



VISION

See clearly
beyond
circumstances



**Lessons from Martin Luther King:
“Accelerate Growth:
Change the Game to Win in 2017”**

Short Excerpt from the Manual
CEO Accelerator: Accelerate Growth to Earn More. Work Less!
By Russell C. Teter III



Accredited to provide technology
commercialization assistance.



For dates, application, and full description, go to

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“Accelerate Growth: Change the Game to Win in 2017”

“...before we can accumulate riches in great abundance, we must magnetize our minds with intense *DESIRE* for riches, that we must become ‘money conscious’ until the *DESIRE* for money drives us to create definite plans for acquiring it.” Napoleon Hill – *Think & Grow Rich* (1937)

How does one go from wishing and hoping that something will change to having the details that create that change?

How does a business owner go from working 70 hours a week and earning no money to having both time and money?

The *New York Times* bestselling author Michael Gerber said that “Building a Small Business that Works!” you must “preempt the world’s changes.”

Many people hope their circumstances change but few know how to create that change.

America has a relatively recent mentor who took hope and implemented a plan to create change.

That game changer is Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He accelerated the building of societies where people have equal rights.

Most remember his “I Have a Dream” speech, but it is his lesser known “Letter from Birmingham Jail” -- and the process of creating that document— that serves as the genuine textbook on changing the game in your favor.

Bernadette Henry joined me in 2008 to write an article titled *Lesson of Entrepreneurship from Martin Luther King*. She is a retired professor of English, teaching at colleges in both New York and Maryland. She used the “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” in several classes. Under the leadership of one of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s deputies, she became active with the civil rights movement in the New York City area.

To illustrate how Dr. King can enable you to create the necessary change that build the life you want –“More Time & Money,” we use the acrostic

Open D.O.O.R.S.

6 Keys that Open D.O.O.R.S to Earn More. Work Less!

Key #1: **OPEN** Your Mind – Think to Win

Key #2: **Dream** – More Time & Money

Key #3: **Opportunities** – Build on Those You Can Convert

Key #4: **Obstacles** – Address Those You Can Control

Key #5: **Resources** – Utilize Those You Have Now

Key #6: **Steps** – Take Daily in Faith

My son, Joshua, deserves the credit for this acrostic. In preparing for a speech on strategic growth planning, the notion of presenting the traditional academic references on the subject seemed boring. Joshua, being only a few months old and unable to sleep, gave me the “time and space” to be creative. Walking around the house for hours trying to get him to fall asleep got my innovative juices flowing.

Key #1: “OPEN” Your Mind – Think to Win

The first key to “More Time & Money” is having the time and space to think.

Martin Luther King did not write his plan in the busy-ness of the day. As the title of the letter suggests, King wrote it while in a Birmingham jail. Local police arrested King for ignoring an injunction against leading protests. He was placed in solitary confinement for days.

At the time, King’s imprisonment was an unfortunate circumstance. Looking back today, it was fortunate. Would this document have been written if King was not forced to be alone for days? Could it have been done around his busy day of speeches, meetings, and protests? We will never know. The “Letter” had such a significant impact on the civil rights movement; it is hard to imagine what would have happened without King’s plan.

“Some people hope, others plan; failing to plan is planning to fail.” Are you truly dedicating the necessary time and focusing on your business’s future?

We are not suggesting that a successful business development plan has never been written around someone’s busy schedule. But we are suggesting that a business development plan cannot be an afterthought. It is so critical to success that one must dedicate the time to review, reflect and rejuvenate from the outside looking in at the business. Each year, set 3 to 4 days (or equivalent hours) aside for the purpose of transforming your business to create the life you want. Hold a retreat.

Strategic thinking requires solitude. You need to look beyond your current circumstances.

Dr. King did not stare at those prison bars; he looked beyond those bars. Just think how the world would be different if he focused on the circumstance. He looked beyond.

When he wrote his plan its purpose was not just a plan to open doors for Birmingham’s black community. He wrote the document to last beyond Birmingham, beyond ending southern segregation, beyond the civil rights movement. The words were written to present a manual for passive resistance for any cause. The “Letter” has value for many purposes.

This did not happen by accident. King, in our opinion, had this long-range intention in mind. He wanted the Letter to last past the immediate need of Birmingham. Yes, King took it one step at a time, but as he wrote he was looking at its highest usage.

Spend time thinking about your long-term desires. Do you want to create a business that is profitable that works completely without you, giving you both time and money?

If you desire to obtain that true prize of freedom, it requires as Michael Gerber writes “Working on the business, not in it.” You need to write a plan as King wrote the “Letter” that goes beyond what you have today. You must build your business following *Emyth* as if you were to franchise it. Have systems in place for each significant process.

