

# Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone

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# Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone

## The Purpose of Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone

Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone (PZ) is designed to help a CEO introduce financial literacy concepts to their organization at a level they are comfortable with.

By identifying the activities in a company that can lead to generating, improving and sustaining profitability, a company is more likely to weather downturns as well as capitalize upon the intelligence of every single employee. The ability of employees to understand how their daily activities impact the company's ability to be profitable, can energize, motivate and help employees understand the value they bring to an organization.

**Audience:** Recommended audience for a PZ is a company that is experiencing growth and is looking for a process that will show immediate as well as long term results. The PZ is an effective growth management tool for companies of any size looking to engage employees in helping drive profit to a company's bottom line.

**Participants:** Must include the CEO and their leadership team. Recommended number of participants for a PZ is up to 8 participants. More can be included but it extends the time frame and could impact the price.

**Format:** Recommended format is a day and a half engagement, back-to-back. The addition of more than 8 participants may require another half day.

The format should also include a follow up ½ day meeting (this is a FEE session) with the participants 30 days after the date of the PZ. The purpose of this meeting is to uncover any obstacles or barriers that may have surfaced since the PZ. The goal would be to provide facilitation to move through any of those obstacles and get people moving forward. Or if no obstacles have appeared, use this as a time to evaluate progress on the initiatives.

The format should also include follow up ½ day meetings 90 days out. (these should be FEE sessions). These meetings provide progress updates from all participants, making sure focus has been maintained and to verify that initiatives are being met, that new ones are taking their place and forward progress continues to show up.

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## **Goals of Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone Program**

Organizational: To provide an easy-to-understand approach to how a company can improve its ability to drive profit to its bottom line. To engage every single employee in understanding how their job impacts the company's bottom line.

Personal: A tool that can help educate managers on how to make the financial aspects of a company come alive for their direct reports.

## **Objectives of the PZ Program**

It's critical that a GCS understand what the objectives and outcomes are from a PZ as this becomes your most important marketing and sales tool.

1. Raise awareness that the ability to impact a company's bottom line is the responsibility of every employee.
2. Identify how well a company is addressing the 9 activities that make up a company's Profit Zone.
3. Create specific action steps that will lead to a company strengthening its Profit Zone.
4. Help each employee identify the activities that reside within their own profit zone.
5. Complete the PZ Map and identify which initiatives will help the company focus on the specific areas that need work as well as the areas where the company is doing well.
6. Create a benchmark for employee engagement and company profitability.
7. Create a dialogue of growth that will engage every single employee in helping the company meet stated initiatives.

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## **Outcomes with Measurable Indicators for Success**

The PZ Program uncovers critical areas of focus for a CEO and their leadership team. The value in uncovering issues is lost if key indicators and benchmarks aren't put in place to monitor progress along the way. These are the areas where progress will be able to be measured and ultimately improvement made.

- Understanding how Revenue Generation and the activities that support Revenue Generation impact the company's ability to be more profitable.
- Recognizing that the company's Strategic & Tactical Focus must be in alignment with driving profit and reducing costs.
- Knowing how Gross and Net Profit Margins are determined and how understanding volume, cost and price influences these numbers.
- Understanding the difference between cash and revenue and why monitoring Cash Flow is the most important activity a company can do.
- Understanding a company's Cost Structure and what it takes to improve profits and reduce costs as an organizational function of a business.
- Recognizing how to tie Customer Satisfaction into profitability and the role employees play in delivering customer service.
- Understanding Staff Voltage as the energy that exists in a company and knowing that low voltage means low profits.
- Using Product or Service Quality as a competitive advantage and knowing it extends beyond your current customers.
- Creating a company-wide mindset around Company Innovation to drive pride and accountability throughout an organization.

## **Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone**

- By taking a position that some financial understanding of how a company makes and keeps money is healthy, a CEO begins the process of allowing employees to see how their job helps a company grow.
- By starting a financial literacy program with the CEO's leadership team, critical information that use to only reside in the head of a CEO or CFO now allows managers to play a train-the-trainer role with their direct reports.
- By taking small steps in introducing basic financial concepts, a CEO will begin a process that provides managers and employees the ability to see directly how their work impacts a company's bottom line.

