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THE GROWTH DIRECTOR'S SECRET



Preface

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If you work for a business – any business – here’s a simple question:

What’s the name of your Growth Director?

What? You don’t have a ‘Growth Director’?

Why not? You have a Finance Director, don’t you? And a Marketing Director? Probably a Sales Director too – or, if you’re a retailer, then a Stores Director. You’re sure to have an HR Director, almost certainly an IT Director and probably a Legal Director as well – even if this role doesn’t sit on your Exco.

Those of you in big, funky, complex organisations might well have a New Product Development Director, quite likely a PR Director (although they may report to the Marketing Director) and possibly even a Sustainability Director.

I’ve even heard some companies have a Director of First Impressions (it turned out this was a neat – and appropriate – title for the Receptionist!).

But no Growth Director – really?

If you haven’t got a Growth Director, who’s responsible (and accountable) for growth in your company? Who brings the growth strategy to the Exco and reports progress against it? Who is rewarded when you’re growing strongly? More pertinently, who is fired when growth goes backwards?

If you couldn’t answer these questions very easily, then don’t worry – you’re not alone.

Incredibly, of the 50 leading listed consumer companies in the US and the UK where data was available, just one (Mondelez) had a Growth Director position on their Excos. Compare that with the other key executive positions:

Executive positions	Finance director	Marketing director	IT director	HR director	Legal director	Growth director
Percentage of companies with these roles (sample of 50 leading UK and US companies)	100%	58%	53%	86%	77%	2%

So who **is** responsible for growth in consumer companies?

Our interactions with many leading consumer companies have found that there is no clear answer to this. The most common response is ‘the whole Executive team’; effectively, this means no- one assumes lead responsibility. Some CEOs would claim they ‘own’ growth – but do they really have the time (or the skills) to focus on this in the right way? Quite often we will find two or three different executives saying ‘I do’. That lack of clarity and the potential for role conflict is a recipe for confusion.

Does this even matter? Well, we think it does. We believe that if no individual feels personally responsible for growth (and is accepted by their colleagues as having this lead responsibility), then it is most likely that the business will lose focus against this key area.

After all, how confident would you feel in your company delivering its bottom line numbers if there was no Finance Director to hold the team to account? How likely is it that your IT systems would work effectively without an IT Director to pull them together? Would your teams implement consistent policies on remuneration, training or recruitment without an HR Director to set standards and monitor implementation? Who would get the blame for the advertising not working if there was no Marketing Director to assume responsibility?

Yet such a lack of accountability is commonplace when it comes to growth.

This book presents much evidence that growth is just about the least- well-managed area of most companies’ operations. Very few companies deliver significant, sustained growth year after year – and this has become almost accepted, as long as they deliver their bottom line profit targets.

We believe that one fundamental reason for this chronic under- performance is the clear lack of accountability for growth in almost all major corporate environments. Growth has almost become ‘the thing that happens when everything else goes well’.

We believe this is not good enough.

We believe this lack of accountability for growth leads to a lack of focus at Exco level about what it takes to grow significantly, sustainably and profitably. This lack of focus leads, in turn, to a lack of understanding of how growth ‘works’ and allows companies to make some basic mistakes in developing and implementing their commercial strategies.

Most fundamentally, the lack of accountability for growth means that most companies do not have a recognised growth strategy (profit plans – yes; revenue targets – yes; sales plans – yes; growth strategy – no) identifying clearly which customers will be targeted as the primary sources of growth, what propositions will be presented to them to secure incremental sales, how these will be delivered, and how marketing plans will effectively target the highest-potential customers.

Without the clarity of a growth strategy to direct corporate efforts and focus deployment of resources, you can be sure many companies are underperforming in this key business area. In fact, we say that even if you do not have a ‘Growth Director’ position on your Exco, you need to think and act as if you do.

So how would a Growth Director help your business to deliver transformational growth?

Well, they might help by showing you:

- How to map the markets in which you operate to identify the areas which provide the biggest growth opportunities for your business (there may be fewer than you think).
- How to identify the core group of ‘Market-Making’ Customers who should be your key targets and who, once ‘sold’ on your brands, will become incredibly powerful and commercially effective advocates for your business.
- How new findings from the field of neuroscientific behavioural economics are revealing how consumers are hard-wired to shop in certain ways and how, once companies understand this, they can begin to orientate their propositions to ensure their brands are chosen more frequently.
- How to identify the key ‘Brand Choice Moments’ that determine long-term brand preference in every business category – and how the companies that ‘own’ these moments are delivering growth, year after year.
- Why your company must learn to focus its teams on developing propositions, products and services that are significantly preferred at these key Brand Choice Moments, and how to do this.
- How you need to be prepared to reinvent traditional approaches to marketing to focus relentlessly against building advocacy with ‘Market-Making’ customers at these key moments and step-changing marketing spending efficiency via a new approach of ‘Marketing at Open Minds’.

In the absence of a genuine Growth Director, this book will show you how to do all of these things.

As you move through the chapters you will, from time to time, encounter our fictitious Growth Director – asking questions, relating anecdotes, and summarising insights. While these may not be entirely real, our Growth Director represents an amalgam of the knowledge and experience acquired by the author and key contributors to this book over careers spent at the top of major consumer businesses in the UK, Europe, the US, Asia and the rest of the world.

Our intention is that our Growth Director will reveal much of what you need to know if you are to significantly improve your company's chances of embedding the practices of significant, sustained and profitable growth.

So we suggest you listen to them carefully.

You never know – you might just discover The Growth Director's Secret . . .

*Many thanks for downloading this excerpt. To find out more about
The Growth Director's Secret and purchase the book visit
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