



Grow to be Great: Breaking the Downsizing Cycle

Joao P.A. Baptista, Dwight L. Gertz

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No company ever shrank to greatness, conclude Dwight Gertz and João Baptista. Drawing upon their new study of more than 1,000 large companies, the authors argue that managers must move beyond the current wave of downsizing, restructuring, and reengineering. Contrary to current management fads, they contend that companies must grow to be great. Managers now involved in downsizing must consider long-term goals for growth alongside short-term measures for slimming. Gertz and Baptista shatter popular corporate myths by revealing that growth opportunities are everywhere, across all business sectors -- even in stable industries and in companies "too big to grow."

Using case studies, Gertz and Baptista analyze successful high-growth firms such as Starbucks, Staples, USAA. They examine not only the strategies followed by these companies -- customer franchise management, superior new product development, and channel management -- but also what they did to make these strategies successful. They discuss how, regardless of differences in strategic approach, the transformations achieved by these firms are based on the same three "foundations for growth": superior customer value, outstanding economics across the value chain, and excellence in process execution. They demonstrate how these three foundations work together, forming a powerful framework through which to attain corporate goals.

Distilling these findings into useful tools for the evaluation of any strategy, Gertz and Baptista show how those facing the difficult task of turnaround can get back to growth. By examining improvements at four companies within the context of their growth framework, they analyze the combination of inspiration, leadership, and technique which has enabled these firms to prosper.

Shifting the focus from cost-cutting to growth is a challenge that thousands of companies must now face. Gertz and Baptista have given CEO's, managers, and consultants in every industry a clear framework from which to build sustainable growth in revenues and profits. This book is a practical and colorful guide for those who want to grow to be great.

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