



## Jim's Profit Accelerator 142 Don't Look Back

Arthur Gensler, founder of the eponymous largest architecture firm in the world, started with his wife and one employee in 1962. They counted the cash every Friday night and then decided what to pay themselves. His story, like many successful entrepreneurs, is a mix of work, luck, careful hiring, and more. His outlook is a mantra all leaders could embrace: *I only look forward. I don't look back.*<sup>1</sup>

**SPEED BUMP:** What would happen if YOU only looked forward?

Current leadership noise worships the post-mortem, the analysis of what happened, the benchmarking of industry leaders, and other tricks of looking away from what's in front of us. The assumption is that our odds of success will rise if we analyze and evaluate before moving forward.

Here's a test for your next review/plans meeting:

1. Before you enter the meeting, write in 25 words or less what should be done next (analyze not included).
2. Work through the meeting.
3. Write in 25 words or less what should be done next (analyze not included).
4. Compare the added value of # 3 with the cost of analysis.

My experience is that #3 wasn't enough better to justify the wait. Here's another approach:

1. Immediately note what actions should be taken going forward from here.
2. Zero in on high-risk actions, and ignore the rest.
3. Shine a light on fuzziness and clear it up.
4. Spell out risk mitigation that can be done without slowing down action.
5. Take action and observe wins and friction.
6. Repeat #1.

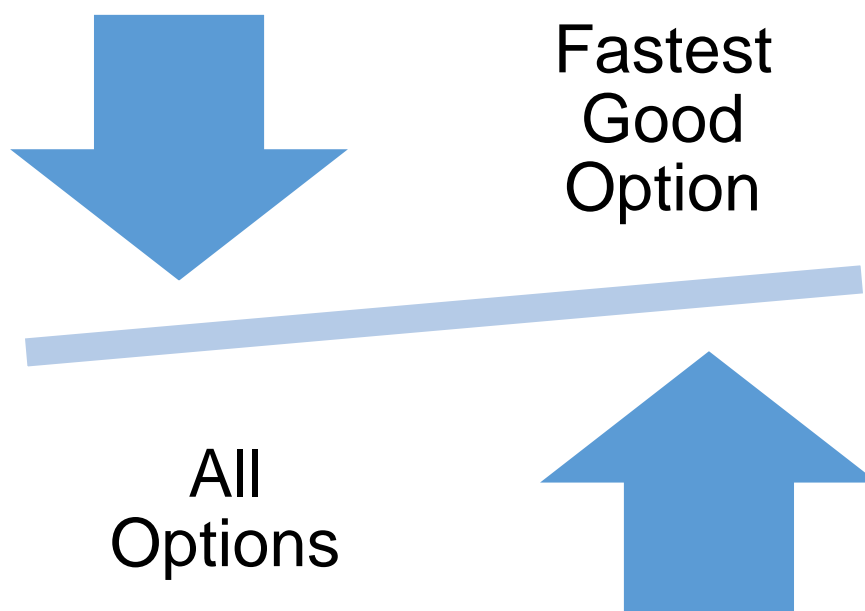
**SPEED BUMP:** To move faster, focus on cutting the big risks.

Here's how: Shift your review meeting immediately to looking forward. Answer the three key questions to move from plan to implementation as soon as possible:

1. What's the highest payoff thing we can do?
2. How fast can we do it?
3. What major risks can we ameliorate?

**SPEED BUMP:** It's faster to plan implementation than to decide what to do.

Renowned psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Dr. Herbert Schlesinger provided this nugget to psychiatrists in training: It's not what you say (or do); it's what you do next that determines the outcome.<sup>2</sup>



**SPEED BUMP:** Instead of thoroughly evaluating all risks in a major decision, writing out the biggest ones.

**ACCELERANT:** What high-payoff action is languishing in analysis?

For more information on how you can accelerate revenues and profits in your business, please call or email me.

A note on **SPEED BUMPS:** Use them to click quickly with an idea that can immediately be implemented in your life as a business leader. Think: "How can I use this today?" or "Who can use this?"

<sup>1</sup> *Fortune* 4/1/17, p 28

<sup>2</sup> Presentation to Menninger Clinic in 1995

For more information, visit [www.grewco.com](http://www.grewco.com).

Jim Grew, the Business Defogger and Accelerator, helps leaders discover hidden opportunities within their businesses and exploit them for dramatic results. Jim has led 9 businesses, worked in 31 companies at C-level, and is an expert in strategy and executive leadership. He presents regularly to industry groups, mentors business leaders, and shares insights in his Executive Letter (above). Jim holds BA and MBA degrees from Stanford University. In his new book, *The Other Side of Succession*, he shares how to plan for the future by growing your business now.