



DO BUSINESS FASTER™

## Jim's Profit Accelerator 70: More Than Golf

"Everybody I know that's retired has died in less than five years," said the guy who is repotting himself after 40 years of successful business leadership. He's brought in a leader to gradually replace him, and he's finding himself at loose ends.

Make no mistake: He loves to travel, he plays golf with friends in the rain, and he looks forward to month-long odysseys in his RV with his wife. He's just as clear that all this plus his part-time role at his business just isn't "it." Evidence: After we enjoyed meeting for the first time at a resort in Maui, he suggested that we get together when we returned home. His answer to the invitation was "I'm in your neighborhood almost every week. I'll drop by." Sounds like he's not fully in either retirement or leading his substantial business. (He's a blunt construction business leader, so he has no trouble saying no if that's what he wants.)

**SPEED BUMP:** There's more to your darkroom life than extending your past.

What's operating here is habit built on fear multiplied by aversion. If you flip it on its head, it's no clear path with no way to build one. What's in the way is that he's looking in the wrong direction. All his business life he's looked at his business as the prime driver of challenge and satisfaction. Even with its moments of terror separated by occasional joy and regular boredom, it was a golf kind of life. The joke is that all that it takes to bring a golfer back next week is one good shot on each nine. Darkroom formula:



**SPEED BUMP:** Moving out of your old job won't deliver the highs that moved you.

Think about it. The constant push-pull of business leadership is like a Western movie: good guys, bad guys, action, near-death experiences. Do you really think that someone who loved that life will thrive in a rocker?

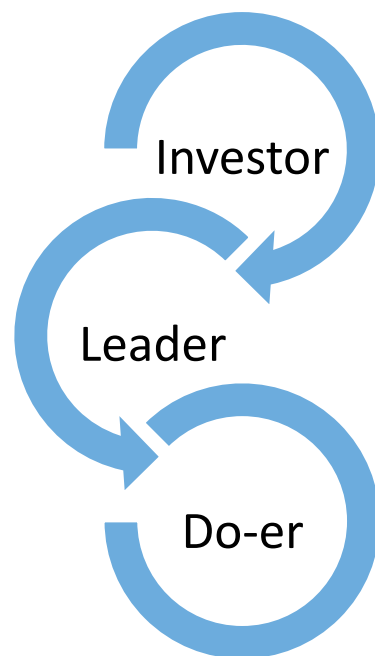
The question is not what to do. It's how to find what to do when you're beyond rusty at it. Your "what to do" is about either growing a business, buying a business, or leading a business. If you remove "business" from that sentence, what's left is the search formula, in three parts. Here's how to start to light up your darkroom:

### **It's About You, Not the Business**

- Stop looking at the business for a moment, and figure out where you are.
- Accept your blind spots, even though you can see them.
- Find at least two senior advisors who care about you, see you, and will question you. Let them question you vigorously about what lights you up. Listen carefully.

As I looked for my way after successful runs in two large corporations, I stumbled through two careers with mixed results. (Worked with a guy who was convicted of bank fraud; sold investment real estate until I was bored silly.) The lights came on when a friend spent an afternoon pouring beer into me and asking probing questions, until he opined, "You're a leader. Forget about being a corporate marketing guy." I've successfully improved 25 companies since then.

**SPEED BUMP:** Since you know it's hard to see yourself, get help.



## Investor, Leader, or Do-er—Which Are You?

Here's the fog-cutter:

- Investors love analysis like they love poker or fantasy football. They don't want to get mud on them, and they'll take a loss from time to time, just to stay in the game.
- Leaders feed off the growth and accomplishments of people. Unless that feeds you deeply, it's not really you. Many business leaders love the puzzle but can't stand the drone of people issues.
- Do-ers either devised the concept that became their business, or they live in their garage to rebuild cars or remodel their houses. These "tinkerers" are happiest when they're wrapped around their workbench.

### Pick One and Try It

Investors will often stay in their business as investors instead of daily leaders. Their model is Board Chair, whether there is a board or not.

Leaders will find another organization to lead. The smartest ones will find either a business that fascinates them deeply, or they'll find a charity that they believe in from their heart. Either needs their skill, feeding their hope to fuel noteworthy success.

Do-ers will answer these questions:

- Looking back from age 12, what projects lit me up?
- What is within reach that's like the best of my past?
- What can I start this week?

**ACCELERANT:** What will you try this week?

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

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