

## GROWING TOO FAST

Once we got a good thing going, what do we do? Ruin it. How do we go from “I can’t make enough money on my own” to “I’m so busy I need someone else to help me”. It’s happened to me many times over, where being overwhelmed is solved by hiring someone. You often justify those lazy thoughts by saying “I’ll make more if I can take on more”, or “I’ll go to meetings while they work”...bah, lies.

If you can work hard on your own, and make a good living...why grow? If you’re lonely...then sure, do what you gotta do. But growth isn’t solved by having more people on staff...in fact it’s worse. Spend the time figuring out how you can fit more in the day, delay client’s work and see if they stick around to get the goods from you. Think long term vs short term, and keep all the money yourself!

Even if you’re a Corporation vs a Sole-Proprietor, you don’t have to grow that fast, because once you get there it’s really hard to go back. I grew too fast, jumping into a partnership right away, then having two staff, an office and a bunch of other unnecessary things two years later. I always regret not taking it a bit slower. Growing slowly has its perks, a bunch of learning and wisdom gains before you make big moves.

If you decide to stay small, support yourself or family and maybe even have cash a year in advance. Stick to it! But if you still have this burning desire to build something bigger, something with assets that you can sell at some point, an office with some staff...ask yourself a few things first.

*Can I build a better work flow first in order to make more money without anyone else?*

*Can I grow by spending my own money vs getting loans, visa debt or another partner involved?*

*Can I start with contractors first, pay them double but have less commitments to their future and mine?*

*If I bring someone on, can I actually leave the room and work keeps churning?*

*If I’m ever sick, can the office manage things on their own?*

*Am I ready to focus on building assets and value to the company when given extra time?*

*Can I sell this business with just me involved, if not, what is the desirable size/structure in order to do so?*

Always push yourself until you’re totally burnt out, then it makes sense to bring someone on. That next person needs to be pushed to the ultimate max too, they most likely will tell you they need help when they’re burnt out, and on and on. The best system is having less work on your plate, and everyone is super busy. But most of the time it’s the opposite.

One thing we did at my first company Faduchi, was not take resumes. I know that sounds so weird, but it showed people we weren’t growing yet, and it also showed my staff at the time we didn’t need the help. I do remember though, when my Art Director came to me and said he was capped, and he needed some help. Instead of hiring, I said to give that work to me...until we couldn’t handle any more. We didn’t hire for another year after that.

Growing too fast is like running a 20k when you don’t even like getting off the couch. Start with walking, then a 5k, then running, then on and on. This takes years for your body, so why wouldn’t you do that for your mind?

## YOU FIRST, EVERYONE ELSE SECOND

I had a friend and business partner tell me once that I cared for my people more than myself. I was of course flattered thinking I was selfless and an awesome boss. But after thinking about it over and over I realized he didn’t say it because I was awesome. He said it because I was suffering.

Sometimes being a great leader requires sacrifice, and that’s fine. But not when it comes at a cost to you and your family. Remember these few things;

1. Pay yourself first, never sacrifice your pay check for someone else. It’s not selfish, it just makes sense.
2. Remember that everyone works for you, not the other way around. Sounds silly...but if things go sideways you can always clean the slate.
3. The business should be taking care of you more than it takes care of its employees. You are employee of the month every month.

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