



Starting with the end in mind.

GREAT businesses
get bought.

BAD businesses get sold.

Upcoming challenges for businesses

1. Changing UK Government (max 18 months)
2. Continued economic disconnect with Europe & US
3. Inflationary pressures on wages and costs of goods and services
4. War and political instability
5. Increasing regulations - ESG, employment laws etc
6. Institutional funds reducing investment

What does this mean for your business, you and your family?

- BADR under threat – budget early 2025 spring latest.
- We're stuck between EU and US protocols and decision making and not big enough to make our own.
- We have the biggest borrowing burden of any major economy (something like £115bn in interest this year alone). [Source](#)
- City, HNWs and digital nomads continue to leak out of the UK. [Source](#)

What does this mean for your business?

- Business may get harder to win
- Costs will increase
- Fundraising (debt or equity) will be tougher access, more expensive and more disruptive to close out
- Increased pressure to maintain or even reduce pricing despite this
- Exits will be harder to achieve at lower rates and with higher taxes



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BUT!
Not all doom and gloom!

- Particularly in consulting and technology companies there is a huge opportunity.
- Globalisation of talent, the VC bubble bursting and need for change creates opportunity
- Larger organisations will increasingly look to boutique firms to partner with for the long term
- Strong businesses will take advantage and make more ground



What does this mean?

It is more important now than ever to have clarity on why are you doing this and making sure that the business works as hard for you as you do for it.

Can you answer yes to these 3 questions?

1. Do you know your preferred buyer/exit route? (eg to Trade, PE, EOT, MBO, IPO?)
2. Do you know what you need to do to exit? (eg organic/growth by acquisition?)
3. Does your wealth management strategy cater for the upcoming events? *Do you have a strategy?*

What does this mean?

*Most of you might be thinking this is too far off, or not on the agenda right now, because you are busy in your business.
So lets just touch on some of the main reasons why that'll be what the outcomes are, and explore how we can help you fix that.*

Why growth is so difficult

- Key Client Reliance
- Hiring the drivers not building the car
- Founder bottleneck
- Sales-led mentality missing
- Reactive Hiring



Owner Trap outcomes...

- Business slows when you're away
- Customers come to you when something goes wrong
- Revenue reaches a plateau
- You don't have time to change the status quo



One of the biggest challenges is making change in the business when you're busy trying to keep the lights on. That's without focusing on selling.

These sessions will guide you through the strategies you can deploy to build a better business:

Stronger, more resilience, more agile and more forward-looking

That can grow consistently and relentlessly.

Breaking the Bottleneck



- Great narrative of your past, present and future
- Strong financials (consistent growth)
- Business maturity – think 3 P's (Processes, Platforms, People)
- Strong management team (what got you here won't get you there)
- Market space where your business can 3x (+)
- A uniquely differentiated way of life – think 3 7's

Preliminary Request Example

An example of the type of information that prospective buyers will want from you.

Questionnaire: Are you exit ready?

Some questions to answer on your current position

1. **Fit For Purpose** – alignment with strategic goals, gap analysis, impact
2. **Go-To-Market strategy** – value proposition, addressable market, competition, how to *“make you, you”*
3. **Roadmap** – what good looks like, process, prioritisation, platforms
4. **Implement** – communication & change management, ensure everyone is *“on the bus”*
5. **Talent** – Roles & Responsibilities Matrix, onboarding, development & engagement plans
6. **Management** – quality, structure, reporting, ensuring you *“march like an army”*



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How can you start?

Some considerations about talent and making growth measurable...

