**SURVEY ON CHARACTERISTICS OF TOP GROWTH COMPANIES**

Directions: According to the research done to write the book *Grow*, the upper ends of the scales below are the organization design features of the world’s greatest companies. Rate your organization on these characteristics, using a scale of 1-5, with 5 representing the upper end.

**1. Explicit Statement of Brand Ideal**

We have no explicit statements of purpose or values, or have statements about being the best-performing, most profitable company in the industry, or the like, about pursuing the company’s agenda.

1 2 3 4 5

- We have an explicit statement of Brand Ideal – our business’ higher purpose - The Brand Ideal is expressed as a life-improving ideal, to engage consumers and employees at the level of their most profound/universal hopes, dreams and values. - The Brand Ideal is unique in its category, offers strong difference from the competition.

Examples: IBM – help build a smarter planet; Pampers – helping mothers care for their babies’ and toddlers’ healthy, happy development.

**2. Business Artist as Leader of Company**

Our company is led by an operator, with a rational, inward focus on optimizing operations and maximizing short-term profits and returns.

1 2 3 4 5

Our company is run by a business artist –a leader with an artistic and creative mind, whose primary medium is the brand ideal; who connects with people holistically/rationally and emotionally, and rallies employees and customers to an ideal of improving people’s lives, e.g., like Steve Jobs

**3. Building the Culture Around the Brand Ideal**

We build the culture, and many subcultures, often unconsciously, around self-serving company management priorities, beliefs, values and goals, and different leaders’ differing personal preferences – resulting in inconsistencies across the whole, which change when leaders move on. We “don’t fix it if it ain’t broke”, and make incremental improvements as necessary.

1 2 3 4 5

- Our business culture is built around the brand ideal, creating one team, with one dream. - We are clear about what we stand for, inside and outside the company -- values, principles, priorities. - We unleash potential by holding high standards in bringing the ideal to life, put into place the capabilities to achieve it, and empower people to do so. - We design the organization for what it needs to win. - We rigorously recruit and select the right people, and are thorough in onboarding them. - We train constantly, in every conversation, meeting, visit, e.g., debriefs/audits; we practice a blend of carefully chosen formal and daily informal training. - We build trust and enable teamwork through the shared meaning and emotional bonds of the life-improving ideal; ideal-inspired collaboration trumps command and control methods. - We champion innovation of all kinds.

**4. Communicating the Ideal to Engage Employees and Customers**

Our internal and external communications are disjointed, with no higher purpose to unify them; different aspects of communication are managed by different groups without clear, consistent guidelines; external communications are business-like, emphasize product/service functional benefits, and are not really authentically us, or consistent in voice; we work in functional silos, and interaction is rare across the whole organization.

1 2 3 4 5

- We treat communication as a critical driver of growth and a leadership responsibility. Every form of communication expresses and supports the brand ideal. We use a personal relationship metaphor in designing and measuring all communication – intending it to be characterized by trust, honesty, love, respect, caring, warmth, humor. - We communicate the brand ideal internally and externally to engage employees and customers, telling the story of who we aspire to be as a business; everyone is unified in this expression. - Our external communication is based on great listening for deep understanding of others. We are differentiated by being authentic, and by our unity of voice – style and tone -- in all our communications. - We ensure that employees of all levels and functions are located together, and that there is ongoing interaction to build and sustain one team. - We guide communications partners with an inspirational, clear, concise brief for every assignment.

**5. Delivering Near-Ideal Customer Experiences**

We strive for realistic goals for financial returns from our current offerings, provide satisfactory customer experience, maintain control over people and operations, and seek incremental improvement in offerings, from the perspective of our R&D organization.

1 2 3 4 5

- We deliver near-ideal customer experiences by having a repeatable, teachable process for innovation. - We make innovation personal through deep understanding of customer lives. - We have a robust portfolio for continuous innovation in all three forms: sustaining (product or service improvement), commercial (creating additional demand for existing products or services) and disruptive innovation (inventing or reinventing a category that changes the business model). - We create innovative customer experiences, and embrace transparency and honesty in them

**6. Evaluating Progress and People Against the Ideal**

We focus on business performance measures for evaluation -- financials and their immediate drivers.

1 2 3 4 5

- We measure and evaluate our progress against our ideal with the customers and stakeholders most important to our future; we measure brand health, and use a brand-building scorecard for the variables that determine it, as well as measuring business performance and organization health. - We define key performance indicators in terms of our ideal, as well as measure our people against our ideal by making contributing to the ideal part of everyone’s plan.