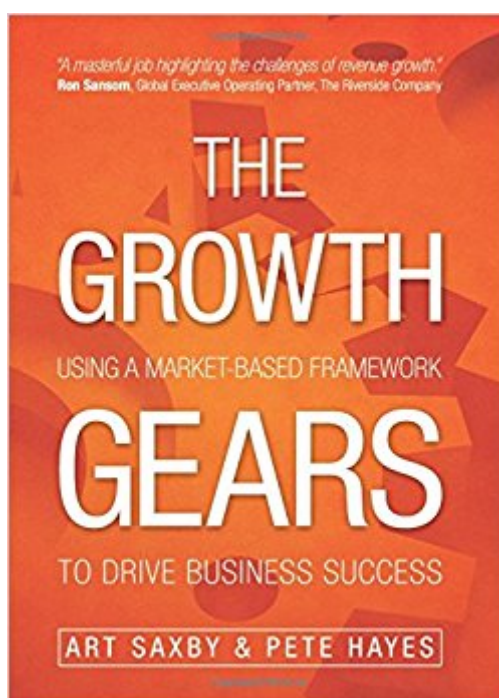


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# The Growth Gears: Using A Market-Based Framework To Drive Business Success



## Synopsis

WHY DO THE BEST RUN COMPANIES OFTEN HAVE THE HARDEST TIME GROWING? Are you running a highly successful company that just doesn't seem to be growing? You may be so operationally focused that you've ignored one of the most important aspects of an expanding business: working from a market-based perspective. In *The Growth Gears*, Art Saxby and Pete Hayes share their linear method of transforming into a market-focused organization. This book provides a simple framework as well as tools and action steps for identifying and adding these "gears" to give your company a set of repeatable behaviors and processes to fully capitalize on your market potential. Pete and Art bring their years of executive marketing experience, and their years of building a national management consulting firm, to lead you from insight to strategy to execution. In these pages, you will learn how to:

- Determine if your business is operationally oriented or market oriented
- Identify opportunities for business growth
- Understand why marketing execution is sometimes not effective
- Assure ongoing market relevance
- Increase the returns on your marketing programs
- Align your organization and your employees behind your market-focused initiatives to lead your organization to new levels of growth!

## Book Information

Hardcover: 228 pages

Publisher: Advantage Media Group (February 18, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1599325896

ISBN-13: 978-1599325897

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 0.8 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #32,900 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 in [Books > Business & Money > Human Resources > Outsourcing](#) #13 in [Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Quality Control & Management > Total Quality Management](#) #14 in [Books > Business & Money > Small Business & Entrepreneurship > Consulting](#)

## Customer Reviews

"Use The Growth Gears to Focus on the Present, Prepare for the Future" -

SmallBizTrends.com Summary Written by experts who have helped businesses create billions, "The

Growth Gears: Using A Market-Based Framework To Drive Business Success" is a guide to business owners who are doing well but are ready to grow. The book guides those owners through a simple three-step model that will help your business navigate the present and an unpredictable future. pointed out in several books (including "The Three-Box Solution" and "The 7 Irrefutable Rules of Small Business Growth"), managing a business and growing a business require two different mindsets. Just because a business is first-class in its product or service doesn't mean it will be around tomorrow (i.e. Netflix, Kodak, etc.) Many business owners recognize that they need to step it up for their businesses to get started, but they are confused about how to get started. How do you grow your business in this environment when the only thing you know is your business? What is The Growth Gears About? The Growth Gears: Using A Market-Based Framework To Drive Business Success attempts to solve a problem that many owners face: They can't see outside their business to grow. The reason the book argues that many business owners have this problem is because they are operationally minded, one of two camps that The Growth Gears says owners fall into. Operationally-minded owners know how to run a good business. They are tinkerers who know how to refine their business process, strategies and personnel to satisfy their current customers. The downside to being operationally-minded is that you can get so focused on the present that you lose sight of the future. That's where the marketing-minded owner comes in. The marketing-minded owner is geared toward growth. This kind of owner knows their current customers in the present and keeps their eyes on the future. They are the owners who are able to transform business process, insight from customer data and signals from the future into a business that successfully evolves through an uncertain future. The downside to being a marketing-minded owner is that you're so focused on the future that you can lose your business in the present. Combining these two mindsets (operation-focused vs marketing-focused) is the goal of The Growth Gears. The authors suggest that businesses that run well today but stay prepared for the future will be in the best position to survive. The way to obtain this mindset is to develop the "three gears" of a marketing-focus business explained in the book while staying operationally fit in the present. (removed author descriptions) What Was Best About The Growth Gears? The best part of The Growth Gears is the simplicity. Saxby and Hayes refine the complexity of business growth and development into just two mindsets. Using those mindsets, they apply a simple 3-process model and then demonstrate how this model can be applied to some of the toughest questions that business owners have (Should we lower our price? What do we need to know about our competitors? etc.) using direct and easy-to-understand examples. What Could Have Been Done Differently The Growth Gears is packed with helpful advice that can help any business

owner (although it is aimed at owners and upper-level executives like CEOs, CMOs, etc.) to think further about the conditions surrounding their business...Why Read The Growth Gears?The Growth Gears is a great book recommendation for any business owner who wants to improve their SWOT analysis but wants another perspective...If you have ever been in the situation of having a good business but you're planning to grow it more, this book offers a perspective that is definitely worth looking into.

