

## CHAPTER 1

# VIVID VISION

*“Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, the mind can achieve.”*

—Napoleon Hill

The goal of doubling your company’s size in three years is easy to accept. Who wouldn’t want to do that? But accepting this goal and realizing it are two different things. To achieve it, you need to prepare for fast growth. And to do that, you need to develop a detailed vision of the future.

Many people create goals for the future but don’t really have a vision of what their company will look like at that point. If revenue is supposed to triple or quadruple, what will that do to the company? How many people will need to be on board? Will you still be in the same offices? Will you have more than one location? Will you be providing different services? What might some of those look like? If creating a picture of your company is worth a thousand words, creating what I call a “Vivid Vision™” of your company is worth big money.

Creating this Vivid Vision is the first step in doubling the size of your company. It may seem like a simple task, but experiencing that vision requires something more than looking at your business numbers. Most entrepreneurs discover that it requires a set of skills that is very different from those they normally use. How to develop these skills and envision the Vivid Vision is the essential lesson of this chapter.

One caveat must be taken into account before you devote time and energy to creating a vision of your company three years out. It is not enough simply to create a Vivid Vision. Everyone in your organization must focus

on the same Vivid Vision, and that Vivid Vision must be in sharp focus. If you and your employees are not all seeing the exact same vision of what your company will look and feel like three years hence, there is no chance it will ever happen the way you see it in your mind today.

## LEANING OUT INTO THE FUTURE

Have you ever observed an athlete right before a competition? The next time you watch the Olympics or World Track and Field Championships, watch the high jumpers. Most of them stand very still just before they start their run up to the bar. They close their eyes and often bob their heads up and down or even throw their heads backward a bit as they focus their imaginations and see themselves running up to the bar and thrusting their bodies over it. Then they open their eyes, stare at the bar intently, and begin to recreate in reality what they just visualized. These athletes use focus and visualization to achieve their desired results, and by imagining the obstacles they might face along the way, they prepare themselves mentally and physically for the challenge.

The focus and visualization techniques used by athletes can and should be applied to business. If you and your employees aren't prepared—mentally and in all other ways—to overcome the obstacles you might face on the path to your goals, you'll struggle to achieve them.

I first learned about this visualization process at a luncheon of the Young Entrepreneurs' Organization (now called Entrepreneurs' Organization, or EO) in 1998. I started to think of this whole process as "leaning out into the future." Eight years later, I heard another Vancouver entrepreneur, David Chalk, describe visualization as "leaning out into the future," too. Obviously, it made sense to people to think about the process this way.

Over the years since that landmark luncheon, I've had the opportunity to learn more about the visualization process from an Olympic coach and sports psychologist and to fine-tune the technique. I've had enormous success using the visualization process in many business settings.

People respond to a challenge, and a Vivid Vision gives them that. When employees see what the company will look like three years out, they are clearer on where they can step up and add value to growing it.

People likewise find their work rewarding when they feel they are contributing toward a common vision. The Vivid Vision allows everyone in the company to feel like they are a part of a bigger plan. And they can see with the same clarity what everyone else in the company, including the CEO, is seeing. Everyone senses they are on the same page—because they are.

When you have “leaned out” and grabbed hold of a clear vision for success, you’re more likely to achieve your desired goal. That’s why it’s essential that you focus, develop your vision, and communicate to your employees, suppliers, shareholders, and even your clients what your business is going to look like at every stage of its growth. I’m not talking about a To Do list, a five-year plan, or a vision statement. Vision statements tend to get written by getting a whole bunch of corporate people in a room pulling together the words that best describe their business. Then they create a one-sentence vision or mission statement for the company that no one cares about or reads ever again.

A Vivid Vision is so much more. A Vivid Vision comes about when an entrepreneur, founder, CEO—whatever you call yourself—plants one foot in the present and then leans out and places the other in the future, in the “what could be.”

