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Growing with Intention

Insight, Strategic Planning and Action Build Opportunities



“Use your team members in the roles you hired them to fill, and trust them to do their jobs.”

If we're not growing, we're going backward. Whether the growth comes from innovation, acquisitions, expansion into new territories, acquiring new clients or other strategic initiatives, growth motivates us. Growing with intention requires insight, strategic planning and taking action.

Companies need to plan for the right kind of growth and expect the inevitable roadblocks and obstacles that often come with it. Sometimes—no matter how well-thought-out planning and tactics—we bump against a block. It's important to recognize when you've hit such a roadblock. Here are a few common growth obstacles.

Doing it All Yourself

As leaders, we sometimes try to do too much. We may take on every aspect of each project as if only we can complete it to specifications. We set standards that demand more time than we can give.

Delegating and empowering others is critical. Use your team members in the roles you hired them to fill, and trust them to do their jobs. If you look over their shoulder at every step, there's an excellent chance you're doing too much. Step back, check in at critical milestones, and step in only when necessary. Surround yourself with a great team, and then let them do what you've hired them to do. When we empower others, we not only unleash their full potential, we build trust and ignite their passion for what they do.

Tracking and Preventing Loss

In our business, acquiring a new customer is never cheap, and losing existing ones is a potential business killer. Look at how much of your business comes from existing or previous customers. Spend time cultivating relationships with your existing clients. Sometimes that means helping out when clients need advice on materials or methods to use on a potential project. Other times, it could be just checking in to see how they are and offering to help where needed. Maybe it's a night

at a ball game or a drink shared at an industry event. The point is for the client to understand that they are important to you.

Many businesses forget to focus on retention and spend most of their time and energy acquiring new clients. Don't be one of them.

Not Listening, Not Innovating

Be open to new ideas and be among the first to try them out. We've just experienced the benefit of doing this with our recent Los Angeles Metro project. We had worked with printed glass for a long time. By focusing on innovations in this niche, we secured some highly creative work on the Metro Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project. Using our knowledge and skills with some new printed and frit glass techniques, we successfully transferred the artist's visions from paper to glass.

Not Seeking Referrals

Referrals are fantastic. They show authentic trust in your partners and your business. And they don't need to be completely organic. It's perfectly acceptable for you to solicit testimonials and referrals from your customer base.

The best time to seek some positive feedback or a referral is after a job well done. You can create growth from word-of-mouth.

Plan to Plan

You need to plan for growth and consider why and where you want this growth. You need clear and measurable goals. You need to seek out and embrace innovations within your industry segment and ask for referrals from your clients who are your biggest fans.

Find a blend that works best for your market and customers. If you don't have a growth plan, you may unintentionally be planning to fail. You are bound to reap the rewards with a team focused on successful growth. **USG**

➔ **Nataline Lomedico** is the president and CEO of Giroux Glass, headquartered in Los Angeles. The company has been in business since 1946.