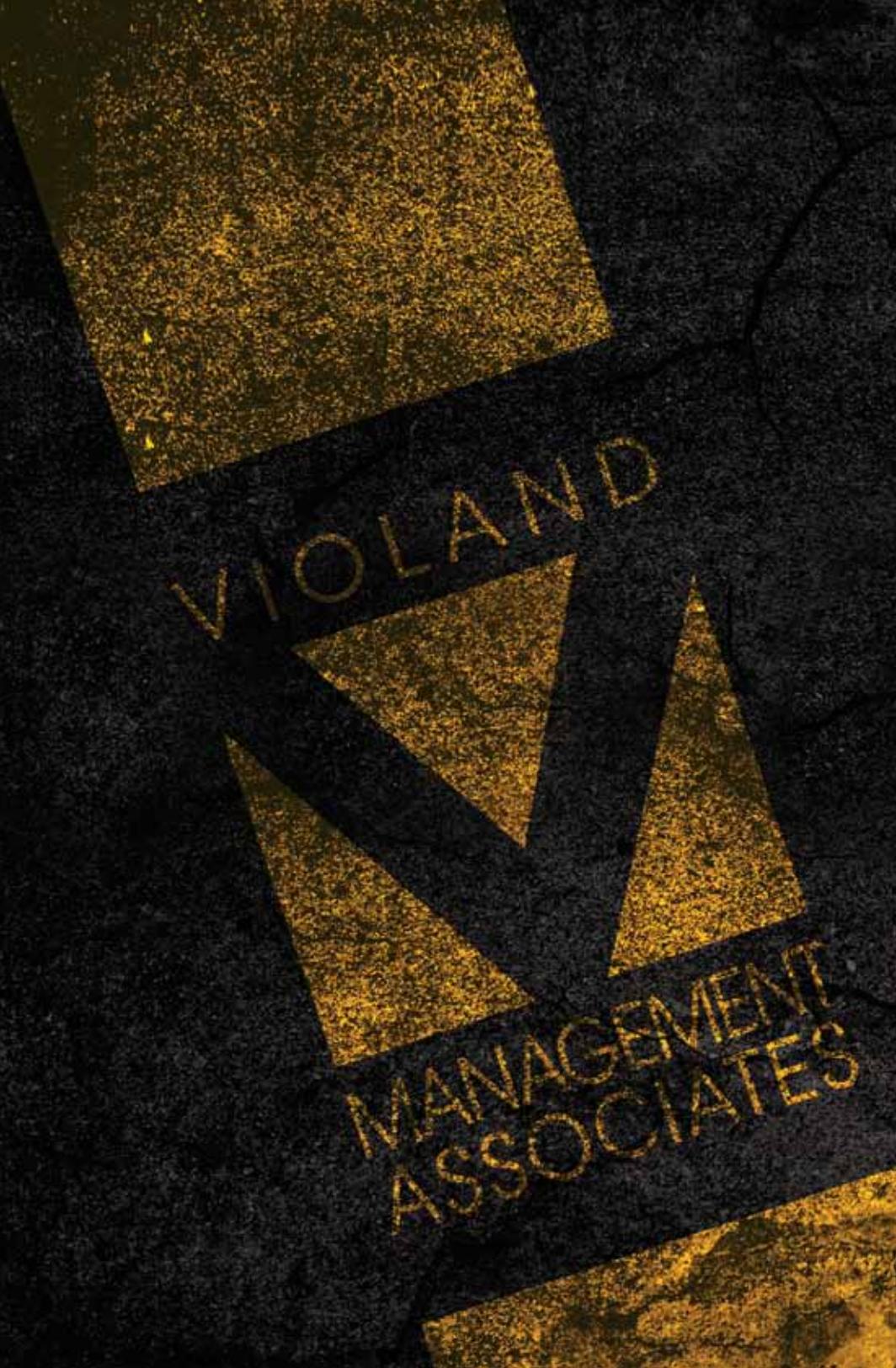




# Overcoming Stage 2 Stall

*by Chuck Violand*



VIOLAND

MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES

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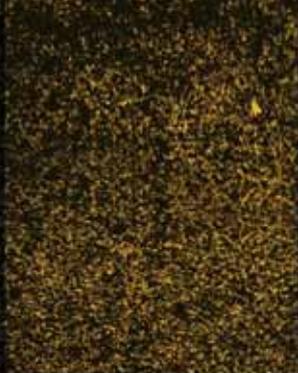
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STAGE

2

STALL





**S**tarting a business is a piece of cake. Simply find a need in your market, offer a unique way to fill that need, and then work day and night to deliver it. You don't have to be particularly smart or skilled, perform sophisticated market research in advance, or have a rich uncle willing to underwrite your enterprise. Overwhelmingly, the required skills to start a business are guts and drive—mixed generously with a little luck.

