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## The Myth of Easy Business Transitions

A number of years ago, a man named Michael Gerber stumbled upon an unspoken rule of business; *that entrepreneurs were not born, they were created*. Well, Mr. Gerber went on to write a number of books and build a consulting business based upon this entire premise. Many years later, those same business owners who successfully got into business with the right advice and coaching are now trying to figure out their transition from those businesses. And, much like Mr. Gerber's words of wisdom regarding the myth of the entrepreneur, there are an equal number of misconceptions surrounding the transition from a business. Namely, the idea that transitions just happen and are not created is a myth that needs to be dispelled before the world of business owners can begin to seek the assistance that they need to properly plan for their transition.

### A Process is Required

If you were about to learn a new sport you might find it prudent to take a few lessons. Having never attempted this new sport you concurrently realize that physical activity often times can lead to injuries if you are not careful. You therefore expect your instructor to provide you with tools, tips, and a process by which you can advance in your new undertaking. Without the guidance of one who has gone before you, it is likely that you would expend a great amount of time and energy in a directionless manner. Moreover, a little voice inside your

head tells you that you're not as young as you used to be and, therefore, you don't adapt to new ideas as quickly either.

Planning a transition is no different than learning anything else that is new. It requires a discipline and a process by which you can follow some simple steps to achieve your desired outcome. But wait! What about the person you heard of who sold their business for a countless fortune to a nameless buyer and that individual easily stepped into an effortless retirement? Why, you think, can't I have the same good fortune as this person? Well, transition plans don't just happen, they are created. And, more importantly, *no transition is easy*.

### No Transition is Easy

If it is true that zest, passion, and a never-say-die attitude is what exemplifies most entrepreneurs, then why should it also be true that these same folks can so effortlessly detach themselves from the work and businesses that they created through an 'effortless' sale or transfer of their business? The answer is that it isn't true – it is a myth.

Every owner of a privately-held business will struggle with their transition. It is a unique situation for an owner of a privately-held business to experience a transition. How do you know that you are doing the right thing? Will the business survive without you? And, equally as important,

how will you survive without the thrill of growing a business and the challenges that come with it? What will replace that need in your life after you have successfully transitioned?

### The Business and the Personal

There is a combination of factors that make each business transition unique. In short, it is the combination of business and personal considerations that make a private business transition a separate experience for each owner. After all, you are not disposing of a business that belongs to nameless and faceless shareholders who buy and sell the shares of your company on a daily basis in stock markets. Rather, you are the name and face and those shareholders are friends, relatives, other employees and managers, and your constituents are local banks and service providers in your community. Your transition impacts each of these players in a personal way. And, again, there is no one type of entrepreneur who can effortlessly navigate the competing interests of these constituents to affect an effortless transition.

### Follow a Process for a Result

Given these challenges, it is helpful to come to two (2) important realizations:

#### 1. No Transition is Easy

This simply means that the easy transition is a myth. Don't believe in it because it will have you heading down an uncertain path at a point in time when you cannot afford to wander.

#### 2. Follow a Process

This simple but true advice is relevant no matter who you are, what type of business you run, or what stage of transition you believe yourself to be in. One must follow a

process to get a result. You understand and use this rule every day within your business. Your transition is no different. If you can take your transition one step at a time, you will find that the myth quickly is dispelled and it is replaced with a nuts and bolts process to assist you with the identification of what is most important to you, how prepared you are for your transition, what options are available, and what needs to be done in order to prioritize your desires and achieved your stated goals.

### Concluding Thoughts

Transitions are difficult. The easy transition is a myth. The more aware that you are about the need to follow a process to achieve your transition, the stronger you will be when it comes time to execute a transition that assists you in meeting your goals. Where to start? We at Owner's Edge have and use such a process. Come to one of our executive briefings and learn how it can help you. It is the first step in understanding how to make your transition easier.

Regards,



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DRIVING OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

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***Our Commitment to our Customers***

We help our owner/clients articulate and execute the strategies needed to make their profits sustainable and their business transferable. This creates true and meaningful value.