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Leadership & Strategy	Initial strategy is to support product sales and provide reference customers while providing workarounds to complete immature products. Leaders are “doers”.	PS has become a profit centre but is subordinate to product sales. Strategy is to drive customer adoption and references profitably. Leaders focus on P&L and client relationships.	PS is an important revenue and margin source, but channel conflict still exists. Services differentiate products. Leadership development plans are in place. Leaders have strong background & skills in all pillars.	Service leads products. PS is a vital part of the company. Solution selling is a way of life. PS is included in all strategy decisions. Succession plans are in place for critical leadership roles	PS is critical to the company. Service strategy is clear. Complimentary goals and measurements are in place for all functions. Leaders have global vision and continually focus on renewal & expansion.
Client Relationships	Opportunistic. No defined solution sets or Go to Market plan. Focus is on new customers and reference building. Individual heroics, no consistent sales, marketing or partnering plan or methodology. No consistent estimating, quoting or contract management processes. Ad hoc, one-off projects.	Start to use marketing to drive leads. Multiple sales models. Start investing in sales training, CRM & sales methodology. Start measuring sales effectiveness & client satisfaction. Start developing partners and partner programs. Some level of proposal reviews and pricing control.	Marketing, inside sales, solution sales with defined solution sets. CRM integrated with financials and PSA. Deal, pricing and contract reviews. Partner plan and scorecard. Tight pricing and contract mgmt. controls. High levels of customer satisfaction.	CRM, PSA, ERP/CFM integration provides 360-degree view of client relationships. Business process, vertical and horizontal solutions. Vertical client centres of excellence. Top client and partner programs. Global contract and pricing management. Key partner relationships. Strong customer reference programs.	Executive relationships. Thought leadership. Brand building and awareness. High customer satisfaction. Integrated sales, marketing and partnering programs. Consistent, high-quality marketing, sales, contract management and pricing processes, systems and measurements. High quality references.
Talent	Hire as needed. Generalist skills. Chameleons, Jack of all Trades. Individual heroics. May perform presales as well as consulting delivery and project management.	Begin forecasting workload. Start developing job and skill descriptions & compensation plans. Rudimentary career paths. Start measuring employee satisfaction.	Resource, skill and career management. Employee satisfaction and engagement surveys. Training plans. Aligned goals and measurements with compensation. Attrition <15%	Business process and vertical skills in addition to technical and project skills. Career ladder and mentoring programs. Training investments to support career. Low attrition, high satisfaction	Continually staff and train to meet future needs. Highly skilled, motivated workforce. Outsource commodity skills or peak demand. Sophisticated variable on and off-shore workforce models.
Delivery & Execution	No scheduling. Reactive. Ad hoc. Heroic. Scheduling by spreadsheet. No consistent project delivery methods. No project quality controls or knowledge management.	Skeleton methodology in place. Centralized resource mgmt. Initiating project mgmt. and technical skills. Starting to measure project satisfaction and harvest knowledge.	PSA deployed for resource and project management. Collaborative portal. Earned Value Analysis. Project dashboard. Global Project Management Office, project quality reviews and measurements. Effective change management.	Integrated project and resource management. Effective scheduling. Using portfolio management. Global PMO. Global project dashboard. Global Knowledge Management. Global resource management.	Integrated solutions. Continual checks and balances to assure superior utilization and bill rates. Complete visibility to global project quality. Multi-disciplinary resource management.
Financial & Operations	The PSO has been created but is not yet profitable. Rudimentary time & expense capture. Limited financial visibility and control. Unpredictable financial performance. Rudimentary contract and risk management.	5 to 15% margin. PS becoming a profit centre but still immature finance and operating processes. Investment in CFM and PSA to provide financial visibility. May not have real-time visibility or BI. Standard Library of Contracts and Statements of Work.	15 to 25% margin. PS operates as a tightly managed P&L. Standard methods for planning, resource mgmt., time & expense mgmt., cost control & billing. In depth knowledge of all costs at the employee, sub-contractor & project level. Processes in place for contract management, legal and pricing decisions.	PS generates > 20% of overall company revenue & contributes > 30% margin. Well-developed finance and operations processes and controls. Systems have been implemented for CRM, PSA, CFM and BI. IT integration and real-time visibility. Systems have been implemented for contract management, legal and pricing decisions.	> 30% margin. Continuous improvement and enhancement. High profit. Integrated systems. Global with disciplined process controls and optimization. Completely integrated financial, CRM, resource management, contracts and pricing systems, processes and controls.

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	Core Processes	Insight		Success criteria	KPI areas
Leadership & Strategy	Setting Strategy Business planning Goal setting Management	Clear and compelling strategy provides a focus for the organization and galvanizes action	Effective strategies bring together target customers, their business problems and how to solve those differently, uniquely or better than the competitors.	Success relies on clear communication throughout the company and support of the purpose of the business. Leadership skills and competencies must mature with the company	Strategic Clarity Communication Alignment Employee Confidence
Client Relationships	Marketing Selling Quote to cash process Driving relevance with clients	Compelling GTM strategy, which defines target buyers, their requirements and how solutions solve these in a differentiated way	Clear processes are thus required for lead generation, quoting, selling solutions, contract management, partnering and marketing	Success relies on ability to communicate effectively with employees, customers and partner to close business, win deals and keep customers returning for more.	Service Packaging Sales Pipeline Client Mix Reference clients
Talent	Recruiting Hiring On-Boarding Training/enablement Compensation Performance Career development	High quality employees represent the essence, brand and reputation of the business	There must be clear structures in place to allow for progression and promotions, and cater for remote/global workforces	Success relies on the ability to attract, retain and motivate high quality consulting staff (and across the business).	Ramp time Employee satisfaction Attrition Billable Utilisation
Service Execution	Resource Management Capacity Planning Project Planning Quality Control Knowledge management Methodology & Tool development	Resource management must remain agile and responsive whilst maintaining high utilisation	Services must continually innovate and refine solutions and propositions to maintain relevance and success with clients	Success relies on projects to be delivered successfully, to a high quality, within budget and in an acceptable time frame. This applies to the project and the pre-project delivery aspect	Resource Management Knowledge Management Project Management Quality Delivery
Financial & Operations	Financial processes Contractual IT & Operating Processes & Controls	Integrated and automated infrastructure eliminates risk of errors, reduces drag and speeds up cash delivery. Credit Control must be managed relentlessly.	High focus must be placed on key financial metrics and a view to looking round the corner to ensure margin and cash do not hinder progression	Success relies upon the business being able to generate revenue and profit and grow this whilst developing repeatable operating processes.	Revenue Project Margin Expenses EBITDA