Every month, more than 500,000 businesses are launched in North America, and 15% of the U.S. population are currently running their own companies. Of this number, small businesses represent over 99% of all businesses that employ people. They are 52% home-based, make up 97% of all exporters (not counting the ones flying under the radar), and have generated 65% of the net new jobs over the past 17 years. Most amazing of all, some figures report up to 96% of small businesses generate less than \$1M in annual revenue.

The tough part isn't starting a business. The tough part is knowing how to sustain profitable growth once your business moves beyond the start-up phase. Even more challenging is sustaining growth and profitability when your company moves beyond Stage 1 (typically defined as generating less than \$1M in annual revenue) and into Stage 2 (usually defined as generating between \$1M and \$50M in annual revenue). Sadly, this transition is where many small business owners realize that the competitive strategies, management systems, and leadership skills that helped them grow their companies in the early, formative years aren't enough to keep them growing as they get larger.

Sometimes companies are inadvertently thrown from Stage 1 into Stage 2 as a result of sales momentum, landing a large contract, or weather events. Other times their owners can "muscle" the company to Stage 2 through a combination of iron will, working insane hours, and a seemingly bottomless reserve of adrenalin. But at some point, the weather events go away, the adrenalin runs out, or your mind and body (or your spouse) let you know you can't keep up the pace. This is when a business owner realizes that what got him to this point isn't enough to take him where he wants to go. This is where small businesses typically encounter what I call Stage 2 Stall™.

Stage 2 Stall isn't something you'll hear about from the Small Business Administration or the U.S. Chamber of Commerce nor is it something you'll read about in *Harvard Business Review*. The concept of Stage 2 Stall

was identified through years of experience advising Stage 1 and Stage 2 companies at Violand Management Associates and helping them work through the challenges of sustaining growth.

While the causes of Stage 2 Stall aren't always apparent, its symptoms are easily identified: a company's sales growth slows to less than 1% per year for two years or more, declines for two years or more, or "ping-pongs" back and forth for several years.

A client of ours once described trying to fix this problem on their own: "We kept walking into a brick wall, wanting it to be a door." While the door might actually be there, the owner and his leadership team couldn't see it. Sometimes it just takes someone from outside the company to point out where the door is and then help open it.

According to most experts, companies enter Stage 2 of their growth at around \$1M in annual revenue. While this is not a fixed line drawn in the sand, it's at about this time when the owner realizes a lot has changed within his company and he can no longer do everything himself nor can he keep running it the way he did in Stage 1. Companies remain in Stage 2 until around \$50M in revenue, which is a long period of time! The period I'll be focusing on is from \$1M to roughly \$20M in annual revenue.

*Borrowing a page from comedian  
Jeff Foxworthy's sketch book,*  
**You Know You're a Stage  
2 Company When...**

- People are doing jobs in your company that you have no idea how to do.
- Your guts feel the same way they did when you were a kid riding your bike down a hill faster than you had ever ridden before.
- You start to feel lonely as you realize the key people in your company look to you for leadership and direction before friendship or beers on a Friday night.
- You find yourself doing work and making decisions you never dreamed you would with little training to do so—formal or informal.

Economic turbulence and market downturns may contribute to Stage 2 Stall, but they are rarely the causes. The impact these two factors have on businesses is usually short lived, and the companies affected by them either rebound quickly or go out of business.

Stage 2 Stall sometimes happens within companies run by owners lacking the skills to grow them, but overwhelmingly, we see it occur in companies run by smart, hardworking owners, decent people with noble intentions who want the

best for their stakeholders but need assistance to free up the bottleneck and undo the Stall.

All Stage 2 Stall isn't inherently bad or a predictor of imminent business failure. Sometimes it's just an indication of the company's natural rebalancing as it postures for future growth. It's when the symptoms persist for two or more years that you want to pay close attention—before they cause unnecessary damage to the company or throw the company into a dangerous decline.

