

GrowBIG Growth Guide

*8 beliefs that will grow your book of business,
your relationships and your career*





Growth Skills Are Great, Yet Rainmakers Are Rare

Why is that?

You probably have a hybrid role. One foot in the delivery of a complex service and one foot in retention and growth.

Maybe you're a professional like a lawyer, consultant, or accountant.

Maybe you're an account manager, business owner or senior leader.

You get involved in retaining clients. Growing them. Finding new ones.

It's a hybrid role. Part delivery. Part – and I hate to say it – *sales*.

That word stings.

Experts tell us *I didn't join this profession to be a salesperson*.

We get it.

But they're not thinking about growth in the right way.

They fear that word, *sales*.

It conjures up images of pushing something on someone else. Manipulation. Short-term thinking. Sliding the gold pen across the table at the fancy steak house. And wanting to take a shower afterwards.

Shedding *sales* is the first step.

Business development is *helping*.

That's how they should be thinking about it.

That's how you should be thinking about it.

So let's say sayonara to *sales*. And bonjour to business development.

Getting great at growth is about having the right mental framework.

The right mindset.

These 8 beliefs are your new way of thinking, your guide to growth.

01 Growth Is Great

The present doesn't want the future to come.

Status Quo Bias is sound science. We avoid change. Our clients avoid change.

Clients tend to use who they used before in the ways they used them in the past.

They're busy. They don't see a better future ... at least in a way that includes you to the extent you'd like.

That's why growth is great. Business development (BD) skills are good.

Helping a client achieve a different future. *A better future.*

Achieving goals.

Improving lives.

Streamlining processes.

Exceeding metrics. Saving money. Making money.

Growth is great. BD skills are good.

They're proactively helping someone see a different future.

Proactively helping them achieve it.

Proactively helping.

02 Rainmakers Are Rare

So if growth is great, why are rainmakers rare?

Some people don't yet *know* growth is great. (Maybe they need this Growth Guide!)

Some people don't know they can learn the skills. *Sue was born with it*, they mistakenly believe.

Some don't want to put in the effort. *I spent 10 years to get to this point, I don't want to learn more.*

But almost everyone fears one thing: *fear*.

Fear of reaching out. Fear of being a nag. Fear of rejection.

But there's a better way.

Proactivity is positive.

Helping is human.

Getting great at growth is worth the fight.

03

Growth Skills Can Be Learned

BD Skills are complex.

Learning them is a journey, the project that never ends.

And you know what?

That's liberating.

Why?

Everything important in life is the same way.

Spirituality. Fitness. Leadership.

Being a good husband. Wife. Partner.

Father. Mother.

Mentor. Friend.

Being *present*.

BD Skills are like those things.

Important. Nuanced. And most importantly, *learnable*.

One researcher put the science of expertise on the map: Dr. K. Anders Ericsson.

For 30+ years, he studied expertise, making things like the 10,000 hour rule popular. Before his passing, he was the worldwide expert on expertise. What a great gig!

He said: *"Consistently and overwhelmingly, the evidence showed that experts are always made, not born."*

Ericsson gave us *hope*.

Learning something complex just takes a specific effort: deliberate practice.

Another researcher, Dr. Amber Gaffney, an expert in group processes and social influence said this: *"The more of your identity you draw from a group, even when you're not around that group, the more likely you are to uphold those values."*

To succeed, you'll want to deliberately practice your growth skills. And join a community doing the same.

That's how you get great at growth.

That's what this community is about.

You're in the right place.

04 Prioritize Growth ... In Your Growth Skills

Bringing in business will set you apart.

You're likely already an expert. A partner in your firm. An Account Executive leading a client team.

Or, you *want* these roles. And soon.

Building your core expertise got you far.

But expertise alone won't get you to the next level.

That's why you'll want to prioritize your growth skills.

They'll determine the arc of your career. Adding the expertise of business development to your core expertise?

It's rare. *And it's valuable.*

Every organization wants more people with both.

No one can bring in business like the expert themselves. But they need the growth skills to do it.

And if *you* improve your growth skills?

No matter how good you are now, you'll get more *control*.

Control of what you work on. Control of who you work with. *Control of your career.*

But let's be honest. It's hard to prioritize. Your client work is important. Your team wants help. It's so easy to kick the growth tasks down the road. A day becomes a week. A week becomes a year. And in no time at all, you've invested no time at all.

How do you prioritize growth skills?

Like other important but less urgent things: *do them first.*

First each week. First each day.

Asking what you can get off your plate is a losing question. It *all* seems important.

That's why it's best to do the BD activities first and let the day sort itself out from there.

It works for *anything* important.

Meditating. Working out. And business development.

It's the most effective approach, and it *feels* great all day, carrying positive energy into everything you do.

Move the big rocks first. Invest in your future self. That's how rainmakers prioritize.

Everything else will sort itself out.

05 Play The Long Game

Being helpful. That's your growth game plan.

But what does it mean?