Top down financial & commercial model

- Driven by BHAG number
- Integrates Financials with Headcount growth (fee earners) and Sales metrics
- Turns growth into a data-driven science

Year	ACTUALS			FORECAST							
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Opportunities required per qtr				86	65	72	57	61	70	81	93
Opportunities Required				344	260	286	228	244	280	322	370
Average Deal Size				£50,000	£75,000	£75,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000
Pipeline required				£17,187,968	£19,531,781	£21,484,959	£22,807,111	£24,354,736	£28,007,947	£32,209,138	£37,040,509
Win Rate		35%	45%	50%	55%	60%	65%	70%	70%	70%	70%
revenue growth %				25%	25%	20%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
GP % of Rev				42%	42%	42%	42%	42%	42%	42%	42%
Expenses % of GP				71%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
Revenue / Rev target	£5,871,479	£6,875,187	£5,972,841	£8,593,984	£10,742,480	£12,890,976	£14,824,622	£17,048,315	£19,605,563	£22,546,397	£25,928,356
Gross Profit	£1,932,404	£2,890,535	£2,152,852	£3,609,473	£4,511,841	£5,414,210	£6,226,341	£7,160,292	£8,234,336	£9,469,487	£10,889,910
Total Expenses	£1,366,293	£2,043,970	£1,802,177	£2,562,726	£3,158,289	£3,789,947	£4,358,439	£5,012,205	£5,764,035	£6,628,641	£7,622,937
Net Profit	£566,111	£846,565	£350,675	£1,046,747	£1,353,552	£1,624,263	£1,867,902	£2,148,088	£2,470,301	£2,840,846	£3,266,973
NP %	10%	12%	6%	12%	13%	13%	13%	13%	13%	13%	13%
Retained earnings	£1,000,000	£1,846,565	£2,197,240	£3,243,987	£4,597,540	£6,221,803	£8,089,705	£10,237,793	£12,708,094	£15,548,940	£18,815,912
Services as % of Rev					45%	50%	55%	60%	60%	65%	70%
S/W as % of Rev											
Renewals as % of Rev											
Services team needed			13	20	31	41	52	65	75	93	115
Services team growth p.a.				7	11	10	11	13	10	18	22
Company Value @ 5x	£2,830,555	£4,232,825	£1,753,375	£5,233,736	£6,767,762	£8,121,315	£9,339,512	£10,740,439	£12,351,504	£14,204,230	£16,334,865
Company Value @ 8x	£4,528,888	£6,772,520	£2,805,400	£8,373,978	£10,828,420	£12,994,103	£14,943,219	£17,184,702	£19,762,407	£22,726,768	£26,135,783
Company Value @ 10x	£5,661,110	£8,465,650	£3,506,750	£10,467,472	£13,535,524	£16,242,629	£18,679,024	£21,480,877	£24,703,009	£28,408,460	£32,669,729



Measuring what good looks like

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Confidence in leadership	3	4	4.35	4.9	5
Win ratio	40%	50%	55%	65%	70%
Projects delivered on time	50%	75%	85%	90%	95%
Employee billable utilisation	55%	65%	75%	85%	88%
Annual Revenue per billable consultant	\$50,000	\$130,000	\$215,000	\$270,000	\$290,000
Annual revenue per employee	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$170,000	\$230,000	\$260,000
EBITDA	-10%	5%	16%	20%	32%



Business Pulse Report

It is important to then start with some clear metrics that give you a snapshot view of the overall health of the business. This should be run weekly, so at any time you can have confidence where your efforts need to be. Even better, it is drillable, so where there are amber or reds, you can drill into underlying metrics to explore the issue

core metrics	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22
MRR	Green	Green	Green									
ARR	Green	Yellow	Green									
Cash	Green	Yellow	Green									
Average Revenue Per User (ARPU)	Green	Green	Green									
Funnel Conversion	Red	Green	Green									
Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)	Red	Yellow	Green									
Customer Churn	Green	Yellow	Green									
On Time delivery	Yellow	Yellow	Green									
Customer Satisfaction	Green	Green	Green									
Billable utilisation rate	Green	Green	Green									
% billable employees	Green	Yellow	Green									
Staff churn	Green	Green	Green									
Annual Revenue per Employee	Green	Green	Green									
Probation completion	Green	Green	Green									
Confidence in Leadership	Green	Green	Green									

Green	100% + of Target
Yellow	>75% - <100% of Target
Red	<75% of Target