

Business Growth Advice: What We Learned from Growing Tomatoes

By Gene Gatty, Ph.D.



Being Italian, there is nothing to like more than good, delicious, Italian spaghetti sauce made with fresh tomatoes. So, one day my wife and I decided to plant some tomatoes in a home garden especially designed for them. Friends had told us how easy it was to produce a bushel of great tomatoes with just a few plants. So, we carefully chose the proper type, planted them and waited patiently for them to produce. We looked forward to turning them into the most delicious sauce which we were going to name “SpaGatty Sauce” taking advantage of our name, “Gatty.”

Alas, at harvest time and after a patient watch, we found from the 4 plants we planted in the ground, only one small, lonely tomato was produced; and thus, went our hope for the “SpaGatty Sauce.” So, what happened? In our After-Action Review, we found four mistakes:

1. We allowed weeds to grow around the plants which took the ground’s nourishment away from our plants. Yep, plants need minerals from the soil.
2. We were not faithful in watering them properly. Attention needed to be given to the tender shoots as well as the mature plants.
3. There is a product called, *Miracle Grow*, that provides extra nourishment to the plants, which we neglected to provide.
4. We, somehow, permitted bugs, insects and worms to attack the plants which caused irreparable harm to our precious plants.

Do you believe this lack of attention is any different from the manner in which we treat our businesses? All of us business owners want to develop healthy vibrant companies that can support our employees and families. Owners desire profitability, and want clients to benefit from our products. However, if you want to create a healthy, sustainable business, you need to pay much more attention to your business than we did to our tomato plants.

Here’s our advice for business growth, based on what we learned from growing tomatoes. Follow these 4 simple concepts:

1. Eliminate the weeds. Define your mission and vision and focus on your core values that differentiate your business from the crowd.
2. Water your business. What resources do you need to become and remain successful? We are in a constantly changing world, and obviously, we need to adapt with it. For one example, rules and regulations promulgated by the governments can cause us many problems that if not known or addressed can add unneeded costs.
3. Use your own **Miracle-Grow** to add new revenue streams. Think and explore new products or services that can enhance your present offerings. Never stop researching market trends and client needs.



4. Get rid of the insects. Focus on your business. Set overall goals for the business and develop action plans to achieve those goals in a timely manner.

Makes sense, doesn't it? But, please do not think you necessarily have the time or the talent to accomplish this without assistance. That is where we, at Strategic People Solutions, enter the picture. We provide the assistance you need. Invest with us and build a business that works brilliantly! Just for contacting us and scheduling a free discovery conversation, we'll provide you a free tomato plant!

About the Author: Dr. Gene Gatty is a partner at Strategic People Solutions, a business consulting firm. For the past 30 years, he has provided leadership mentoring, solutions to HR issues, and business strategic planning. He is well known for his humor and enthusiasm when conducting employee training seminars and public speaking engagements. His prior experiences include public school superintendence and classroom teaching. Visit StrategicPeopleSolutions.com for more information about the services available.