disconnect showed up in pricing and retention problems.

However, this article isn't about pricing strategy. It's about taking control of the language we use to communicate.

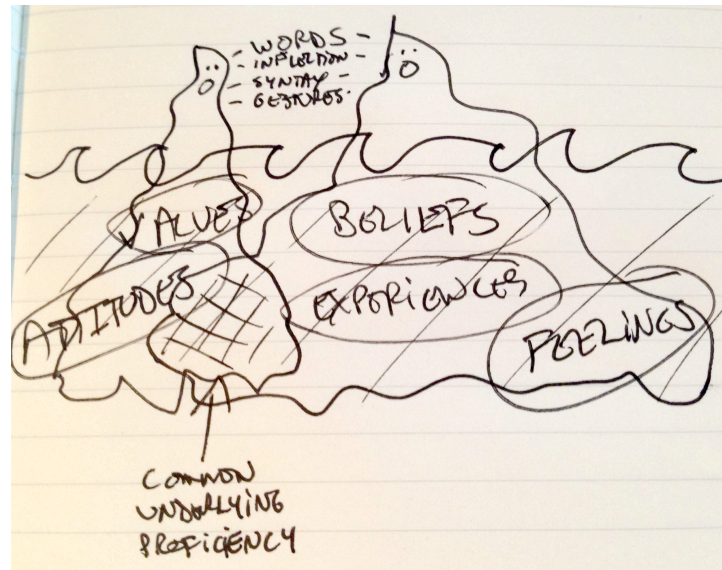
Communication tools will change over time, but the principles of effective communication will not.

In order for your people to accurately and persuasively communicate your company's perceptions, they need to be effective communicators.

I'm going to ask you to take in the beauty of my talking icebergs on the facing page. But before you look, imagine the popular image of a sole iceberg surrounded by icy blue ocean. The iceberg visible both above and below the water.

If we're on the same page, 20-30% of your imaginary iceberg is sticking out of the water and 70% is under the surface of the water out of view, right?

Okay, you can look now.



Linguists tell us that when people communicate, there are not only the Words/Inflections/Gestures/Syntax at work, but a world of Thoughts, Beliefs and Values are working just under the surface. Just like an iceberg.

In those Thoughts, Beliefs and Values there will be overlap (the Common Underlying Proficiency) but it's not complete. It runs on a spectrum of strong commonality with, say, a family member, to near zero overlap if you communicate with a Pygmy tribesman.

That's how I end up with two talking icebergs that touch under the surface.

My point is this. You have a department inhabited by people with a natural inclination for defining terms and repeating messages. Expert communicators that can build commonality. **Your customers want Outcomes.** Direct your marketing team to be sure they are communicating Outcomes to customers. Then ask them to focus that effort internally.

From Knowing to Doing

“Eat foods in close to their natural state.”

“Get 60 minutes of vigorous activity a week.”

“You need a minimum of 7 hours of sleep each night.”



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It's one thing to know what to do and another to consistently do it. Listening to Alex Goldfayn tell it, the bridge between Knowing and Doing is Discipline. The willingness to hold yourself to a standard.

With that in mind, consider this.

Referrals and Client Testimonials are a business development best practice across multiple industries and disciplines.

Much like the 3 pieces of advice used to open this article, in order for your junior partners to get referrals and testimonials consistently, it requires them to put forth a consistent, disciplined effort.

Just before I heard Goldfayn make his points, I was listening to Dr. Martin Seligman discuss the concept of well-being. In his talk he mentioned the **VIA Survey of Character Strengths**. What his research found is that one way for us to consistently exhibit the behaviors that lead to our well-being is to identify our particular Strengths and apply them to high-gain tasks. Especially those tasks that we know we should be doing, but can't seem to get started on or consistently complete. A way to be more disciplined.

You can find the free strengths test here:

<https://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/testcenter>

If your junior partners struggle to consistently ask clients for Testimonials and Referrals, apply Dr. Seligman's advice. Have them take the test, review the results and brainstorm ways to apply their particular strengths in order to consistently ask for referrals and client testimonials.

Then sit back and prepare to reap the rewards in 2016.

Perception is Reality



Photo by Michael Zagaris/San Francisco 49ers/Copyright© 2014 Getty Images

Quality of decision making was a recurring theme during the conference. One decision trap went by various names: Framing, Bounded Reality, Relative Comparison. . but all of them share the same bias.

The decision making structure/frame we are given goes unexamined.

Here's an example: Compare these two statements about an opportunity to purchase a competitor's customer list.

(A.) "If we take advantage of this opportunity to buy Company X's customer list for \$100,000, we have an 80% chance of adding \$400,000 in revenue this year but a 20% chance of losing the entire \$100,000 investment."

(B.) "If we miss this opportunity to purchase Company X's customer list, we lose the opportunity to add \$400,000 in revenue this year."