If you build it as if you were going to franchise it, you will truly have a business that can operate on its own and enjoy life. Dr. King wrote the “Letter” as if to franchise his beliefs of passive resistance.

A common myth by the general population is that ALL small business owners are successful. Not true. Those that are successful,

**Win by Having the Energy within to Change the Game,
Undertake a Cause that Inspires Dreaming, Have the Courage to Ask
“What If” and “If When” and Possess the Faith to Act Daily.**

Accelerating growth can and must be learned. Learn by watching others whose energy within resulted in change. Dr. King had mentors, one being Gandhi. You need one too—living, deceased, real, and/or fictitious. Tap into the wisdom of others. A mastermind group may not answer your entire question, but it will enable you to open your mind and ask better questions.

Dr. King, having the “time and space,”

**Opened his mind, used the keys to turn a desire into reality.
He affirmed his Dream, understood Opportunities & Obstacles,
identified Resources, and outlined Steps (existing, new, or different).**

Key #2: “Dream” – More Time & Money

The Birmingham, Alabama authorities arrested Martin Luther King for ignoring an injunction against leading protests. While in jail he started to write a letter to the black community to explain his role as a civil rights leader and to the leaders of the white clergy that criticized his activities.

Dr. King started his plan with the first critical step. He provided a description of the problem (segregation laws and discrimination) and why his approach was best (non-violent demonstrations). The “Letter” stated when you should begin seeing results (immediately). Giving dates to your dream is imperative. Rev. King expressed the urgency, stating, “We have waited 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights . . . We’ve taken about all we can . . . The status quo cannot continue.”

The “Letter” clearly gave the readers a narrative picture of the sunlight behind the door, one that others could see and agree to join by helping to open the door. Your plan must do the same if you intend to create a business that works.

The dreaming process begins with three questions:

**Where am I now?
Where do I want to be?
How do I get from here to there?**

Personally, where am I now, where do I want to be and what are the steps that take me from here to there?

The business, where is it now, where do I want it to be and what are the steps that take it from here to there?

Customers, who are they now, who do I want them to be, and what are the steps that take me from who I am serving to those I want to serve? Your customers are your boss. Always strive to work for a boss you like but first you need to know who you want to serve.

Are you dreaming too small? Do you have great dreams, big visions for your life? Most people, including myself, dream way too small. We don't take big steps, take great chances. We need to dream vividly, in full color.

Martin Luther King, while in prison, looked beyond his circumstances (prison bars) and wrote down Gandhi size goals. Gandhi dreamed that the most powerful empire in history would walk out of India. We know the British did just that. It all started with Gandhi's dream.

Do you have Gandhi size dreams?

We dream too small. We don't take the big steps towards changing our lives because we dream too small. We don't take big risks, take big chances, because we dream too small.

We also try to accomplish our dreams too quickly. Game changers dream so big that their dreams can never be achieved today.

What is your burden? What is your burning desire?

Write down your big dream, your big goals. Write down into words a painted picture of the life you want.

Writing down your burden, your burning desire, will cause your mind to open to see more. See beyond your current circumstance. Begin the process to dial into the details necessary to reach your dream. Take your mind beyond the whimsical hopes to specific steps.

Begin to breakdown that painted picture into the more specific goals. Goal setting is essential. Start to translate your dream into the tangibles.

You must have a target to shoot at. It is true that if you aim at nothing, you will hit NOTHING every single time. Business owners have the habit of meandering around. Know what you want to do and when you want to do it by. A goal without a deadline is a nothing more than a wish.

Key #3: “Opportunities” – Build on Those You Can Convert

List the reasons that the industry, target market, your product’s strengths, your competitor’s weaknesses, and your personal experiences make your dream possible. This list builds the faith necessary to act daily towards your goals. You must explain to yourself and others that it is a door that can be opened, not an unmovable wall.

Dr. King thought it out and listed why his vision of a changed world was possible. Below are some of his reasons:

- The 14th Amendment, the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, and the Bible gave King a legal and moral right to stand against discrimination.
- Recently and not far away, the black community embraced action in Montgomery, Alabama with a non-violent boycott (over a year) that resulted in victory when some of the City’s segregation laws were ended.
- Birmingham’s black community and liberal white community had shown a strong desire to use nonviolence to end one of the nation’s most segregated communities.
- King believed he had the experience and responsibility to help Birmingham’s black community as he did in Montgomery. King explained “. . . just as Apostle Paul . . . carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to the far corners of the Greco-Roman world, so am I compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my own home town.”

Dr. King is starting to translate his dream into the tangible.

Making the list of opportunities adds more color, more details to the picture of the life you want. It will build your faith and the courage to ask more questions. The more questions you ask yourself and ask others, the more opportunities you will discover.