The causes of Stage 2 Stall addressed in this booklet are by no means the only ones that exist. Rather, they are four of the most common causes that my colleagues and I at Violand Management Associates have observed in more than fifty years of combined business consulting. They are: Loss of Focus, Arrested Professional Growth, Checking Out, and Swollen Ego. While most companies can survive the effects of one, it's when two or more causes exist simultaneously that serious, sometimes irreversible damage can occur.

It's not unusual for Stage 2 Stall to reoccur at different times throughout a company's growth. In these situations, the issues that initially precipitated the Stall are corrected, the company regains its momentum, and it resumes its growth until the process is repeated.



CAUSE

1

LOSS OF  
FOCUS





**T**hroughout my nearly three decades of working with business owners, I've discovered the times they and their companies are least at risk of Stage 2 Stall is during the start-up phase or when experiencing financial trouble. While on the surface this might seem counterintuitive, it makes a lot of sense when you look close: it mirrors the focus of the owner.

During the launch phase of a company, there's a lot of enthusiasm and passion. Every day brings new challenges. The adrenalin flow within the company can be almost palpable during this time. While the company may not have formal vision or mission statements, there's no question about where everyone's focus is: survival and growth.

The same concept holds true when the company is experiencing financial difficulty. If you want to get an entrepreneur's attention, just mess with his money! When

his money is threatened, an entrepreneur will focus all his resources (time, emotion, energy, and financial reserves) to solve the problem and remove the threat.

Things change, and it's easy for owners to lose their way when a company starts enjoying success.

The adrenalin that kept everyone energized in the beginning and the close proximity everyone had to the owner in Stage 1 aren't sustainable as the company enters Stage 2. A previous experience I had with a client illustrates this point.

This company enjoyed several years of aggressive growth, strong profitability, and healthy cash flow. They had grown from \$1.5M to \$7M in annual revenue in just four years. The company worked day and night handling the work that flooded in. Their energy was consumed maintaining the high level of quality their customers demanded, putting out operations fires common in fast growth companies, and staffing front line and management positions in their rapidly growing company. While the company's strong CFO kept them always operating from a budget, the rest of the strategic plan was weak and gave little attention to sales and marketing, organizational health, or operations. Furthermore, the plan was held close to the vest by the owner/CEO.

The owner of the company was engaging with unquestioned integrity, the kind of person everyone likes and who easily enlists the respect and loyalty of those around him (a key strength in Stage 1 and even more so in Stage 2). Everyone had access to the owner when the company was small, but

*Because of the owner's reluctance to share the strategic plan with his management team and to assign accountability for its execution, no one knew what their jobs were beyond daily to-do lists and extinguishing fires within their own divisions.*

that changed as it grew and managers were added to handle different divisions. He was no longer able to personally communicate his vision for the company to his employees.

The division managers worked on their own agendas with little regard for the needs or agendas of other divisions, sometimes even working in conflict with them. There was no common, long-term goal, no “flag on the hill” that everyone could see and work together to capture. Unable to maintain the pace without a common objective and clear accountabilities, the company went into Stall. Fortunately, we were able to identify the problem in enough time for them to turn things around.

The consequences of a company losing its focus may not be noticeable until the organization experiences increased speed, similar to what happens when the front end of a car is out of alignment.

At lower speeds, it may go unnoticed except for a slight pull in the steering wheel, while at high speeds, the effect

can be pronounced. The steering wheel starts to vibrate, the car may pull to one side or the other, and, in extreme cases, the driver may even lose control of the car and risk a potential collision.

When a business is misaligned and there is no clearly defined vision or long-term goals, its people, especially owners, are tempted to chase the next new thing that captures their fancy: geographic expansion, new service lines, shifting sales goals. The list is endless, but the results of diluted focus, energy, and resources are typically the same. Employees become confused when they don't know what's expected of them, and morale slips as they become frustrated or disengaged. When a blurred focus keeps the target moving, people can't gain traction and performance is often sub-par. This doesn't mean people aren't working hard or don't care. As in the case of the company mentioned earlier, people are simply pulling in different directions. In extreme cases, this can become so frustrating for those who are motivated by growing and winning that they leave the company.

The best place to start when refocusing your company is to clarify where the company is going, what has to be done to get there, and who is responsible for doing what to make sure it happens.