Art Saxby is the founder, CEO, and coprincipal of Chief Outsiders, LLC, a provider of part-time marketing executives for small and mid-sized companies. Art received a bachelor's degree and an MBA in finance, going on to work with a variety of highly successful brands, such as Frito-Lay, Kellogg's, Coca-Cola, and Compaq Computers/HP. His accomplishments have earned him a reputation as an experienced professional and innovator. Pete Hayes is CMO and coprincipal of Chief Outsiders, LLC, where he brings his years of experience from the technology world. Pete earned an engineering degree from UC Berkeley. He has worked as the marketing executive for Fortune 500 tech giants IBM and AMD as well as for a variety of start-ups and turn-around companies, with achievements in digital marketing, brand development, and consulting.

I have been a marketing professor for more than 20 years and I've used all of the standard marketing textbooks. Growth Gears is head and shoulders above any conventional text, in my opinion. Conventional texts are encyclopedic, reporting every study that was ever run. Growth Gears strips away all of the lists to simply and powerfully report that marketing is a set of repeatable steps that result in growth. Those repeatable steps are: Insight, Strategy, Execution (the growth gears). While conventional texts are also built on the notion that one needs insight, strategy and execution, that message is lost in the desire to report every possible research finding that has ever been published. Because academic research focuses on "insight" (studies of customers) and "execution" (studies of the effectiveness of various marketing tactics), these comprehensive texts are badly over-weighted to those two subjects, consequently devoting very little attention to strategy. In contrast, Growth Gears gives a very clear picture of how these three "gears" work together--it gives the "connective tissue" between steps in the marketing process that are essentially ignored in conventional texts focused on comprehensiveness. I'm using Growth Gears as the text in my Honors Marketing course this semester. Of course I have to supplement Growth Gears with other readings and with case studies, but I have to do that when I use conventional texts, as well. Perhaps surprisingly, despite their conscientious attempts for comprehensiveness, the coverage of

certain key topics is not sufficiently rich in conventional texts, so I long ago cobbled together "notes" on those key topics that I used to supplement the conventional texts and that I use to supplement Growth Gears. (If you're interested, the notes I append cover: Positioning, Target, Organizational Buying, Consumer Decision Process, Product Life Cycle, Channels, Persuasion (Cialdini), and a host of business press articles that illustrate important course concepts.) So far, my students are loving it.

Several years ago, Gary Harpst wrote the book *Six Disciplines Execution Revolution*. In that book, he included a matrix that's stuck with me to this very day. In short, the matrix reveals it's difficult to be a growing company AND a profitable one at the same time. For years, I've believed that, especially since I see it in my client base. And then I read *The Growth Gears*. In short, I call it the ultimate playbook to be both profitable and becoming a growth machine at the same time. The authors focus on the marketing side of the equation. But it's written in such a way that's very accessible for the CEO, CFO, or any other team member charged with growth in his/her organization. But are you a CMO or head of marketing? Don't worry, this book focuses on strategy, not just tactics--you'll benefit from it too. I don't want to give away too much of the book, but here are some key takeaways and things I liked about the book ...

1. The authors clearly differentiate between operationally-focused companies and market-focused organizations. That's sticky and resonates. Again, the focus is on the latter, implementing marketing-based strategies that coincide with the ops-focused strategies.
2. The authors asked great questions at the end of each chapter. Have a senior management team? Get this book for everyone, and then go over the questions together.
3. Loved the story about the delivery people going to the bathroom at every stop. Brilliant.
4. While it's incredibly simple and nothing new, the authors make the four-quadrant box in growing a business come alive. Many a marketing and growth strategy should start at this matrix. This may have been my favorite section of the book.
5. The execution section is easy to absorb too. For the get-to-the-bottom-line-right-now executives, don't skip to that section first as the authors state early in the book. But I'll add that the bubble chart will be a great exercise for the team once you get to the Execution phase.
6. Whose decision was it to put in case studies--great call. In version 2.0 of this book, I'd really like to see a case study from a consumer products company or a large retailer and/or eCommerce business. I'm going to re-read it and start recommending this book within my client base. If you read it, don't skip the sections about the authors or the Introduction. There's great content there too and how their story to grow top lines came to fruition. Yes, the authors run a consulting firm, but I found nothing salesy inside the book. Something tells me we're going to hear

more and more about the authors and their firm in the future.

At just over 200 pages, this book is a fast read. Yet almost immediately there are nuggets of actionable insights to deploy. The basic premise is simple: as a CEO or even a business, you have one of two orientations - operational or market-focused. And these are indicators of how you'll run your company. The research indicates that the market-focused companies will grow faster than their peers. And since the majority of CEOs appear to be operationally focused, the book lays out a simple framework - including nine chapters and exercises - for how to develop a market-based approach to growth. While the research findings are impressive, there are no earth-shattering models or methodologies shared. But the way this is all presented is quite engaging and easy to follow. And given the hundreds of companies that contributed to the knowledge base from the Chief Outsiders's firm's experience, you can count on the messages to reflect reality.

It is good

During my career I read a lot of books and attended a lot of seminars & company training sessions but can't remember a single time that the focus was on becoming a growth-oriented, market-focused company. To the contrary it was all about running the business, cutting costs and making the number for the quarter, and if it was long range thinking, making the numbers for the year. Seems to me you and Pete have hit upon exactly what is wrong in a lot of businesses, small medium and often large enterprises. I like the approach and think you can fill a real need for a lot of small to mid-sized companies with the "RENT A CMO" idea. Congratulations on the book. Perhaps it should be mandatory reading for any CEO who hasn't grown the business. NICE JOB

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