I find three years the best period to cover when creating a Vivid Vision. This timeline is short enough to be seen as realistic and achievable, yet long enough to allow you to realize innovative and expansive ideas. As a result, employees can incorporate the blueprint into their overarching and day-to-day goals, all the while enthusiastically striving for the picture of an even more successful future you have painted for them.

At the end of the process, your Vivid Vision will consist of a three- to four-page document that describes your vision for what your company will be three years out at double its present size. This may seem like an easy thing to produce, but it isn’t.

## HOW TO CREATE YOUR VIVID VISION

The first step in creating a Vivid Vision is to start thinking about certain questions. When you peer into the future, what do you see? What

do you want to be there? What materializes in front of you as the *epitome* of success? Don't worry about how you're going to build it; just focus on *describing* what you see over the next three years. One helpful exercise is to imagine that you're filming every aspect of your business: your employees, customers, supplier relationships, and so on. Play the film in your mind: what do the big picture and the details look like three years out?

In order to answer these Vivid Vision questions, you'll need to free your mind from the day-to-day worries of running your business and allow yourself the freedom and concentration to visualize the future, just as Olympic athletes visualize their performances.

Here are a few steps to get you started on the right path. Although you are writing just three or four pages, they are the most important three or four pages you will ever write.

## Get out of your office.

When you're creating a Vivid Vision for your company, you must leave your office. If you try to work anywhere in your building, whether you're sitting at your desk or at the boardroom conference table, chances are you'll get dragged back into the daily routine and won't be able to truly let your mind wander into the future. When you're working within an office, your mind will also tend to get pulled back into specific constraints, and that's the antithesis of this exercise. Forget current metrics, daily tasks and obligations, and the looming question of "how?" and simply let your mind wander.

The best way I've found to start a Vivid Vision is to sit by the ocean, go into a forest, find a spot in the mountains, or even lie down in a hammock in your backyard and just start sketching and writing (which is what I did when I wrote my company's Vivid Vision, the company I created to help entrepreneurs turn their dreams into reality).

## Turn off your computer.

Don't use a computer to start drafting the Vivid Vision for your company. If you do, you'll get sucked into the vortex of daily emails and tasks. Instead,

put pen to paper. There is magic in just writing it all out by hand first. I got a sketchpad with unlined paper. Initially, it was hard for me to think abstractly because I'm so left-brained. I turned the sketchpad sideways so it was in "landscape mode" and started writing down my ideas about what my business would look like three years in the future.

## Think "Where"—Not "How."

Look at the road in front of you. Don't focus on *how* you'll make it happen. When I was COO of 1-800-GOT-JUNK? I was, by choice, never a participant in the process of creating what Brian called his "Painted Picture" (Vivid Vision) because I was the "how" person. In contrast, the company's founder, Brian Scudamore, was the "where" person: he looked at the road ahead to see where he wanted it to go. If I'd been involved in crafting his vision for that company, I'd have gotten in the way by constantly thinking about *how* we'd make it happen. Now I know how to get out of the way of progress and stop asking "how?" all the time.

## Think outside the box.

It's a little hard for me to get creative, but it's definitely not impossible. Bottom line: if I can do it, so can you! Creating a Vivid Vision requires you to get out of your comfort zone, and I encourage you to do so. To ensure you're getting creative, think about crazy stuff—maybe something too outlandish to share at a meeting or even consider seriously.

I like to use a technique called "mind-mapping," which isn't so much formal writing as it is plopping down random thoughts onto paper and fleshing them out later. Mind-mapping allows you to brainstorm without having to provide explanations of strategies for achieving the desired goal. Here's a good rule to follow to help you unleash your creativity: if what you think about during one of these sessions seems bizarre or unlikely, it is something you should definitely include in your Vivid Vision.

## The Vivid Vision Checklist

Pretend you traveled in a time machine into the future. The date is December 31. Three years from now. You are walking around your company's offices with a clipboard in hand.

