

Jim's Profit Accelerator 118: Relentless Implementation?

Iconic CEO Alan Mulally (turned around Boeing and Ford) has said: "...you need a really good plan to deliver your future, and then relentless implementation."* Let's look at the relentless part, instead of the plan. It turns out that most of us worship at the altar of a good plan, ignoring the pile of plans that went before us. Let's stipulate for a moment that some kind of plan is good, and should exist. That's not how the game is won. Implementation gets it done, period.

SPEED BUMP: How you implement boosts your chance of winning.

Implementation is always sloppy. It's never how we hope. So why do we think that this time it will be different?

I was working at my computer this morning when there was a sharp THUMP that shook my building. Earthquake? The big one? (Catastrophic earthquake predictions are a thing in Portland now.). Nope: Natural gas explosion and fire, five blocks away. It blew away an entire building, shattered windows down the street, and ultimately injured three firefighters.

The explosion isn't the point, but this is: Firefighters come to get the job done. They don't just try, or hope, or give it their best shot. They come to fix the problem, and they do. Doubt it? Where is a fire that's still burning? How do they do it? Beyond drive, training, and skill, they decide ahead of time that they'll put the fire out. Period. Here's evidence from today's explosion:

1. A block away from the fire sat four backup fire trucks. (I know that because they weren't engaged with the fire.)
2. Down another street, four backup ambulances waited, engines running, in contact with their supervisor.
3. All intersections were blocked by barricades and police officers, keeping people out.

SPEED BUMP: Firefighters bring plenty to the fire to be sure they put it out. Do you?

Are you more like the firefighters or Walmart?

Walmart implementation seems to have been to squeeze more and more out of its resources (people, suppliers, and buildings), chasing profit and leaving customers behind. Sales have fallen short of forecast, actually declining in many stores. Their CEO is now the face of their new advertising, talking about how they are taking care of their people. They are pushing to refill the shelves in their stores so that customers can find what they came to the store to buy.**

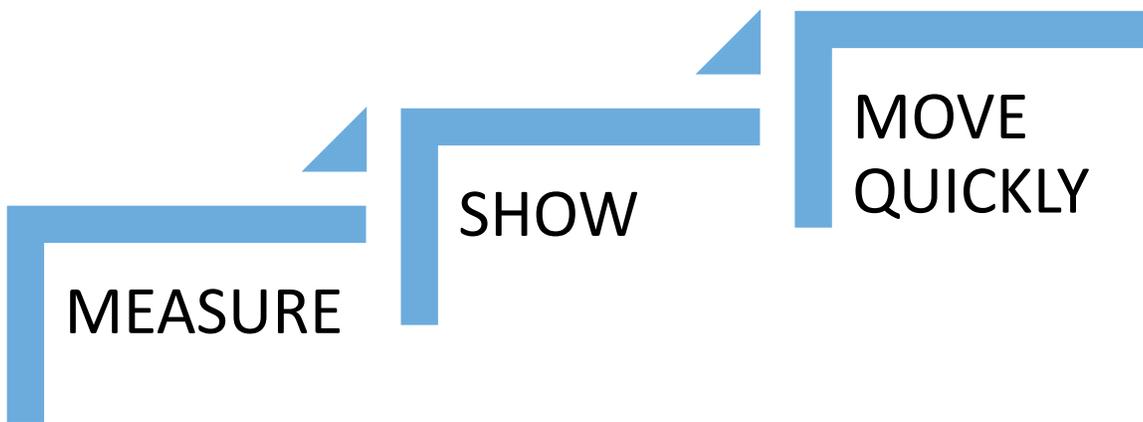
Relentless is about what you bring to the game, and how you keep going back to the fire until it's out. Relentless is not about trying hard, and it's not about doing more than you've ever done before or more than you ever thought you could. Relentless is about getting it done.

SPEED BUMP: Leaders determine what their people bring to the game.

Here's how you build relentless into your organization:

1. Measure critical things. (Is the fire out or not?)
2. Show everyone how you're doing. (Is the fire out or not?)
3. Move quickly to snuff out the hot spots. (Is the fire out or not?)

SPEED BUMP: Everyone should know how you're doing.



ACCELERANT: Which hot spot are you focusing your people on?

(Bonus Award: Did you get the double meaning?)

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

**American Icon*, ©2012 Bryce Hoffman, Crown Publishing, p. 392

***Wall Street Journal*, 10/19/16

For more information, visit 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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