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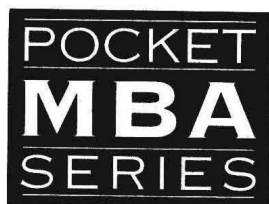
企业的成长与管理—— 建立企业的25个诀窍

GROWING & MANAGING A
BUSINESS
25 KEYS TO BUILDING YOUR
COMPANY

凯瑟琳·R. 阿伦博士著

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陈荣 译注

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前 言

《纽约时报袖珍MBA英语学习手册》具有很强的实用性，适合各层次商业人士学习，无论是一线经理还是企业决策人士。本系列书的作者均为美国最好的商学院教授MBA课程的博士们，并由麦克·勒维塔斯等一组资深编辑运用其商业出版的专业知识为此系列配备了极有价值的参考资料。

本系列书的特点在于提供了快速学习顶尖MBA课程的参考要点，每本书以25个诀窍的形式对在企业管理专业领域中应用的关键性原理提供了无可比拟的综合表述。本系列书的独特方法是将学术著作变成易学易懂的读物，既可做英语培训教材，又是商业人士理想的MBA英语自学用书。为完成您的MBA学习，请一定买齐全套12本书。

勒勃海尔—富莱德曼图书公司

总编辑

约瑟夫·米尔斯



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内容简介

本书介绍建立企业的25个诀窍，学会检验每一个重要环节以避免企业过早夭折，刺激新建企业的成长。

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KEY 1

Prepare yourself and your company for growth

If you have survived the trauma of birth and successfully started a company, the natural byproduct will be growth. Most people think of birth and the very early stages in the life of a business as the most dangerous time. The reality, however, is that the growth stage is likely to be even more perilous, because growth often catches the entrepreneur unaware and unprepared. How can this possibly happen?

The start-up stage of a company is a demanding time for entrepreneurs. They are so busy making everything happen that there is rarely time to scan the horizon to see what's coming. Consequently, entrepreneurs often do not realize that once the business reaches critical mass in terms of customer awareness, demand usually increases dramatically. That translates into immediate needs for the business and the entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurs are considered by many as "control freaks." Because the business results from their

financial and sweat equity, they are naturally reluctant to delegate responsibility to others. They believe that no one can do what they do better than they can. That simply is not true. The skills required to create an opportunity and assemble the resources to start the business are not the same skills necessary to grow the business. Growing the business requires professional management skills, and typically the entrepreneur will have to bring someone on board who has the skills that he lacks.

At a minimum, you will benefit from establishing an advisory board of experienced business people who can guide you through the growth process. It is likely, however, that you will also need to hire people to set up the strategies, controls, and systems for growth. Greg Levin, who started the Boston-based company PerfectCurve® with his father, recognized that. The company manufactures and distributes baseball cap accessories to more than 350 retail outlets and catalogs around the country. The company is most known for its PerfectCurve, a simple device that creates a curved cap brim on baseball caps. As the product gained acceptance and demand exploded, Levin made sure that he surrounded himself with people who knew more than he did about how to grow this type of business, and he attributes his company's success to that decision.

Just as a business plan was a critical component in starting a company, a growth plan is vital to its expansion. This should include your overall growth strategy, the specific tactics you will use to execute that strategy, and the resources that will be required to undertake those tactics. Those resources usually include additional staffing to meet the increased workload, standardized systems or procedures for

how things should be done, and controls to provide benchmarks and checkpoints for monitoring the company during growth. The plan should also specify how you plan to secure working capital and financing for any new equipment and facilities.

In the following keys, you will learn the methods of successful growth for any business.