- What do you see?
- What do you hear?
- What are clients saying?
- What does the media write about you?
- What kind of comments are your employees making at the water cooler?
- What is the buzz about you in your community?
- What is your marketing like? Are you marketing your goods/services globally now? Are you launching new online and TV ads?
- How is the company running day to day? Is it organized and running like a clock?
- What kind of stuff do you do every day? Are you focused on strategy, team building, customer relationships, etc.?
- What do the company's financials reveal?
- How are you funded now?
- How are your core values being realized among your employees?

Cover every area of your business: culture, staff, marketing, public relations, sales, IT, operations, finance, production, communication, customer service, engineering, values, employee engagement, work-life balance, etc. Cover interactions you'll be having with all stakeholders, too. Remember that you are envisioning all these aspects of your company after it has doubled in size.

Once I had put on paper all the ideas in my head, I was then able to write a three-page description of all the thoughts I had generated through

mind-mapping. I organized them by such areas as marketing, finance, IT, operations, customer service, employee engagement, and so forth.

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In summary, a Vivid Vision is a written document roughly three pages in length that describes in vivid detail what a company's highest-ranking executive envisions that company will look and feel like three years out, without detailing how each part of the vision itself will get built or put in place. It describes what the future looks like, not how you'll get there. I've included my Vivid Vision on page 12, and you are also welcome to read a copy of it on my website (<http://www.CameronHerold.com/who-is-Cameron-pp.html>).

## VIVID VISION 2016

The following is my Vivid Vision. Creating a vivid vision brings the future into the present, so we can have clarity on what we are building now. It is a detailed overview of what my business will look like, feel like, and act like three years out—by December 31, 2016. Sharing it with others helps it become reality! Because of the clarity Vivid Visions provide, CEOs globally are using them instead of the traditional mission statements.

## What I Do

*Why* I “do what I do” is simple and clear—I *love* helping CEOs turn their dreams into reality.

## My Programs for 2016

My content is about my leadership and growth expertise, and is designed specifically for CEOs and entrepreneurial minds. It’s easy to absorb—my presentations have few words on the slides and are delivered as a conscious stream of thought. They spark excitement, ideas, and transformative breakthroughs for those who hear me speak.

I am frequently invited to present at conferences hosted by the Young Presidents’ Organization, Entrepreneurs’ Organization, and Vistage. My keynote talks at large-scale events produced by *AMEX*, *Fortune*, and *Inc.* garner national and international attention.

I set a firm limit for the number of annual speaking events I do, which increases the demand for my services, and my fees increase each year. This allows me more time with my family. Speakers bureaus enthusiastically book me to speak at their top clients’ events.



## Live Programs

While on the road speaking, I book half-day and full-day workshops for groups or companies, in the same city, to teach their employees the systems to become more entrepreneurial. I run two-day growth camps and leadership team retreats in my home cities that attract companies and employees from around the globe. My content ranges from operations, growth, and culture to preparing companies for sale. I also have content designed solely for COOs.

*Mastermind Adventure Trips* is my live program for adventurous CEOs, their spouses, and key company executives. We travel to places like Antarctica or Everest Base Camp, or board a luxury yacht and set sail for an intensive learning experience that combines unique travel excursions with valuable coaching about how to successfully grow companies.

For my coaching clients, I run quarterly and annual strategic planning sessions. These retreats not only identify goals; they also tightly align teams.

## Remote Programs

I leverage webinar technology and companies book me to do remote training for their employees. Prior webinars I've done are available online for thousands of companies around the world to use—and for their employees to learn from as well.

## Coaching/Mentoring

My clients stay with me for an average of twenty-four months. Those who leave only do so because they've learned enough to no longer need me to guide them. I am coaching twenty-four clients per month by reducing the number of lower-leverage speaking events I do. My fees increase each year for new clients.

## Leadership

Clients say that I hold them accountable for doing the things they need to do in order to successfully grow their company. Clients I coach love setting goals with me because our efforts directly correlate to an increase in their company's productivity. CEOs value having me on their team as a senior leader who they normally couldn't afford. Clients consistently say I've made (or saved) them millions of dollars.