Then write it down. Simply walking around expounding about your dreams for the future of the business to anyone who will listen will not hold up when a non-producing employee who's being called on the carpet asks to see a copy of the company's goals in writing.

Burt Nanus, Professor Emeritus at the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business, makes some great points about the value of a company's vision. He states that a company's vision, and by extension its strategic plan, clarifies the purpose and direction of the company. They inspire enthusiasm, encourage commitment, and are articulated and easily understood. They're ambitious, yet achievable.

*Perhaps most importantly, companies' visions "prevent people from being overwhelmed by immediate problems because they help distinguish what is truly important from what is merely interesting."*

Having a written plan (vision) is only the starting point. Following through on the plan is where the real work takes place and where the results are delivered. This is especially true when things don't go "according to plan," which they rarely do. This is also why it's so important to include your key people when drafting your plan. They help the CEO to remain focused and the company moving toward its stated goals.

**Finally, the company remains focused when the owner/CEO himself models the appropriate behaviors to keep the company focused on its long-term goals.**



CAUSE

2

CHECKING  
OUT





**W**ith a little help, I could probably locate the exact intersection where I was sitting with my client, waiting for the traffic light to change, when he uttered two of the most alarming words an entrepreneur can say: “I’m bored.” Instantly, I knew I would have my hands full helping him re-engage in his business or organize it to remain a viable enterprise while he was off on whatever new venture was capturing his attention. Either way, I knew he was checking out.

Checking out is what happens when a business owner mentally disengages from his business and is one of the surest ways to experience Stall or decline in a company. So, if we know this to be the case, why do so many entrepreneurs put their companies and their own futures at risk by checking out?

Sometimes, as our businesses grow, we aren’t sure what we’re supposed to be doing. We were fine when our companies were smaller and our time was spent on jobs

we understood or were trained to perform, but as our companies grow, it's not uncommon for them to outgrow the owner/CEO's comfort zone to the point where many mentally check out of the responsibilities and decisions demanded of them.

*A phrase that's sometimes used to describe this disengagement is "rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic."*

What this means is that we engage in inconsequential activities, those with which we're either familiar or comfortable doing, but that have little impact on the performance of our companies. We take on these activities either because we don't know what we're supposed to be doing with our time or because we don't want to do the things we know we should.

Sometimes we check out because we get bored, as was the case with the client I mentioned before. Many entrepreneurs are, by nature, high-energy, easily distracted people who are constantly searching for the next thing to keep their adrenalin rush going. It's easy for the excitement of their new venture to wear off and for them to become bored, which leads to an overwhelming urge to find something new that rekindles their passion.

The upside—this generates new inventions and progress. The down side—this is why many great ideas and business ventures never gain enough traction to become financially viable or to reach their promise.

Finally, we check out when we “go Hollywood,” referring to our pursuit of the trappings of success rather than success itself. Sometimes this is driven by an inflated ego but not always. A conversation I had with the owner of a \$1.5M company illustrates this point.

The owner had checked out of his company several years prior and now spent his time dabbling in non-business related activities. He was voicing concern that the company he had built and the lifestyle he was enjoying were being threatened. His long-time office manager/bookkeeper, the trusted person who was keeping the company running, abruptly left, and several new competitors had entered his market. He was now faced with having to re-engage with his company and try to regain the momentum to face the competitive challenges brought on by the two competitors. He was learning that when we check out of our companies, we compromise our motivation to make the hard decisions and to confront the tough issues needed to run successful businesses.

Lee Iacocca, former chairman of Chrysler Corporation, accomplished what many consider to be one of the greatest turnarounds in business history when he led Chrysler back from the brink of bankruptcy in 1979.

As with many companies, when Chrysler was looking over their own fiscal cliff at impending disaster, it was easy for them to stay focused on what needed to be done (as discussed in Cause #1: Loss of Focus). That is until they started to experience success. That’s when the chairman went Hollywood and checked out.

We saw Iacocca grace the cover of *Time* magazine not once but twice, pitch margarine, and even be considered as a candidate for President of the United States. You may remember that it didn't take long before we were once again reading about Chrysler's financial woes, which led Dr. Dieter Zetsche, one of Iacocca's successors, to later remark, "Every time we get successful, we get stupid."