If your dream does not require you to be asking others for advice and help, then your dream is too small. Big dreams require the help of others.

There is, however, a balance between asking questions and acting daily.

Some people are all action and no asking. Others people are all asking and no action.

Create the balance.

After listing opportunities, the next phase is explaining what obstacles must be overcome.

Key #4: “Obstacles” – Address Those You Can Control

Be honest about the reasons why you are facing opposition. King did not sugar coat the facts about the challenges. You should not either; it will only hurt you in the end.

A summary of those in the “Letter” are:

- Discrimination was legal in state and local laws, accepted by the establishment.
- The white community demonstrated in the past they would respond with violence (arrests, beatings, bombings) to anyone who challenged their segregated way of life. King wrote “. . . freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor . . . ”
- Change is not comfortable for anyone. The black community needed to make changes for a nonviolent approach. The white liberals, he felt, “. . . would be among our greatest allies. Instead some have been outright opponents . . . all too many others remained silent behind the anesthetizing security of stained glass windows.”
- King, living in Montgomery and originally from Atlanta, was viewed as an outsider by the Birmingham residents who felt he had no right to be involved in their community.

Obstacles need to be identified and addressed; either address by fixing the problem (if within your control) or maneuver around (if not in your control).

If the economy is causing a decrease in revenue, recognize you cannot fix the economy. What can you address? You can address, because it is in your control, what you sell and who you sell to. Follow the money.

Know your opposition, internally and externally.

Anticipate the opposition that would distract, discourage, and deter.

When you know the Opportunities and Obstacles, then you can utilize available protection and provisions.

Key #5: “Resources” – Utilize Those You Have Now

Martin Luther King, Jr. used several resources. Some of those were:

- King communicated that he and his followers were in God’s will and thought faith change would come “. . . through the tireless efforts of men willing to be coworkers with God . . . ”
- Federal government would step in if violence by whites in retaliation became prevalent and widespread (the age of TV brought national and international attention to discrimination that embarrassed the federal government).
- Mahatma Gandhi was King’s mentor. Gandhi successfully fought British oppression with passive resistance.
- Pulpits of African American churches in the community were used to communicate the need to protest for change and served as training grounds.

Your dream of more time and money requires you boldly asking yourself and others for their time and money now.

Work with what you have. Look at what you have in a new and different way. How can you use something you have better, faster or cheaper?

It is amazing, when someone becomes absolutely obsessed with their dream, everything and everyone look differently. You stop saying what was that made / hired to do. You start asking, then seeing, what it can do now for me.

Key #6: “Steps” – Take Daily in Faith

After the public dissemination of the “Letter”, King and his followers began their boycotts, marches, public forums, and other methods to create tension. The “Letter” clearly laid out the steps. He and his followers took those steps daily in faith. Did they have to make adjustments along the way? Yes, but as a mentor once said to me,

“You can’t steer a parked car.”

Are you committed enough to accelerate growth to take the steps necessary to open the doors by building on your opportunities, addressing your obstacles and utilizing your resources to reach your dream?

The best analogy to describe the “Step” phase of planning is the use of a navigation system when traveling. You must enter in your ending point (your dream) and your starting point (the opportunities and obstacles). The navigation system, as a series of several resources (human, capital, financial, information, and time) presents you with step-by-step direction. Of course, a navigation system does not give the steps in alphabetical order or random order. That would be useless. Steps need to be in priority order.

Many people go on a trip without planning—just get in the car and start driving. “I’m not lost,” says the non-planning traveler “I just made a few wrong turns and do not know where I am right now.”

How many wrong turns can you afford to make with your business? Martin Luther King, Jr. knew that the civil rights movement could not afford to make many wrong turns and become lost. He developed a plan. True business accelerators have more than a good idea. Those that accelerate growth convert needed innovations into reality.

King did most of the planning in private before it was publically presented. He thought while in solitary confinement, wrote his key points on a magazine’s margins, then when released scribed the beautiful document we can read today. A desired outcome of the external version of the “Letter” was to get financial support for the Civil Rights movement.

Most business owners start their growth process by writing a business plan to borrow money. Dr. King did not start with the external version, but instead used this order:

- 1. Thinking & Dreaming in Solitude**
- 2. One Page Strategic Plan of Goals & Priorities**
- 3. External Version (i.e. Business Plan for Financing)**

Begin your growth acceleration today by getting away from the day-to-day business of your business and begin to think and dream of the life you want to create. Follow the process of Dr. King to become a game changer. That is the difference between talkers and takers.

Remember, if your dreams don't make you a little nervous you're not dreaming big enough: Dream bigger.