## Communication

People trust me because I say what's on my mind. I am respected for that. People say I'm a breath of fresh air and that I say what other people are thinking but won't say. My inner voice helps me filter my decisions.

My speaking and coaching branding/marketing has moved beyond *BackPocket COO*, and is now simply Cameron Herold. Cameron Herold the Author. Cameron Herold the Speaker. Cameron Herold the CEO Coach and Mentor. I am *the* resource CEOs want in their back pocket.

## Customer Service

My clients are very clear about what I promise them and say that I over-deliver with every interaction. My client companies feel grateful to have me helping them, as I feel grateful to play a role in their growth. I deliver incredible value. They are thrilled they have time with me consistently.

## Media

The media regularly turns to me as an expert. The media covers what I do and asks me to be a regular contributor. I have several columns in leading business news outlets and magazines.

## My Mentors

I connect and learn from those who have already “figured it out.” I practice what I preach—“R&D = Rip off & Duplicate.” I study fiercely—what the great companies do and how they do it—so I don’t have to reinvent the wheel. I’m known as a “connector” because of how many people I know and regularly call on, leveraging social networks and the CEOs I meet globally. My track record of hyper-growth with my clients and honesty in my relationships is what accelerates and grows my network.

## Profitability

I continue to be extremely profitable doing exactly what I love. My revenues have grown 100 percent over 2013.

## How I Feel

I feel successful every day. People keep telling me that I look incredibly relaxed. I feel lucky to be doing what I am doing. I comfortably accept the praise people give me and I let it sink in. I make a conscious effort to choose happiness and set worry aside so I can focus my energy on the positive!

## Balance

I choose international engagements where I’m able to add days of personal time to enjoy the country with my wife, and as our four children get older, we include them more as well.

## Core Values

I live the core values that I have set for my company—and I ask people to call me on *any* deviation.

- Do What You Love
- Be Authentic
- Deliver What You Promise
- Balance Is Key

## How I Do What I Do

My content truly helps companies leverage entrepreneurial systems and create incredible culture. Large multinational corporations use my systems to teach their divisions to “act small” and entrepreneurial. Small and medium-size businesses use my systems to commit to smart growth and develop amazing teams. They use my systems to significantly grow their revenue and create world-class cultures.

My book, *Double Double*, is *the* go-to systems book for growth and culture. Its continued reputation has me speaking at high-profile conferences attended by CEOs from all over the globe.

My coaching and mentoring programs assist CEOs and their teams in growing their companies. Companies continue to ask me to be on their board of advisors, as well as to facilitate employee trainings.

My books, DVDs, and online content help companies’ dreams unfold systematically worldwide. Companies are leveraging *Double Double* for their employees to learn—orders for hundreds of books at a time come in weekly. *Double Double* is no longer “the CEO’s book.” It is now used from the C-suite to the receptionist. These simple tools, when used by an entire organization, create a tidal wave of excellence within the company.

I am committed to a holistic approach with the CEOs I work with. Professionally, the success they find in their businesses implementing my systems validates my commitment to them. They have created teams of *only* A-players. Using my systems, they have identified and fired the

people who are a cancer in their company, but they have done so with compassion. My “Emotional Rollercoaster” training (also called “The Highs and Lows of CEOs”) is taught to CEOs and especially their spouses and leadership teams. This education creates an ecosystem in the CEO’s world that allows for emotional highs and lows, and their teams and families know how to support them through it. The teams’ new understanding of the emotional needs of their CEO leads directly to greater outputs in the business.

I only work with clients that are an absolute fit for me. To the clients I can help catapult, I am a magnet. I also repel the clients that aren’t a complete match. When CEOs meet me, they instinctively say, “I need a Cameron Herold.”

