

# Orient Your Strategy:

## Pivoting Over Perfection

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**When you stop expecting the marketplace to adapt** to your current organizational structures and efficiencies, you can begin building your organization around the needs of your customers. This way you will ensure your internal measurements are consistent with expectations.

Ben Stroup

 **VELOCITY**  
strategy solutions



**Problem:** Current strategy development methods constrain leaders and organizations from moving fast enough to maximize revenue and impact because they are unable to quickly turn ideas into marketplace opportunities.

**Opportunity:** When you stop expecting the marketplace to adapt to your current organizational structures and efficiencies, you can begin building your organization around the needs of your customers. This way you will ensure your internal measurements are consistent with expectations.

**Resolution:** Adjust the relationship between people, data, and strategy to build more responsive leadership capacity within executive and project teams. Then you will be able to deliver products, services, and solutions that are attuned to the needs, challenges, and obstacles of your customers, clients, or partners.

**“ If our thinking is flawed, outdated, or baked-in assumptions that are no longer true, then we will miss the queues we need to see to initiate the change required to make the transition from now to next.**

The rules of winning for leaders and organizations are changing.

There used to be an advantage in being large, flush with cash, and operating from fully developed business processes and systems. But the constant state of change happening everywhere is upending business development, supply chain management, product development, and customer experience management.

The people at the top are empowered to make massive changes, but they are also the farthest from the chaos in the marketplace. Further, most organizations have yet to see precipitous declines in current revenue. The leading indicators are demonstrating a slower growth, but the top and bottom lines have not yet manifested to a level that would signal a massive review of current revenue and operational strategies.

The luxury of having a long runway to mitigate the risk of disruption is over. Today's marketplace demands an agile management approach that values pivots more than perfection. For too long, business and industry have found comfort in traditional practices around the division of labor that has well-defined internal metrics, clear compliance definition, and incremental process improvements.

### **Strategy Development Demands Iterative Improvements**

If you are at the top and not paranoid about staying on top, you're already losing. The barrier to entry into just about every marketplace is lower, cheaper, and more accessible today than at any time in history. That means size is now your liability—not your asset.

Agility is the new business strategy. You need to be able to understand the variables as well as their relationship to each other, and you also need a constant flow of new information to ensure you are making the best decision at the right time. Being able to understand what has already happened is no longer good enough. You need to understand what's happening now.

Once you have the information, you also need to be able to act. While keeping your focus on customer segment groups, deploy interdisciplinary and cross-functional teams who have the ability to make quick decisions, act fast, and pivot when necessary. This requires rethinking what centralized decision making looks like.

Another important shift requires leaders to let go of the pursuit of perfect execution and elevate the value of “test and learn” approaches. The caveat is that “test and learn” can get entangled into massive corporate review processes. This neutralizes the value of iterative and adaptive management disciplines and reinforces antiquated decision-making practices that will inhibit leaders and organizations from staying ahead of any potential disruption.

**“ If you value compliance, predictability, and the familiar, then you aren't leading. Instead, you are a prisoner of the prototype of your personal preference and professional experience.**

## Strategy Development Values Outcomes More than Process

The larger the organization, the more likely you are to be consumed with perfect processes that mitigate any and all potential risks rather than focusing on achieving the right outcomes. Those outcomes should include leading and lagging indicators of growth. But you'll never be able to bring about new pathways of growth if you subject new insights and discoveries to the weight of scrutiny applied to more established and traditional product and service line management.

Outcomes are the most valuable part of an iterative strategy. It challenges or validates your hypothesis in measurable and demonstrable ways. But when process trumps outcomes, you will be blinded by the potential that is right in front of you. Instead of cheering for the unexpected victory, you'll be consumed with concern about compliance, scale, or margin. All of those elements are certainly important. But when you're trying to bring about change, nothing succeeds like success.

The massive overhaul of corporate governance two decades ago may have some unintended consequences. In the desire to bring about corporate responsibility, it unnecessarily handed the power of the organizations to those who know how to manage rather than create. This is why companies, industries, and market segments are being upended by startups they never even considered to be a real threat to their existence.

## The Choice Is Simple: Grow or Die

The only business strategy that works consistently in the midst of constant and radical change is growth. If you don't have a bias toward growth, you will eventually lose. It might not be today. It might not be this decade. But you have already decided that you will manage your organization into decline rather than push toward new growth horizons. And you'll push out your best ideas, your best talent, and anyone or anything that brings a clear and present threat to the order of your organization today.

Your people, your product, your supply chain, and your market access points are all available to your competition. The only thing you have that your competition doesn't is your people. That's why you need a better, more agile approach to strategy development. It's the only way to ensure your organization doesn't get upended by two kids in a garage.

The leaders who believe that money, size, and market share insulate them from disruption are also the ones most likely to make "safe" decisions that will unnecessarily put organizations at risk. The speed of change will not slow down while you get comfortable with new approaches to business strategy. Without a commitment to pivots, you will be sidelined—and perhaps even eliminated—in your pursuit of perfection.

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## About

**Ben Stroup** is Chief Growth Architect and President at Velocity Strategy Solutions where he helps leaders design, develop, and deploy smarter business growth strategies. Ben is a futurist, disruptor, and data champion. He leads a team that takes a structured learning approach to business challenges, which allows them to assist leaders in bridging the gap between ideas, innovation, and revenue—taking ideas from mind to market.

**Velocity Strategy Solutions** is an on-demand, next-generation business strategy and management consulting firm which provides clients with a relentless focus on data, execution, and results that positively impact the bottom line. Velocity delivers integrated people and revenue strategies combined with a disciplined approach to growth architecture that elevates the capacity of leaders, teams, and organizations to succeed and win more.