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## **Specific Knowledge a GCS Needs to Deliver Zeroing in on Your Profit Zone**

1. Basic understanding of managing cash flow
2. Basic understanding of how to generate revenue
3. Basic understanding of how to control or cut costs
4. Basic understanding of cost of goods or cost of sales
5. Basic understanding of gross profit and gross margins
6. Basic understanding of marketing and sales expenses
7. Basic understanding of overhead and administrative expenses
8. Basic understanding of net profit and net margins
9. Basic understanding of the 9 Activities of the Profit Zone

**If a Growth Curve Specialist would like more training in the above areas of knowledge, contact Laurie. She has an online program that covers these areas and gives examples of how to increase revenues and cut costs, set up cash flow, create a profit plan and better understand how to improve gross and net profits.**

# **Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone**

## **Self-Diagnostic Tools included in Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone**

1. The Financial Literacy Quiz  
Completed by the CEO and the Leadership Team
2. Identification of How Employees Impact Profitability  
Completed by CEO and Leadership Team
3. Cash Flow Template  
Completed by CEO and Leadership Team
4. Profit Plan Template  
Completed by CEO and Leadership Team
5. Profit Driver Chart  
Completed by CEO and Leadership Team
6. 27 Question Online Assessment  
Completed by CEO and Leadership Team

## **Getting Started**

- Identify participants.
- Set date for day and a half PZ.
- Meet with CEO and go over Financial Literacy Quiz, and Company Financials.
- Determine how much the management team knows about financials and determine how comfortable the CEO is in sharing financials.
- Assess program based on CEOs beliefs.
- At end of PZ set up 30 and 90 day follow up meetings.

# Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone

## Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone and Follow Up Work

### Stages & Timelines: First 30 Days

Stage	Activity	Recommended Timeline
<b>1. On line set up and review with CEO</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet with CEO and go over the Financial Literacy Quiz</li> <li>2. Set up the PZ Company on the <a href="http://www.growthcurvespecialists.com">www.growthcurvespecialists.com</a> website</li> <li>3. Select date for day and a half PZ</li> <li>4. Select 30 day follow up date</li> </ol>	<b>Days 1 - 3</b>
<b>2. Prior to the event</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Get the Profit Zone Map prepared</li> <li>2. Get power point presentation ready</li> <li>3. Review company's financials to understand Gross Margins, Net Margins to use as benchmarks</li> <li>4. Put together notebooks</li> <li>5. Get all supplies ready – highlighters for Map, any other handouts</li> <li>6. Touch base with CEO to finalize meals and location</li> </ol>	<b>Days 4 - 5</b>
<b>3. Day of the event</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Setup projector, arrange room, set up flip charts, display map</li> <li>2. Meet and greet everyone and get to know something about each one prior to the day starting</li> <li>3. Follow suggested agenda in training manual</li> <li>4. Listen. Learn. Facilitate discussion.</li> <li>5. Keep flip charts up to date with issues that can turn into initiatives</li> <li>6. Don't allow issues to get swept under the table</li> <li>7. Probe gently until a problem and a potential solution have been identified when listing initiatives</li> <li>8. Keep schedule tight if it's a one day event – monitor breaks, keep track of time – most time needs to be spent on honing initiatives</li> </ol>	<b>Day 6</b>





# **Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone**

## **Things To Do Before the Event**

### **Set Up Company on Growth Curve Specialists Website**

At least 10 days before the scheduled PZ, set up the company information in the Growth Curve Specialists website. This ensures that we are tracking our growth curve clients and keeping track of their stage of growth for future development and work opportunities.

To set up your company for completing the online assessments, go to [http://www.growthcurvespecialists.com/survey\\_system/main.php](http://www.growthcurvespecialists.com/survey_system/main.php)

### **What You Need to Have Ready the Day of the Event**

- Zeroing in on Your Profit Zone Map
- Notebooks for each Participant
- Flip Charts and Easel
- Laptop with PowerPoint Presentation
- LCD Projector and Screen

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## How to Deliver a Day and a Half PZ -- Sample Agenda

### 1<sup>st</sup> Day Of PZ

#### 8 – 9:30 a.m. Introductions and Goals

- Explain your background
- Highlight goals of the day and a half session
- Ask what expectations are from each participant and put these on a flip chart
- Go over the first 9 slides in the ppt to set the tone and get people's buy in as to the seriousness of the information they will be sharing
- Deliver the 10 Question Financial Literacy Quiz

#### 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Review Answers to the Financial Literacy Quiz

This is designed to establish a quick benchmark to find out how much people understand about the company's financials or business financials in general. Generate discussion and take notes to put on flip charts of areas that may need to become a part of the initiatives. Slides 10 – 13.