## THE VIVID VISION IN ACTION

At 1-800-GOT-JUNK? we did a great job of making Brian's vision come to life within the offices. As I mentioned previously, Brian Scudamore was the visionary who would write down what he saw in the company's future. He handed me his first vision for the company in October 2000, after he had spent some time sitting on his parents' dock at Bowen Island, just outside of Vancouver. It was a vision of what the company would look and feel like by the end of 2003. He didn't know *how* he'd build what he had seen that day overlooking Horseshoe Bay, but he wrote down everything that came to mind as he contemplated what the future would be like.

I've learned that implementing (much less actually creating) a Vivid Vision is far from intuitive for everyone else. Most people don't think about the steps that lead to personal or business success, and those who do can become easily frustrated with the implementation process. I use the phrase "conceive, believe, and achieve" to remind myself—and others—to keep this process in perspective as they work to make the Vivid Vision a reality.

"Conceive, believe, and achieve" became our mantra as we introduced his vision to everyone inside the company, with surprising results. By getting everyone to see the same big picture of the company's future, you make them your allies in helping it come true. When your Vivid Vision has been given out to all your employees, an incredible alignment takes place, and they end up being as aligned as a team of fighter-jet pilots. They instinctively make decisions that are aligned with the same vision that everyone sees. It's powerful stuff.

We also introduced people outside of the company to his vision, with equally surprising results. Are you afraid someone will steal your ideas if you share them with too many people? Forget it. The reason you should put them all in writing and then give them away is that your Vivid Vision doesn't show *how* you're going to do it. You're not giving away your secret sauce. What you're giving away is what the future looks and feels like for your company, and then everyone, whether they are part of the company or not, works to help you make it come true.

I have a copy of my Vivid Vision on my website, I just shared it in this book, and I give it to anyone who asks about it. I don't care if competitors

see it. I want the *whole world* to see it. The more people who know with clarity what my company looks and feels like, the better chance there is that people will be able to help me make it happen. (Please share my Vivid Vision with your friends for me, too.)

## THE “CAN YOU IMAGINE?” WALL

We later began asking employees and Franchise Partners what they saw in 1-800-GOT-JUNK?’s future. It was pretty much like a suggestion box—employees would randomly come up with cool stuff, usually in casual discussions. They’d say things like, “Wouldn’t it be cool if xyz happened in the future?”

Some of their ideas got baked into the visions created for 2006 and again in 2009. Many of their visions were placed in large vinyl letters on what we called our “Can You Imagine?” wall. We included brief descriptions of our ideas for the future, too. Employees would share the little things they saw happening, and leadership would sign off on them before putting them up on the wall. We wouldn’t know how to achieve them yet, but often we could see them happening too. The wall was less concrete—it was meant to keep people excited and dreaming about cool things the company could do. Our guests also saw it, and they often got excited too.

At 1-800-GOT-JUNK? we called our office the “Junktion,” and one employee, Katie Dunsworth, envisioned it becoming a famous tourist destination (I’ll go into the details in just a little while). Then there was Lindsay Peroff’s vision of seeing our company on Dr. Phil, which she later made a reality.

One day when we were adding to the Can You Imagine? wall, I tossed out the idea of Harvard Business School doing a case study on us. I offered it up almost as a joke, but I really could see Harvard MBA students wanting to study 1-800-GOT-JUNK? because we were building a world-class brand.

When Harvard did finally learn about us, it wasn’t by accident; it was because of our wall. You see, so many clients, vendors, and guests had seen our wall—on which our desire to be included in a Harvard case study was mentioned—that eventually someone visiting 1-800-GOT-JUNK? said, “Hey, I know someone at Harvard who approves the cases; would you

like an introduction?” Naturally, we said yes. If we’d never committed to the idea by writing it on the wall, it may never have happened, or perhaps it wouldn’t have happened as easily. Either way, what we conceived and believed—getting into a Harvard case study—was actually achieved.

Another example of our mantra in action began one day when one of our marketing managers, Andrea Baxter, came up to a group of us and said, “Can you imagine our company name on Starbucks cups?” I must admit, I thought she was a bit nuts for suggesting such an idea, but I didn’t say anything. When she continued, “Don’t worry about *how*—it’ll happen. As long as you can see it three years from now, I’ll make it happen!” Then I really *knew* she was nuts, but I loved her passion and conviction.

