



DO BUSINESS FASTER™

## Jim's Profit Accelerator 252 The Lullaby World

To our surprise, it's October. October means 4th quarter to most leaders, and a time for a sharp shift in priorities: stop development, boost execution. What does that mean?

It means directly influencing the actions of your key people, and then checking to see that the changes actually happen out in the real world. The "meeting world" seems so real—and so willing—that it can be a lullaby that blocks reality.

**SPEED BUMP:** The meeting lullaby feels like action, but it's often merely pleasing.

One of my clients has spelled out specific reviews and data that its project manager—foremen teams are to complete at specific times. These aren't "as needed," or "as problems require," or "as you feel like it," or "when you expect a visit from your boss" (all of which describe the lullaby world that many leaders inhabit without knowing it). Instead, these are forms of progress review that include the key folks needed for progress. Seems clear enough, right? When the COO asks his leaders if they are happening, the answer depends on how he asks the question:

- If he asks, "Are they happening?" the answer is yes.
- If he asks, "When did this meeting happen on that job during the past week?" he gets a different answer.
- Of course, he's learned that a general question doesn't get the job done, and that there's resistance in his organization to the key actions.

**SPEED BUMP:** If the answer changes depending on how specific the question is, there's a problem.

Learning to ask questions with a sharp point is a survival technique that feels too aggressive, threatening both teamwork and commitment. The reverse is true. A clear question that reveals a clear answer is among the most helpful leadership actions that exist. They are helpful because they reveal the truth, enabling action or bringing help to the site.

**SPEED BUMP:** People call "FIRE" when they see one; they don't beat around the bush.

Unfortunately, most daily leadership challenges aren't so dramatic, but their impact on results can be powerful, especially when they recur unanswered. So make your calls to action as clear as a fire alarm.

Back to our regular programming: It's less than three months until the end of the year—the financial and goal marker spot. In fact, because of the lead time to get things done, it's more like two months or eight weeks.

So now is the time to stop development, stop testing, and move to 100 percent execution. There will be time in the first quarter next year to resume testing and trying. Now is the time to get it done. That will be hard, because habits leave room for “partly work” typified by the hope that “I’ll do it tonight when I get home.”

**ACCELERANT:** What essentials will your team finish between now and Christmas?

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?”

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.

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