When we check out of our companies mentally or physically (or both), we weaken our decision-making mechanisms and our willingness to confront the tough issues that present themselves every day in our businesses. While we may assign responsibilities to others within our companies to perform certain tasks and to deliver results, when push comes to shove, it's easy for us to back away from making the tough calls that need to be made when our expectations aren't met. Instead, we're tempted, and oftentimes accept, mediocre performance because the alternative is more undesirable than the lack of performance: we'd have to re-engage with our companies.

This is one of the reasons so many companies suffer when the owner unexpectedly dies or is taken away for unforeseen reasons. People look to leadership for direction.

Leadership expert Max De Pree, former chairman of Herman Miller, addressed this point when he wrote, "Leaders are obligated to provide and maintain momentum. Momentum in a vital company is palpable. It is not abstract or mysterious. It is the feeling among a group of people that their lives and work are intertwined and moving toward a recognizable and legitimate goal. It begins with competent leadership and a management team strongly

*Just as important, when the owner of a small business checks out physically, the visionary who provided inspiration and direction is no longer around to provide guidance.*

dedicated to aggressive managerial development and opportunities. This team's job is to provide an environment that allows momentum to gather.”

Does all this mean that, in order for our businesses to avoid Stall, the CEO has to show up every day and lord his presence over his people? Absolutely not! There's a world of difference between being present and checking out. The effects of checking out are felt much sooner when the CEO checks out mentally than when he checks out physically. In a large organization, or one with multiple locations, there's no way the CEO can be physically present everywhere everyday, but there's no question that he can be present mentally without being present physically and that his presence is felt when he's mentally engaged in the company.

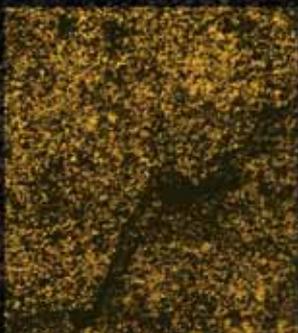
**While there are never any guarantees in business, it is this mental engagement that helps to inoculate a company against Stage 2 Stall.**



CAUSE

3

ARRESTED  
PROFESSIONAL  
GROWTH





*“We demand discipline. We expect innovation. The lives of my teammates and the success of our mission depend on me. My training is never complete.”*

*–part of the Navy SEAL Creed*

**A**ccording to Navy SEAL combat veteran Brent Gleeson, becoming a Navy SEAL involves some of the most physically and mentally demanding training the U.S. military has to offer. You’d think that once you’ve completed this training and joined this elite group, you’d be home free. Instead, you quickly learn you’re just another new guy in an already well-established organization. And it only gets tougher from there.

The vast majority of candidates who enter Navy SEAL training never make it through. Only the best of the best survive, and still they believe their training never ends.

The same principle holds true in any endeavor where only a select few are able to attain the ranks of the elite—be it the military, sports, the arts, or business.

*Becoming the elite is only the beginning; staying there requires growth and continual refining of our skills. If we don't work to stay on top of our game, there's always someone faster, better, cheaper, or just plain hungrier who's eager to take our place.*

It should come as no surprise that failing to continue our development as leaders can cause our businesses to stall.

In some cases, in spite of an owner's best efforts to keep up with his business, it outgrows him. This frequently happens in hyper-growth companies. In these situations, it's easy for the demands of the business to outstrip the skills of the owner. Because of the extreme rate of growth, the owner doesn't have time to learn the skills needed to continue leading his rapidly growing company. To avoid Stall, owners often bring in highly talented managers from outside the company to drive their businesses forward.

At the other end of the spectrum, we sometimes resist developing ourselves as leaders out of fear. We fear change, and we fear the unknown. We wonder if we continue to develop ourselves as leaders, what changes might this bring to our companies and what new and uncomfortable demands might this place on us as the owners.

When things are going well in our companies, it's easy to convince ourselves that we have all the answers and don't need to continue growing as leaders. Rather than exploring new ideas, investigating promising markets for our services, or driving more efficient ways to deliver our services, we play the mental equivalent of computer solitaire.

We keep playing the same game over and over and settle for an occasional win. When this happens, it doesn't take long for competitors, market changes, or technological advances to catch up and send our companies into Stall.

We fear change. While this may not be a major factor when a company is young, it's not uncommon for it to occur as the business owner ages. The exhilaration felt from trying new things and rapid growth can sometimes wane as we get older. As a result, we may not be as willing to gamble the groceries on a new idea. In the later stages of our businesses, we usually have more to protect or more to lose if our gambles don't pan out.