So, when a few months later she told us the name 1-800-GOT-JUNK?, along with a related quotation, would soon be on ten million Starbucks cups across North America—for *free*—I knew once again that our mantra, “conceive, believe, and achieve,” worked—and in more ways than one. Starbucks had originally told Andrea that she could put a note from our founder on the cups but *not* the company name. In response, Andrea told Starbucks: “No, you *have* to put the company name on the cup! That’s part of our vision. It says so on our wall!” She sent Starbucks a picture of our Can You Imagine? wall and convinced them to include the company name. Her belief in the idea helped us achieve our goal of getting 1-800-GOT-JUNK? on ten million cups of Starbucks beverages. It was great advertising for the brand, it cost us nothing, and it also helped create more buzz about us as an awesome company to work for in Vancouver.

When Katie Dunsworth came up with the idea of our office becoming a famous tourist destination, we thought she was crazy, too. However, six years later, we were offering tours at the office every Friday, with twenty-five to thirty businesspeople in attendance. Katie’s “dream” had become a reality. It’s not quite a “famous tourist destination” yet, but if visitors keep telling other people and the company keeps telling the media, soon the Junktion will be a premiere office-tour destination.

So, to make the best use of your Vivid Vision, take the following actions (some of which I have covered already in the examples you’ve just read).



## Enlist support.

When you finish your Vivid Vision, share it with your employees, suppliers, bankers, and lawyers. You'll then start to see people align with your goals, and the picture will become a reality.

It's incredibly beneficial for your employees, who will use your Vivid Vision as a means to understand their role in the grand scheme of things. I've even seen business areas within a company form their own version of a Vivid Vision that then dovetails with the overarching one. Overall, sharing your Vivid Vision with in-house people will prompt them to make decisions subconsciously that are in alignment with your blueprint. Then others outside the company with whom you share your Vivid Vision will also *consciously* help you make it happen because they see the employees are energized by the clarity of it as well.

## Stick to a three-year Vivid Vision.

The main reason to stick to the three-year timeline is that longer periods tend to overwhelm. Think of it this way: in order to create a Vivid Vision, you need to keep one foot firmly planted in the present, while the other reaches out and taps tentatively on the soil of the future. If you go much further than three years into the future, you lose your balance and fall over. So, stay about three years out and write down what you see. Six months before the end of the three-year period, start crafting your next Vivid Vision.

## Refer often to your Vivid Vision.

Over time, your company's decision making will start aligning with your Vivid Vision. I suggest having all of your employees and suppliers reread the Vivid Vision throughout the year. A perfect time to do this is right at the start of your quarterly planning retreat. (I'll discuss focused quarterly planning retreats in more detail in chapter 6.) At these retreats, I've found it helpful to have each person read the Vivid Vision quietly and circle the key words or sentences that resonate with them.

Then, go around the room and have each person read out the areas they circled. This exercise provides alignment for the whole team before the brainstorming process takes place, and it is a useful tool to assist you in planning and prioritizing future projects. At MCI, a Geneva-based global association, communications, and event-management partner, whose Vivid Vision is shared below, employees actually read one section of the company's Vivid Vision prior to the start of every meeting at which more than two people are in attendance. They are maniacal about staying focused on their vision so that all decisions and discussions are aligned with it.

## VIVID VISION HALL OF FAME

Based on my positive experiences at 1-800-GOT-JUNK?, I have introduced thousands of companies globally to an updated concept called a Vivid Vision. All of the Vivid Vision Hall of Famers I describe in this section did exactly what you're supposed to do with the exercise: they pushed beyond the corporate-speak and confining metrics to answer the simple question, "What's really possible for our company?" This is how you should approach the Vivid Vision. Look at it as the ultimate opportunity to make your business a success.

