



Build Your Business

An eNewsletter for
CEOs looking to
grow their companies.

High-value, "how-to" articles on customer-attraction, sales development, leadership, and best-practices in HR, IT, product development, communication, financial operations, engineering and M&A/value creation.

How to Really Get Things Done

Are you always short on time?
Does your To-Do list only get longer?
Are you at the end of your rope with trying to get ahead?

In this article, learn how to get
you and your business ticking.

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How to Really Get Things Done

Superior time management is a cornerstone of profit and productivity. You already know that. But you're still having trouble actually turbo-charging your GTD IQ.

What's the key to fixing chronic procrastination, edge-of-the-minute task completion, and behind-the-8-ball management?

It's not about time. It's about your relationship to the goal.

Business doesn't get done if *you* can't get things done. Simple as that. Every CEO knows it. Yet in even the best organized, tightly run C-Suites, ineffective and inefficient use of time accounts for a substantial drain.

Sure, your schedule's already tighter than a NASA mission, and your to-do list is longer than the Health Care Bill. But still, there are only 24 hours in a day. Do you suffer from GMTD (general multi-taskcrinating disorder) – meaning you can't do everything because you're trying to do everything?

There's no shortage of apparently helpful resources to boost your time management IQ: there are blog posts, time coaches dispensing advice, productivity experts, even tips from industry gurus of Getting Things Done.

But the most popular strategies espoused by these experts mainly look at the first three inches of why productivity falls into a gully – too many distractions and interruptions, poor prioritizing, disorganized to-do lists, tech glitches. The fixes and work-arounds they typically offer are just as superficial.

Beyond all of those surface issues, there is much more to the problems of chronic procrastination, edge-of-the-minute task completion, and behind-the-8-ball management.

My advice: Look deeper to learn what's really holding you back, and to determine how to get – and keep – you and your business ticking.

Start by realizing that **it's not about time; it's about your relationship to the goal.**

What do I mean? Consider these feet-dragging business owners (I've disguised some identifying details here).

These successful, high-performing CEOs can manage their inboxes, wrangle their to-do lists, and say "no" to low-priority tasks until they're as sleek and efficient as Michael Phelps in the 200m butterfly. But here's why none of that will unhook them from their critical sticking points.

CEO Case Example 1:

Theo recently brought a thoroughbred creative director into his design firm. His new superstar is attracting buzz and blue-chip projects. Now, to leverage this and really take his business to the next level he needs to streamline operations and show a few duds to the door. But he keeps putting it off.

Theo is ambivalent about growing his business. He'll tell you he's ambitious and his success to-date is proof of that. But now that he's actually positioned to kick things up a notch or three, part of him isn't so sure he's ready-or willing-to run a hot-shot shop handling high-profile work.

The Fix: Theo's business issues are playing out in staffing and time management. But to catapult his business, he needs to first resolve his conflict about where he wants to go.

CEO Case Example 2:

James: Following a dazzling attention-grabbing product launch, a new client he'd been courting for months presented him with a game-changing opportunity. To make this fly, James has to put himself and his staff in hyper gear. He knows exactly what needs to be done. But he's deferring all the preliminary activities.

James is by every objective measure an admired and successful 44-year-old businessman with plenty of entrepreneurial drive. He knows how to plan and execute. Being the best is what gets him up in the morning. But privately, he sees himself as a teenage prodigy with a lifetime of potential still to realize. He's unable to relinquish the feeling that his best is yet to come. So, however irrationally, he wears gravity boots, struggling harder than necessary to reach every new brass ring, unknowingly holding himself back in the past. Where a brilliant future awaits him.

The Fix: James' apprehension feels real enough. But it's an old impediment (which surfaces at crux moments) that needs to be quarantined and resolved separately from business.

In my experience, problems with time management are rarely only about the management of time. For many business leaders, procrastination and other similar struggles are usually a symptom – visible evidence, as with Theo and James, of some personal friction or restriction about moving forward.

Bottom line: Getting things done is a completely learnable and improvable set of skills. But to really optimize your use of time, don't just grease the clock. First understand why it's off.

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Author's Biography

Alexander Stein is a business psychoanalyst, speaker, author and thought-leader, and is a Principal in The Boswell Group LLC, a consulting firm focusing on the psychology of business. He advises CEOs and corporate directors on the people side of their business, and specializes in expansion, succession, leadership, boardroom and senior team dynamics, conflict resolution, high-stakes hiring assessments, partnerships, and innovative development initiatives. He is a former FORTUNE columnist and CBS business news blogger, and an engaging public speaker adept at rendering complicated ideas clearly and compellingly. Dr. Stein's approach pivots

on knowing that the best business decisions and solutions are built on sound understanding, not just expedient action.

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March's eNewsletter summaries are provided below. If you would like to receive the three trial issues, please go to: www.synergy-usa.com/eNews.html.

How a \$3 million/yr Company was Acquired for nearly \$20 million: in 6 Months Mark Paul

Are you looking for ways to increase the value of your company? As one CEO found out: Attracting significantly more "A" customers, while decreasing expenses is the surest way.

How to Improve Your Company's Cash Flow

Patrick Wheeler

Do you need extra cash? Are you searching for new sources of capital to help you survive & thrive? This article is for nonfinancial CEOs and discusses the different "levers" you can pull to improve your cash flow.

Using HR to Boost Company Performance

Iris Sasaki

If you are interested in dramatically increasing your employees' and managers' performance, there is a little-known secret that will leverage your strengths - and those around you - to accomplish far more.

Simplifying the Sales and Channel Strategy

Bill Etheredge

Is your sales and channel strategy defined? Have you assessed the effectiveness of existing strategies? Are changes in market conditions causing chaos in your strategy? This article defines what to do to boost effectiveness.

How to Really Get Things Done

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How to maximize the value of IT in your business - IT Outsourcing

Manoj Garg

You know that you spend a lot of money on IT and that you need to maximize the value of your investments in IT. Do you know if you have made the right decisions on make vs. buy on IT functions and services?

Are You Jumping on the Lean Bandwagon?

Rick Pay

Are you trying to reduce operations cost - and considering Lean Manufacturing? Companies are climbing on the Lean bandwagon in droves, but how do you know if Lean is the right approach for your organization?

Got Heart?

Dan Duggan

Is morale an issue at your company? Do employees act listless? Is absenteeism beginning to be a problem? Learn how to recognize and transform "lost heart" into "loving your work".

Ten Reasons to go International

Richard Biggs

If you are pondering whether to go global, recognize the fact that you are already "global", in that you very likely have global competitors. You are in a competitive global marketplace.

Engineering Resources: Captive or Consultant?

Mike Miles

Too many projects and too little staff? Can't afford to hire anyone full-time? This article outlines how CEOs can clarify what is important in choosing to hire technical staff or to retain an outside consultant.

Can you do it in 6:40?

Dave Yewman

Chances are your presentations are too long. Why? Because everyone's presentations are too long. So how do you fix that? Here's one option, a radical option. Are you feeling brave?

How to Find & Attract Capital to Grow Your Company

Brent Freeman

If you have ever had to find capital to grow your company, this article will show you how prepare critical documents required to find capital from non-traditional sources.

This is the third edition of a three-month trial of the Build Your Business eNewsletter. We are interested in your thoughts via a survey. To receive past months' articles and to take the survey, please 'subscribe' at www.synergy-usa.com/eNews.html. Thank you.