#### 10:30 – 11:45 p.m. Capturing the Imagination

This segment is designed to start people thinking about the financial aspects of their business. Slides 14 – 28

#### 11:45 – 12:15 Lunch Break

#### 12:15 – 2:45 p.m. Goal #1: Raise Awareness

Education segment on Profit, P&L, Profit Planning. This also covers how employees impact profit, how the company makes money, examples of Cash Flow, Profit Planning template and Profit Drivers. Slides 14 – 60

#### 2:45 – 5:00 p.m. Goal #2: The 9 Activities Assessment

Set this up as an exercise that everyone will work together on. The question will appear on the screen and you will facilitate getting a consensus on the answer. Your flip charts will collect the answers. At the end of the assessment, you will fill in the Map, showing their completion on each of the 9 activities.

### End of First Day

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> Day of PZ

### 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Goal #3: Creating Action Steps

Have all the flip charts in the room and facilitate a summary of what was discussed. Identify areas where improvement needs to be made and facilitate the discussion to create some general areas of focus.

Owners of the general set of initiatives should be identified. Their goal is to take the initiatives back to their teams and discuss how as a team they will address the areas of concern. Then the owner brings their ideas to the next management team and all owners discuss how they will address the issues. The goal is to get buy in from the employees and keep everyone in the loop as to progress.

### 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Goal #4: How Employees Impact the Profit Zone Exercise

This exercise is designed to have the participants examine more specifically what they do every day in their role that impacts the companies bottom line.

This will be an exercise in helping teach the Managers how to take this exercise to their direct reports.

**Wrap Up:** Clarify roles and responsibilities. Remind people of the follow up session in 30 days.

**NOTE:** The day after the workshop, it's recommended you follow up with the CEO and find out if there are any specific areas they might like help with based on what came out of the workshop. This is a great way to continue follow on work with this client. Suggestions could include having the CEO take the LADP, coaching sessions with the CEO to help he/her address leadership issues; full day or half day workshops to develop more team building skills; full day or half day workshops to address management issues such as creating Vision, Mission, Values or Employee Compensation Planning; Employee Development Programs, etc.

# **Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone**

## **Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone Tools**

Find this presentation at [www.growthcurvespecialists.com/downloads](http://www.growthcurvespecialists.com/downloads)

You are welcome to use the content and put your own company name and logo and contact information on the slides.

You do need to put an attribution on any presentation you use that talks about the Profit Zone:

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## **Completing the PZ Map**

You can download the Profit Zone map at <http://www.growthcurvespecialists.com/downloads>

The file can then be shipped to a Print/Copy center to be made up.

The MAP becomes a visual reminder of the work completed in the day and a half workshop. Once you have written in the INITIATIVES, the CEO should place this in his office (make sure you put a hanger on the back in case they want to hang it on their wall) and continue to refer to it as the team makes progress on the Initiatives.

## **Statement to use on websites**

**Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone is a program designed and created by FlashPoint! LLC**

In any presentation that you utilize that discusses the concepts relating to the PZ program, give attribution to:

**Copyright 2010, FlashPoint! LLC**

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## Facilitation of Critical Initiatives

The goal at the end of delivering a day and a half PZ is to have the participants come to agreement on their top 6 - 8 initiatives based on the Profit Zone assessment.

This assessment is designed to create dialogue around the 9 activities of a company's profit zone and it's the facilitator's responsibility to help identify issues throughout the session and then finalize the ones that everyone feels are most critical.

It's also important to work to identify owners of each initiative and to create a few milestones to track progress.

All the initiatives, in abbreviated form, are to be placed on the PZ Map.

It may be of help to also put up a Parking Lot flip chart sheet to capture any issues that aren't relevant to the discussion today. Areas that the facilitator could highlight in the Summary Report so the CEO knows to address them at a later date.

### **Facilitator's Exercises to Draw Consensus Among a Group**

You may already have several of these facilitation exercises in your own tool kit. We only provide these two in case you are looking for effective ways to take a lot of information and filter it down to critical points everyone can agree to.

#### **Facilitation Exercise #1:**

This exercise is designed to allow each person to MARK the issues they feel most strongly about. To set this up, you need to assign either a Number or a Letter to ALL issue statements that are on the Flip Charts.

Provide each person in the room with a DIFFERENT COLOR marking pen. Explain that each person gets to pick up to FIFTEEN issues that they feel the most strongly about. (this number will vary depending upon how many issues you have in total – with fewer issues, you may only let them pick EIGHT issues).