Some of the companies I have coached have done a particularly amazing job. Here are just a few stellar examples to inspire your own creativity. (Send me an email to: [VividVision@CameronHerold.com](mailto:VividVision@CameronHerold.com) and I'll send you copies of their Vivid Visions, as well as others that companies like yours, from around the world have written.)

## Gong Show Gear

Gong Show Gear is a fantastic online and offline brand of clothing. It's worn by fanatical hockey fans around the globe. Their CEO Ger McNamee worked hard to get a vivid description of his companies future into writing. His final draft of the Vivid Vision is incredible. He handed it to one of the writers I refer to CEOs globally, and she was able to create a tone of voice in the document that actually sounded like hockey fans would talk over a

beer. Then designers added design elements to make it jump off the page. It's literally one of the finest Vivid Visions I've ever seen.

## Blue Grace Logistics

The CEO of Blue Grace Logistics is a YPOer who I've been coaching for over a year now. They've been getting tons of media; are ranked as one of the top companies to work for in Florida; recently won the EOY Entrepreneur of the Year for Florida; and one of their most aligning forces is their Vivid Vision. Their CEO Bobby worked closely with a writer I had introduced them to in crafting his message. Each revision got tiger and more inspiring. They now share their Vivid Vision with potential employees, suppliers, and the media. In fact, the media now writes about the content that's in their Vivid Vision document.

## Fish Marketing

Fish is a Vistage member company based in Portland. After seeing one of my speaking events, their CEO was inspired to write his Vivid Vision. He did an incredible job at bringing to life what his company would like like 3 years in the future, and made it really visceral by using different fonts and design elements to engage the reader. He also kept it concise and didn't let the design make the document too long.

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What I have witnessed firsthand in the workplace is that the visualization techniques taught by Olympic coaches are as applicable to the business world as they are to high-performance athletes. In creating a Vivid Vision, you shouldn't worry about *how*; instead, focus on the end result, the vision of success. By involving employees in implementing your Vivid Vision, you'll essentially be enlisting people to help make that vision of success a reality.

While your mind is racing with ideas, why not start writing them down right now? Start jotting down the initial ideas you have for your company. What's it look like three years from now?

Once you've committed to sketching your vision for the future, to painting your picture, you'll be well equipped to "reverse engineer" your own success.

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cameron Herold has been a growth guru to multiple \$100+ million-dollar companies and is one of the most sought-after business minds in North America. For over twenty years, he has been coaching the top entrepreneurial CEOs on the planet, guiding them through the process of hyper-growth.

As chief operating officer (and employee #14), Cameron took one of the most successful new business ventures of the last decade—1-800-GOT-JUNK?—from just over \$2 million in annual revenues to \$106 million in just seven years—with no debt or outside shareholders. His innovative business leadership helped enable the company to build a rock-solid foundation, grow at 100 percent year over year each year, and, through that hyper-growth phase, develop his trademark corporate culture. In 2005, they were honored to be a case study at Harvard Business School. Upon Cameron's departure from the company, a yearlong search was started, and the former president of Starbucks was brought on board as his replacement.

Prior to growing 1-800 GOT-JUNK? Cameron was a driving force behind building three major companies: College Pro Painters (the largest residential house-painting business in the world), Boyd Auto Body (the largest collision repair shop in North America), and UBarter.com, which sold for \$42 million—just before the tech bubble burst.

Overall, he's accumulated twenty-five years of real-life experience since starting his first real company at twenty-one. His successes (and yes, the occasional failures too) have given him insights into tried-and-true systems that work. He has a unique understanding of growing companies, having led business areas from operations, marketing, and public relations to strategic alliances, sales, and call centers.

His work has helped companies be featured in the Associated Press, Bloomberg, *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, Fast Company, and *Fortune*, as well as TV shows like The Big Idea with Donny Deutsch, The Oprah Winfrey Show, and Dr. Phil.

Building a successful brand and hyper-growth business isn't about personality or luck. It's about having the right systems. Cameron can give you the framework and proven solutions that will accelerate your revenue, build your profitability, and help you avoid costly problems. It really is like having a COO right in your back pocket!