



DO BUSINESS FASTER™

## Jim's Profit Accelerator 208 Red Zone Leadership

“Red zone” is football talk for the grind to a score, usually in the last five yards to the touchdown stripe. It's got a name and teams practice it a lot because it's the most demanding part of the game—the other team toughens up to try to prevent a score, the space is compressed, and so forth. Success requires strength and precision. The metaphor fits well in business leadership: Only the finish produces the result.

Many leaders are good starters, but few are good as finishers. Since this is about leadership, it's about the performance of the folks that you lead. The question is what can you do to cause your team to start better and finish well sooner?

**SPEED BUMP:** What can you do to help your team start better and finish better?

### Start Better:

We all know this, but we may not do it regularly:

1. Shave the action list to a few top impact items.
2. Sharpen the target and check for understanding.
3. Pick a leader and ask for a start time.
4. Help the leader get the right team.
5. Set a check-in time.

Rate yourself on the past month as a starter: Circle the steps that you followed at least once. Then you'll see where you can do better.

**SPEED BUMP:** A clumsy start delays and cripples the finish.

### Finish Better:

Check-in weekly:

- What are the odds of success?
- What needs tuning?
- What needs big change?
- Where are spots for small improvement?

Require clear weekly measures (1-3):

- Review weekly.
- Use to recognize good work.
- Use to spot action areas.

Once performance has momentum, pull more, push less:

- Encourage good small steps.
- Re-simplify work to meet goal.
- Reward effort as well as results.
- Emphasize precision: least effort to reach target.

When Robert Maclellan got out of the Navy, he and a partner bought a Wendy's in Medford (with no prior industry knowledge). They cut the time to produce a hamburger from company standard one minute down to 13 seconds! Cars lined up in the street to come see it. Dave Thomas flew in from Ohio to see what the heck they were doing. Their method: Look for spots to compress the time needed. In time Maclellan became a millionaire restaurateur.

Rate yourself as a finisher right now. (The courageous will ask two others to rate them as well.)

On a scale of 1 to 10:

1. How do I rate as a starter (of others)? \_\_\_
2. How do I rate as a finisher (with others)? \_\_\_

What it means: 70 percent is good enough. Above that is suspicious—are you really that good?

**ACCELERANT:** What will you do this week to finish better?

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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