During a presentation Tim Hull and I do on mastering Stage 2 growth, we explore a concept Tim coined that is inherent in all small businesses: The Short Ladder.

In large businesses, it's common for managers and executives to be motivated by "climbing the corporate ladder." In small businesses, the ladder is still there, but there usually aren't as many rungs to climb before you bump up against the owner. This is what Tim refers to as The Short Ladder: a situation that can present challenges for small business owners.

*Great employees look for opportunities for professional growth. If those are limited because of a short ladder and if a candidate senses the growth of the company won't provide them with enough opportunities to exercise their professional skills, they may pass on your company and opt for another where such possibilities exist.*

Not everyone is driven to be the top person in an organization. Many prefer to be great sidemen, which can actually bring greater value to a business. At the same time, most competent people want to grow professionally, be part of a winning team, and see their company succeed. It's this professional growth and desire to feel part of a winning team that brings meaning and excitement to our jobs. When owners stop growing themselves professionally, it further shortens an already short ladder and creates additional challenges for attracting and keeping talented people.

Some employees will give their employer the benefit of the doubt and assume the growth of the company will compensate for the lack of growth on the part of the owner. Unfortunately, this can be short-lived for two reasons. First, failure to grow on the part of the owner can ultimately lead to Stall in the company, thus limiting or eliminating the employee's opportunities for professional growth or advancement. Second, owners who don't see the value in developing themselves frequently don't appreciate the value in developing their people beyond what's absolutely necessary to deliver rudimentary levels of service. You don't have to look too deeply to see how this can turn into a vicious, downward spiral of Stage 2 Stall brought on when talented people realize there are limited professional opportunities and leave the company—not a happy prospect for any company when you understand that business growth is facilitated through the engagement of talented people.

When talented managers find themselves stuck on The Short Ladder behind owners unable or unwilling to lead their companies forward (or to move aside), they start questioning their own futures. Career-oriented people seek opportunities to exercise their talents and to test their skills. When their current workplaces fail to provide such opportunities, they will be drawn to ones that do.

As with the two previous causes of Stage 2 Stall, Arrested Professional Growth is avoidable.

**Surrounding ourselves with competent people who are motivated and capable of challenging us is a great first step.**

CAUSE

4

SWOLLEN

EGO



**P**erhaps no story in history better demonstrates the tragic consequences of arrogance driven by a swollen ego than that of the murder of Julius Caesar. Caesar went to the Forum on the Ides of March apparently unaware he was to die there that day. But how could he not have known? A soothsayer warned him to “beware the Ides of March.” There were signs any superstitious Roman would have recognized: an owl hooting during the day, a lion running through the streets. Even Caesar’s loving wife, Calpurnia, begged him to stay home. If all that wasn’t enough, consider that Artemidorus, a teacher in Rome, wrote down the names of the conspirators and tried to give the note to Caesar—three times! The last time was just moments before Brutus and the boys attacked.

Caesar felt he was invincible and he paid for his arrogance with his life. While the story of Caesar is tragic, it’s not

unique. The corporate landscape is littered with the names of once great business leaders whose careers were destroyed and their companies seriously compromised because they allowed their success to turn into arrogance fueled by an inflated opinion of themselves.

*We don't do our diligence, we fail to consider the long term consequences of our decisions, or we simply ignore input from our chief advisors because we think we're above all that.*

Making decisions while under the influence of a swollen ego is like getting behind the wheel of a car when you're drunk: your reasoning is clouded. While you may have convinced yourself that your decisions aren't being affected, everyone around you knows better. We put our companies and ourselves at great risk when making decisions that are distorted by our egos rather than based on informed data. I often refer to this as situational blindness, where we don't see situations as they are but rather as we want them to be. We bend reality to fit our needs—in this case, our egos.

The good news is that, just like with Julius Caesar, business owners have warning signs letting them know their businesses and the decisions they're making are being

overly influenced by their inflated egos. Unfortunately, just like with Caesar, too many times business owners ignore the warnings. Oh, sure, we still go through the motions of asking people for their opinions, but everyone has learned to recognize this for what it really is: a thinly veiled attempt to have them nod their approval as they rubber-stamp the decisions we've already made.