Economists say we are risk averse when looking at gains and risk seeking when it comes to avoiding losses. The ability to sidestep this decision trap, to pause, step back from a given frame and confidently reframe the structure of the decision is rooted in self-esteem. Confidence.

A recent NFL defection illustrates this further.

Chris Borland of the San Francisco 49ers retired from the NFL at the age of 24. Forgoing years of earnings that could have been in the tens of millions of dollars.

He may have been risk averse when that choice was framed as a gain: “You can earn tens of millions of dollars but there’s a strong chance that your quality of life will be severely degraded in middle age.”

He may have become risk seeking if his choice was framed to avoid loss: “We’re prepared to pay you millions of dollars. Dollars that will prevent your family from being doomed to poverty. But you should know there’s a chance you’ll be impaired by middle age.”

My point is that you can train your people to recognize this trap. When they hear something like “there are no other options.” Help them work around the trap. Give them the confidence to take the frame they are given and hold it up to closer scrutiny. When they hear “there are no other options,” they know that there are always other options.

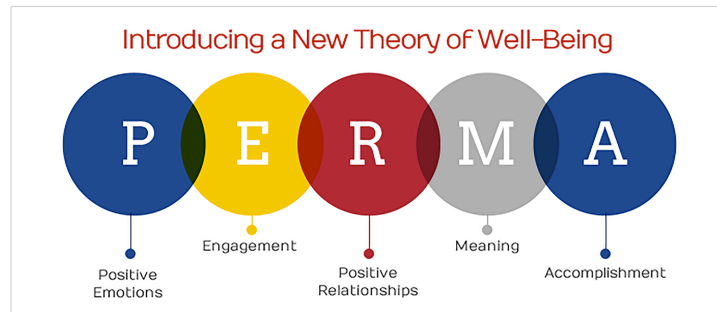
Avoid the trap. Check your perceptions and come up with alternatives or find a trusted advisor to help.

YOUR BEST YOU

The Invisible Hand and Well-Being

You're familiar with Adam Smith's "Invisible Hand" metaphor, the one that says self-interest regulates the marketplace. Dr. Martin Seligman used it to describe the economic benefits of companies that have focused their managers on raising their PERMA, his new theory of Well-Being.

<https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/learn>



Have no fear, I'm not going to attempt a 200 word summary of PERMA and what it means to the organizations that have applied its principles. Other than to say that happier employees are more productive a la the Invisible Hand. However, I am going to encourage you to pick up his book Flourish and dig in.

What I am going to do is focus on what I found to be the most interesting part of his talk.

Seligman said that eliminating employee stress is the wrong target for companies that want a more productive workplace because there is a limited upside for those efforts.

Helping employees increase their well-being, on the other hand, works better because it gives your team the tools to deal with challenges. That tied into what Alan Weiss had said the day before, which was the number one challenge impacting performance is self-confidence. And it's what Gallup espouses with their Strengths Finder tool. Your organization will achieve more by getting team members to focus on their strengths. I'm sure there are other examples.

Ultimately, both of these thinkers are telling us that happy customers come from happy employees. Allocate your resources appropriately.

Flourishing in Life



"I don't make predictions and I never will!"

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Dr. Martin Seligman has been studying the field of positive psychology at the University of Pennsylvania for years. While describing PERMA he threw in this aside, “resilience is twice as likely to predict success as talent or intellect.”

Twice as likely.

Inside of an organization, Dr. Alan Weiss describes empowered employees as “people who can make decisions which influence the outcome of their work.” Letting people decide where to hold the next corporate retreat isn’t empowering people. They need to control their work outcomes.

These two ideas work together to help your people flourish not just in work, but in life. To flourish is defined as “to grow or develop in a healthy, or vigorous way, especially as the result of a particularly favorable environment.”

Note that last part of the definition - a particularly favorable environment.

You’re building your company to provide True Wealth and self-directed time, so you have an active self-interest in helping your team flourish in life. That’s not wholly dependent on your leadership, as Seligman points out, but you can control how your management team allows employees to influence the outcomes of their work.

Challenge your leadership team to remove the obstacles that prevent employees from controlling work outcomes. Challenge them to reward behaviors not wins.

I predict positive outcomes will result.

Time is Precious



As humans, we understand the concept of “future.” We project ourselves into it and understand our eventual mortality. As philosopher Stephen Cave puts it, “we live with this sense of personal apocalypse,” and it drives our busyness. It drives how we choose to spend our time. How we spend that time shapes who we become.

Busyness. Great word.

In my startup life there was a constant comparison and contrast to corporate life. Two of the words that took on particular meaning were “prioritization” and “allocation.” Everything in startup life was viewed as an allocation problem. As in “not enough resources to allocate.” Including Time.