***About Owner's Edge***

Owner's Edge is a business advisory and consulting firm specializing in helping business owners work *on* their businesses by devising and implementing strategies to drive operational excellence every day. We are one of the few advisor firms that can provide a formal and comprehensive Transition Planning service for business owners. Call us for a no-obligation consultation today.

**Executive Briefing: *Business Transition Strategy Planning***

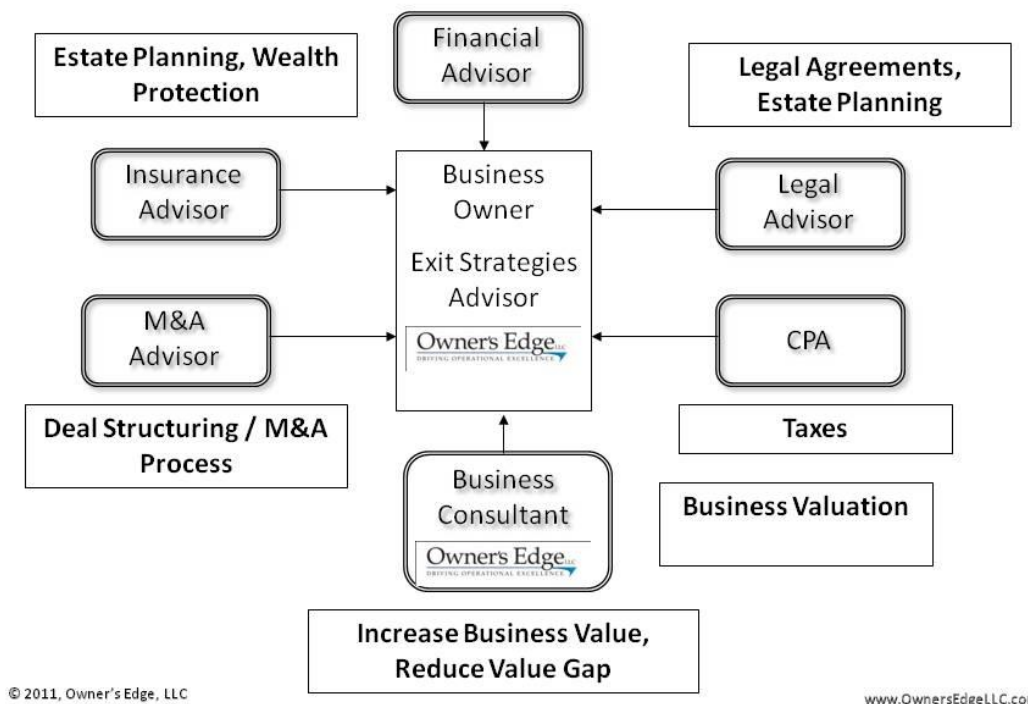
Wednesday June 8 at East Greenwich Yacht Club; 8:00AM – 10:00AM

This free educational breakfast briefing is tailored especially for business owners and their key advisors. Learn why it is important to plan your transition, where you should start, what your transition options are, who is involved in the process and when they need to enter into the process. A continental breakfast will be served. Reserve your seat today and feel free to invite members of your advisory team.

Kindly RSVP by June 3, 2011

to Lauren McCarthy, Newberry PR & Marketing,  
401-433-5965 or [lauren@newberrypr.com](mailto:lauren@newberrypr.com).

## Your Transition Advisory Team



*A professional exit planner such as Owner's Edge can lead your trusted Transition Advisory Team you already have in place. Don't try to go it alone! Turn to the professionals at Owner's Edge to ensure your transition plan is structured and executed to leave your business on your terms.*

*Do you find it more convenient to use email? To receive our "The Edge Transition Planning Newsletter" by email instead of US Mail, please drop us an email at [info@OwnerswEdgeLLC.com](mailto:info@OwnerswEdgeLLC.com). We will be happy to convert your delivery to our electronic version.*