Helping your prospects with their problems, even before you're paid.

Sending assets and ideas when they're needed, even when they weren't asked for.

Giving needed criticism, even if it's tough.

Recommending others, even if you could do the work but aren't the right choice.

Continuing to proactively add value, even when you don't get a response.

Moving clients to action, even when they're busy.

Prioritizing the relationship over the transaction, even if you want the deal.

One of our clients said this about their clients: *I wake up every day thinking about how I help my friends succeed. Some of them happen to pay me for it.*

One of the reasons the word sales gets a bad rap is because it's viewed as transactional, all about the deal.

Business development is the opposite—*it's all about the relationship.*

Always work to build trust.

Always have your clients back.

Play to win the long game.

It's funny. More often than not...

You'll win in the short term too.

06 Measure What Matters

A lot of important things in life are difficult to measure.

Love. Relationship strength. The power of an idea.

And unfortunately, a lot of things usually less important are *easy* to measure.

Your email inbox. Answering messages. Random tasks on your to do list.

That's why we say this: *Better to measure what's important subjectively than measure what's unimportant accurately.*

How do you measure what matters? Gamify growth?

Strategize: Did you spend 15 minutes this week thinking about how you can invest in your relationships, picking 3 Most Important Things (MITs) to do? (Choose things with 3 attributes that spell BIG: Big Impact, In Your Control and Growth Oriented.)

Execute: How many of the 3 MITs did you do each week? 3 a week turns into about 150 a year. They build momentum. Flywheel!

Invest: How many hours did you spend on business development, the things that will help your year-from-now self?

Help: How many strategic investments did you offer your clients?

Share: How many thought provoking ideas did you share with clients?

Lead: How many meaningful conversations, using true candor, did you have with your clients? Your team?

You'll get more of what you measure. You'll want to measure the right things.

Measure what will correlate to long term success. Measure what's in your control.

Try new approaches. Measure them. See what works. And trim what doesn't.

Always improve. Ever forward.

Better to measure the important subjectively than the unimportant accurately.

07 Progress Over Perfection

Everything we do is backed in research.

Here's one of our favorite researchers: Dr. Teresa Amabile.

Her body of work is immense, but my favorite of hers is called The Progress Principle.

In short, the most successful people – and the happiest – are those that celebrate incremental progress.

How cool is that?

It's especially important to celebrate your incremental BD progress because your other tasks will pull you away.

Your team thanks you for jumping in.

Your client rewards you for a quick response.

Your boss praises the special project you did that someone else could have done.

But that senior prospect you want to meet or deepen a relationship with, but haven't?

They can't thank you yet. Even though you can make their life better, they don't know you well. Or know you at all. *Yet.*

If *you're* not making that happen, no one will. Others can do the other stuff. Your growth is yours and yours alone.

So we *have* to develop reinforcement mechanisms for our growth activities. We have to plan for progress. Anticipate setbacks. Get back up. *Keep going.*

There are so many enjoyable ways to do it. The key? *Consistency.*

Pair up with an accountability partner. Hire a coach. Use tech to keep count of your measures. Get your team lined up to praise people's progress.

Find a way that works for you.

A weekly review is the best cadence. Our minds think in weeks. We know what a Monday feels like. We know what a Friday feels like.

Tap into that.

Don't worry about the big win until it's the next incremental step. That's the end. The *last* thing to celebrate.

Instead, celebrate *all* the incremental effort, the things that are hard. Maybe the things that scare you.

Praise that progress. Celebrate small successes.

You'll drive more growth.

You'll be more productive. And you'll be happier too.

08 It's About Everyone Else

Be selfish for a second: growth skills will determine the arc of your career.

Great rainmakers live the hero's journey.

Stage One: They add the expertise of growth to their core expertise, getting good enough to be worth more than their pay, proving their value, taking control of their career.

Stage Two: They scale these skills across a team, usually with great mentoring, systems, or both.

Stage Three: They're so good at BD *leadership*, they scale BD skills across dozens at Stage Two, driving positive growth in way that changes 100s or 1000s of lives every year, both internally and externally.

Expertise matters. It always will. But it doesn't scale without adding growth skills.

The most needed expert in the world can't help people that don't know about them.

And *you* can't help people that don't know about you.

Want to do more of the meaty work you love? *Get great at growth.*

Want to help more clients? Team members? *Get great at growth.*

Want to leave a true legacy, impacting the most people possible? *Get great at growth.*

It's a skill most avoid, just because they have the wrong paradigm. The wrong mental image. They haven't seen the light.

Growth is great. Rainmakers are rare.

Your expertise needs to be shared. People need your help.

That's the funny thing about getting great at growth.

It's really about everyone else.

I hope you've enjoyed this Growth Guide.

Want to double down on your growth?

I can send our best thinking right to your inbox every week in our GrowBIG Playbook newsletter.

Click [this link](#) to sign up, or just type growbigplaybook.com into your browser.

I can't wait to help you succeed!

