

Jim's Profit Accelerator 47: You Don't Need Steph Curry to Be More Like the Warriors

The Golden State Warriors are likely to be the first San Francisco team to bring home an NBA title since 1975. Their story is as much about management and leadership off the court as it is about the players and coaches.

Six months after Silicon Valley veteran venture capitalist Joe Lacob bought the team in 2011, he upgraded both discipline and talent in the senior management group, to put it mildly. Their performance is on display every game night. Of course they have gifted players, Steve Kerr as coach, and a remarkable record. However, it wouldn't have happened without the leadership upgrade, according to owner Lacob. "You can attribute it to luck, or to the people we picked."*

Of course picking people is just part of the story; it's also about how the organization is led. These leadership pillars mark winners:

The Right Leaders: Warriors owner Lacob says he's learned to "pick people" in working with 130 Silicon Valley firms. It's not just the picking, though that's vital. It's the willingness to make a space for the new and stronger leader by moving someone aside or creating a new position. Cost and habit are the enemies here, and because they're out of the limelight, they can generate damaging fog from their closets.

SPEED BUMP: Which of your top leaders can be moved to open the growth door?

Active Vision: Vision isn't gazing, it's finding the next action target. The difference compared to traditional vision is that it always includes action, but requires space to see and create. One of the companies where I worked has sales 30 percent ahead of two years ago, with profit coming along nicely. They roared out of the recession by re-casting their leadership team, pushing for the next growth step before the last steps were digested. Here's what they did:

1. Carefully developed their best salesman by training him in project management and production before moving him to sales.
2. Invested nearly \$1,000,000 in two highly focused process equipment upgrades in their manufacturing operations.
3. Considered and rejected many other appealing paths to profit growth.

They are now examining expansion to the east coast. What's driving your sales today?

SPEED BUMP: Vision means little without timely action.

Move to the Marrow: Instead of trying to be “the decider,” or letting your team make the decisions, move to the marrow of effective action. Most executives wallow between pleasing their boss and finding action paths with acceptably low risks.

The difference-maker is a CEO who frames discussion, agendas, and “no’s” to give his team a playing field where they can excel. That means blowing up agendas and activities that are small bore or off-target, regardless of their appeal. It also means creating spaces of no action, where thought and debate can safely occur. If you think you do this well and regularly, ask your team this question: What’s the top opportunity that we’re missing? You may have to ask twice to get them to believe that you want their thought, not just their answer.

SPEED BUMP: Do you dally in discomfort, or do you lurch to decision in discomfort?

Your “warrior leadership” might look like this:



ACCELERANT: Which of your leaders needs to move?

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

**(SF Chronicle 6/7/15, p. A1)*

For more information, visit www.grewco.com.

Jim Grew is an expert in CEO-level strategy and executive leadership whose clients refer to him as the Business Defogger and Accelerator. Jim helps leaders swiftly discover the hidden opportunities within their businesses and exploit them for dramatic results. Nearly three decades of success as a COO and CEO coupled with his experience running nine thriving businesses provide the foundation for his consulting work as president of the Grew Company. He presents regularly to industry groups, mentors business leaders, and shares insights on his blog, BizBursts.com: <http://bizbursts.com/>. He holds BA and MBA degrees from Stanford University.

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