Now our companies are hit with what attorneys might call double jeopardy. Not only are our business decisions being made blindly, but our best people become demotivated when they find their input is no longer valued.

Rather than feeling like respected members of a vibrant team, they start to feel like voiceless cogs in a spinning wheel. It doesn't take long for them to begin searching for a place where their opinions are valued.

Warren Bennis sums this up when he writes: "Authentic leaders, by contrast, don't have what people in the Middle East called 'tired ears.' Their egos are not so fragile that they are unable to bear the truth, however harsh—not because they are saints but because it is the surest way to succeed and survive."

**What business leader couldn't benefit from that kind of thinking?**



**SUMMARY**

**&**

**CONCLUSION**





**T**he lucky ones in life are often reminded by the people who love them that it’s “not all about you.” While we may not like hearing it, we all need that reminder from time to time. It helps us to stay grounded and to maintain perspective.

When it comes to our businesses, it’s a little different, as in many ways it really is all about us. Our businesses are reflections of who we are: our beliefs, our talents, our passions... even our egos. On a larger scale, it’s about our ability to develop the disciplines we need to lead our growing companies. As the demands of our businesses increase, the demands on our ability to lead them grows.

When our companies grow beyond Stage 1 and into Stage 2, we’ve usually got the technical end of what they do figured out pretty well. Otherwise, we probably wouldn’t have survived long enough to become a Stage 2 company.

This is not to say there won't always be refining to do: efficiencies that can be gained, new markets to explore, and industry trends to stay on top of. But overwhelmingly, the greatest challenges we'll face will be driven by the behaviors of the people in our companies—especially our own.

*As leadership expert James Kouzes writes in Business Leadership, “How you lead your life is how people judge whether or not they want to put their own lives in your hands.”*

Since many of the major contributors to Stage 2 Stall are really the personal behaviors of the CEO, it's something completely within our own control.

In our efforts to lead our Stage 2 companies forward, it isn't necessary for us to have fancy mission and vision statements hanging conspicuously throughout our offices or pasted all over our websites. It is important for us to have a clear sense of where we're headed, and that should be a direction about which we, and our people, can be passionate.

It isn't a requirement that we open the door to the store every day or deny ourselves the rewards of our sacrifice and hard work, but it is important that our presence and commitment to the company is felt throughout the organization.

We don't always have to be the smartest guy in the company nor should we be, but we do have to demonstrate a commitment to learn and grow in order to better face the increasing demands of our growing business.

Finally, we don't have to possess the humility of Gandhi or Mother Teresa to succeed in business or in life, but we do need the self-awareness to recognize when our egos become obstacles to our companies' continued growth, rather than contributors to it.

Society, economies, and businesses have been evolving to the point where today the people who work for them pretty much do so on a voluntary basis. People no longer have to work for our companies as much as they choose to work for them. At least, that's the case with the talented, motivated people who want to make contributions and on whom we depend to grow our businesses.