In hindsight I should have realized that **time was my non-renewable resource**. It demanded prioritization, not allocation.

Alan Weiss says that ironically, the harder we work to merely make money, the harder we are working to decrease our true wealth.

True wealth is self-directed time. Money is the fuel. The more we mindlessly work, travel, and respond to others, the lower our wealth regardless of how much money we’re earning.

Ozymandias

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

— Percy Bysshe Shelley

Help your people prioritize their non-renewable resource. Time.

Build on Your Strengths



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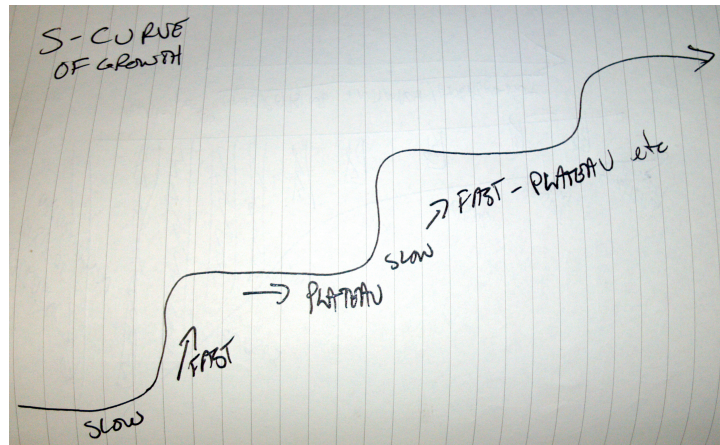
I have a bias. It happens when I think about your business.

I default to creating or uncovering the innovative ideas inside your business. Breakthrough concepts. I want to encourage visionary thinking. Invent ways to propel the business to the next plateau in the S curve of growth.

Whether you need it or not.

It's part of my VIA Character Strengths Profile: Creativity, ingenuity and originality.

(Followed by Humor and playfulness then Capacity to love and be loved. Remember that. You can use it against me later.)



Propulsion to the next level comes from focusing on one or two areas. Concentrated effort to gain speed. Those areas are where we focus strengths on strengths.

Dr. Seligman has a tool he uses in PERMA called the VIA Survey of Character Strengths.

<https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/testcenter>

His premise is that after you've identified your particular strengths, you apply them to challenges in your day to day work life. More importantly, you should have your team apply their strengths to their day to day work life. Strengths building on strengths.

It's easy to imagine how it works. When confronted with challenges like unexpected events or new regulations, apply your strengths. To discover a new path that takes advantage of new technologies or to combine tools in a unique way, use strengths.

It reminds me of Steffi Graf. Did it matter that every opponent knew that her backhand was her weakness? More to the point, did she focus on fixing her weakness? Her time was spent improving her already powerful forehand and excellent footwork.

She built on her strengths.

GREGORY S. CHAMBERS

Chambers Pivot Industries List of Services



Leaders utilize me to brainstorm and strategize. I bring my processes and intellectual property to the table and combine it with their expertise to increase sales or decrease the cost of sales or speed up results. Or a combination of all 3.

Tools I use:

Consulting Engagements
Topic Driven Workshops
Online Classes
Speaking
Individual Coaching
Individual Mentoring

Topics I discuss:

Analytics: Insights for Making Exceptional Decisions
Sales: Boost Value by Banking on Good Decisions
Conversion: Stop Guessing, Start Mapping, Convert
Retention: Bottom Line Customer Service
Pricing: The Plumber's Primer on Pricing
Convergence: Logged In? Always On.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

I encourage you to learn more from the authors and consultants referred to in this booklet.

Alan Weiss Ph.D can be found at
<http://www.alanweiss.com>

Dr. Martin Seligman's work is at
<http://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu>

Phil Symchych can be found at
<http://www.symcoandco.com>

Constance Dierickx, PhD is at
<http://www.cdconsultinggrp.com>

Alex Goldfayn's Evangelist Marketing Institute is at
<http://www.evangelistmktg.com>

Dr. Linda Henman's consulting group is at
<http://www.henmanperformancegroup.com>

There were countless others that I met from around the world, Boulder to London to Australia, and they are all added something to the experience whether or not they made it into my little essays.

My website is <http://www.chamberspivot.com> and I keep a blog there that is updated once a week or so. You can sign up to receive those articles via email on the site.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Greg Chambers is a business development consultant.

Leaders hire him to tweak, reinvent and brainstorm ways to get more from sales and marketing. They do this because Greg is immersed in a river of sales and marketing approaches across numerous industries.

A history major in college, once Greg found a career in sales he hasn't stopped researching, reading and writing about the process that some refer to as the oldest profession on Earth. (often confused with another)

Greg is married to his college sweetheart, Laura, and they live in Omaha, Nebraska with their 3 kids, 2 cats and a dog.