**He who thinks his business
below him, will always be
above his business.**



Thomas Fuller, Gnomologia

KEY 2

Be aware of the factors that affect your company's ability to grow

Growing your business is a little like going into battle. It is important to know your enemy. If you don't understand all the obstacles to growth, you won't be prepared to deal with them. Douglas Levin certainly learned that lesson the hard way. He started by paying too much for his fresh juice company, Fresh Samantha, he says. That meant he had less room for error in the decisions he would make. Then he mistakenly targeted the wrong market, so consumers thought the price of his juices was too high. And if that weren't enough, a competitor sold a batch of apple juice that contained the *E. Coli* bacteria, and Levin, like other juice manufacturers, had to invest in expensive pasteurization equipment. All of these problems halted his growth for a time, and it was only his persistence that finally allowed the company to grow from \$2.8 million in 1996 to \$7 million in 1997.

Several factors can affect your ability to grow your company.

Your intentions. Some entrepreneurs actually choose not to grow or to grow very slowly. This reluctance is usually out of fear. It's important to understand that you have to want to grow your business or you will not do what is necessary to make it happen.

The nature of your target market. The size of your market and its buying power will certainly put limits on how much and how fast you can grow. You can expand those limits by looking at global markets or adding more products and services to your offerings.

The nature of your competition. You choose your competition based on how you define the market niche you are entering. If you intend to go head to head with a much larger, more established company, you are asking for trouble. You would be better off creating a customer niche that is currently not served by the larger companies in the market to give your company a chance to gain a foothold before it takes on larger competitors.

How your industry deals with innovation. If you are fortunate enough to be in an industry where innovation is rare, you can gain a competitive advantage by introducing something new—a new product or a new way of doing something. If, on the other hand, you find yourself in an industry where innovation is the price of admission, you will need significant capital resources to survive.

How predictable your industry is. Predictability certainly makes business life easier, but the truth is, it makes it so much easier that it is difficult to differentiate yourself and do well in the market. By contrast, a highly volatile industry like

telecommunications can be a hotbed of opportunity because things are changing so rapidly. Small companies can often benefit the most because they tend to be more flexible with much lower overhead, and they can change course quickly as needed.

How difficult entry barriers are. Your industry is not always a friendly place. Mature players can make it very difficult for new businesses to enter by setting high standards for research and development, plant and equipment, or regulations. Established businesses that own core technology can effectively keep you from playing by refusing to license that technology.

Knowing the factors that could prevent you from achieving your goals will give you a chance to find ways to successfully deal with them before you reach the growth stage.

KEY 3

To grow, your company needs a vision

There is an old saying, "If you don't where you're going, how will you know when you've gotten there?" That certainly holds true for growing businesses. Superstar athletes like Michael Jordan visualize games before they play them. Successful entrepreneurs also envision where they want their companies to be in the future.

Vision is the glue that holds everyone in the company together in a common purpose. The research of people like Jim Collins and Jerry Porras¹ has taught us that a company can be profitable without a vision, but vision appears to be essential for a company to endure over time. Vision provides the environment conducive to making the right decisions.

The problem is that most entrepreneurs get so wrapped up in the day-to-day activities of

¹Collins, Jim and Jerry I. Porras (1994). *Built to Last, Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*, New York: Harper Business, 1994.

keeping the business moving forward that they rarely raise their heads above the fray to see what's coming. Moreover, they have no idea where they are going. This is a critical mistake. Defining where you want the business to be at some point in the future allows you to make better decisions along the way. In other words, you will make decisions that take your business in the right direction.

The foundation of any business's vision is the value system of the entrepreneur. Collins and Porras called this "core values," and they represent your fundamental philosophy of life, what you believe in. Core values are long-held beliefs and are unlikely to change. If you are willing to change a belief you have, then it is probably not a core value. Here are some examples of core values that some business owners have expressed:

We believe in total integrity.

Our employees are our most important asset.

We will treat everyone fairly and honestly.

The core values you define for your business are sacred. You would never do anything to compromise those values because they are the values by which your company is known. For example, if your employees are your most important asset, you would never treat them like mere cogs who have no say in what happens. Rather, you would treat them like members of the team, who have a vested interest in the success of the business.

It follows that you should involve your employees in the definition of the other core values for your business. That will be easier if your business is