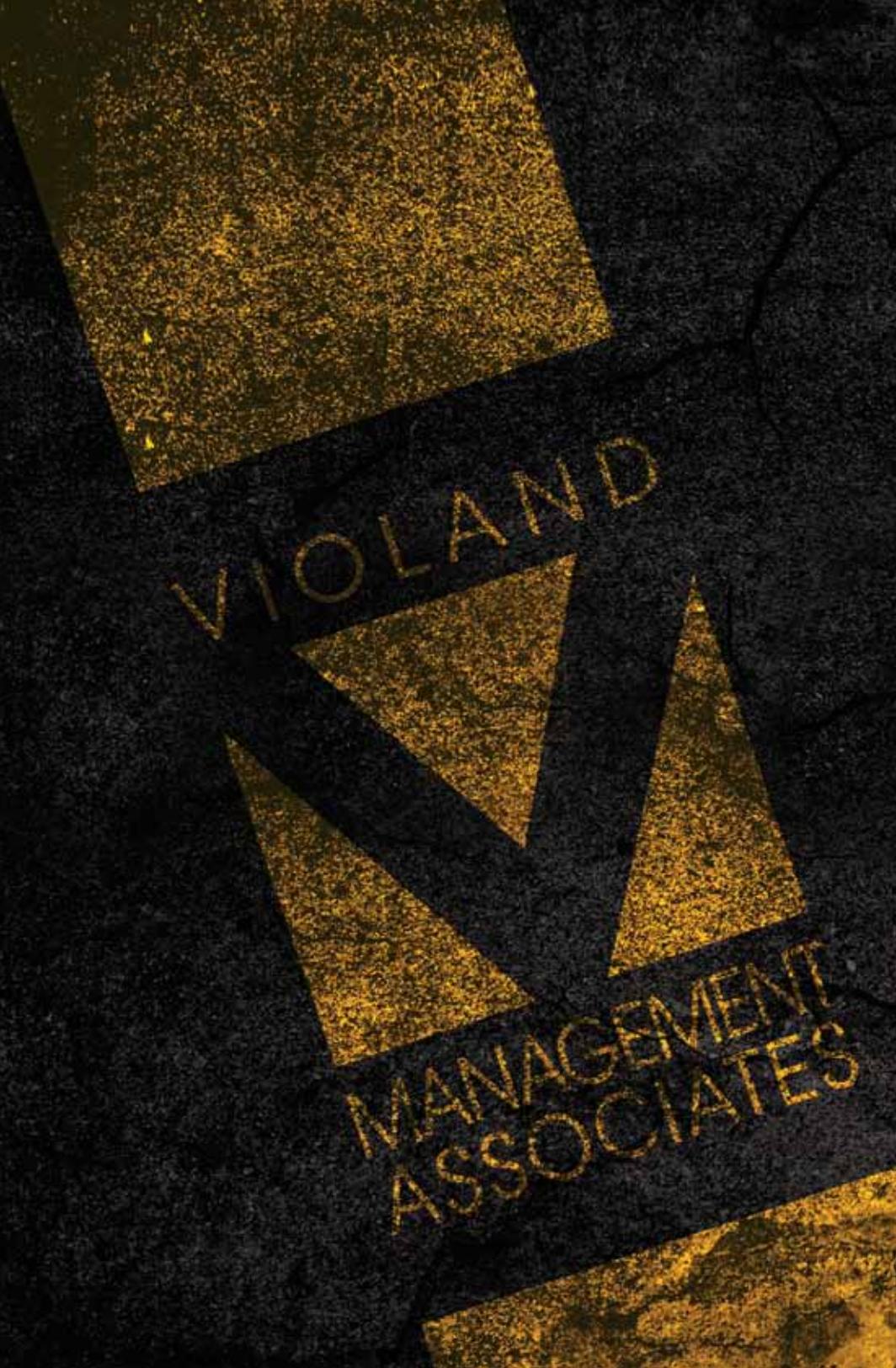
One of the main challenges we face as leaders of our companies is being aware of the symptoms within ourselves that can lead to Stage 2 Stall. Only then can we help our companies avoid Stall and achieve sustained Stage 2 growth.



## About the Author

Chuck Violand is the founder and principal of Violand Management Associates (VMA), the largest Advisory Services firm in the restoration and cleaning industries. He is a recognized industry leader in advising entrepreneurs on the unique challenges they face both personally and professionally. Through VMA, Chuck works with business owners to help them develop their companies and the people in them for long-term success.

Chuck is a regular contributor of articles to several newsletters and trade publications on the subject of growing and managing small businesses. He is a popular keynote speaker at conventions and trade shows and serves on the Board of Directors for the Restoration Industry Association (RIA).



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## About VMA

Violand Management Associates (VMA) is the largest Advisory Services firm in the restoration and cleaning industries, dedicated to executive development, management training, and business performance maximization. The mission of VMA is to enrich the lives of business owners and their teams by helping them achieve their goals and aspirations. Our team of experts works one-on-one to bring advanced, customized business solutions to your company.

By combining our advisory services with our industry-leading professional training programs, we are able to offer a wide range of opportunities for restoration and cleaning business owners to develop their people and maximize their profits.

The growth trajectory of a business rarely follows a straight, upward line. Most ebb and flow, which is to be expected. What is not expected is when the trajectory flat-lines or declines for several years in a row and a company finds itself in a condition referred to as Stage 2 Stall™. Businesses frequently blame external forces such as the weather, economy, or competition, but that's not why it happens. In this booklet, Chuck Violand goes beyond excuses to the heart of the principal causes of Stage 2 Stall. More importantly, he shows you how to avoid and correct them in your business.



For more information on the programs and services offered by Violand Management Associates, please call the office at (330) 966-0700 or visit [violand.com](http://violand.com).