As each person reviews all the issues, when they find one they feel strongly about, have them put a SLASH mark on the right hand side of the issue. Each person gets up to FIFTEEN slash marks.

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Taking a clean sheet of paper, the facilitator determines which issues received the most SLASH marks and those get put onto a new list.

It's from this list that the facilitator now needs to get that list narrowed down to the TOP 6 - 8 initiatives that the team agrees to work on.

The facilitator can go through the same process, now giving people only FIVE priorities.

Ask the CEO to help determine ownership by having that discussion with the group. Put initials by each initiative to indicate who is the owner.

With the CEOs input, have each 'owner' create at least 2 milestones to capture for their initiative and set up with the CEO when, as a team, they will review these milestones.

### **Facilitation Exercise #2:**

Another facilitation exercise that can be used to help you evaluate which issues have the ability to be dealt with on a short-term basis and which ones, that are still important, may take longer to address is called the Will, Skill or GOD exercise.

- **WILL means that the team believes they have the collective WILL to take on that issue.**
- **SKILL means that the team believes they have the collective SKILLS to take on that issue.**
- **GOD means that it will take an act of God to solve this problem. Things seem to be outside our control.**

In this exercise, the first review of all the issues that have been discussed and put up on charts around the room asks this question:

Which issues would take an Act of God to resolve? They require something more than the company or the team can come up with in order to take this issue on today.

The team simply looks at each issue and asks the question:

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**Is this an issue that is simply out of our control right now?** If the answer is YES, put that issue under a Category on a Flip Chart called God. These issues will not be addressed right now but should be captured and included in the Summary Report that goes to the CEO.

Now have the team look at each initiative with these two thoughts in mind:

#1 – do we have the WILL to take this issue on? AND at the same time ask

#2 – do we have the SKILL to take this issue on?

On a flip chart, draw a horizontal line at the top and a line down the middle of the page. In the Left Column put WILL and in the right hand column put SKILL.

If there is room on the flip chart that lists the issues, put a T with one column having WILL at the top and the other column having SKILL at the top.

Go through all the issues and rate each in the SKILL column first – rate each issue as to High, Medium or Low.

Then go back through all the issues and rate each in the WILL column – rate each issue as to High, Medium or Low.

Each issue will now have been given a designation as to how much WILL the team has on each one and how much SKILL the team has on each one. If you have high SKILL and high WILL these issues will emerge as quick wins for the team. Low SKILL and low WILL issues may have to wait for another day when skills are more available.



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## **Revelations**

At the end of your PZ, it's important to capture what each person came away with.

In the notebook is a Revelations Tab. On this page the facilitator will ask each participant to write down as many revelations as they can think of from the workshop.

Once everyone has captured as many as they can, go around the room, getting to the CEO LAST, and ask each person to read aloud their Revelations.

Ask each person to hand their sheets in.

It's important that these sheets are included in the final summary report to the CEO.

Also, it's from these Revelations that a facilitator can create testimonials.

## **Review of Session**

It's important that you leave at least 30 minutes if possible at the end of the day and a half session to review the results of the session.

This is more for the CEOs sake as it solidifies in their mind the value his/her team received from the session. A critical success factor in getting follow on work from this CEO is to make sure he/she recognizes the inherent value in having the team come together and understand how their job and activities impact the company's bottom line.

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## **Summary Report to CEO**

This is a recommendation that you provide a summary of the workshop in a report within 48 hours after the session to the CEO.

In this report you can include:

- The day and time of the workshop
- The names and positions of the participants
- The Results of the Profit Zone Assessment
- Your recommendations as to what steps the CEO should take with these results
- The list of Revelations from each participant
- The list of the top 6 - 8 initiatives
- The list of all other initiatives that were discussed
- Your recommendations for the next six months which includes the date for the 30-day included in initial price review of how initiatives are going

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## **Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone Follow Up:**

### **Over the next 3 – 12 months**

The most effective use of the PZ is to conduct a follow up session 90 days after the first workshop and then every 6 months. These can be half day sessions or can become a full day session in conjunction with other work, such as a vision setting workshop, or a management performance workshop, or use it as a chance to bring in other key employees into the process.

### **Follow up Plan**

30-day phone call to review how the team is doing and how the CEO is viewing the results from the session – this is FREE

Any half day or full day suggestions on follow up work that came from the workshop – i.e. education on how to generate revenue, cut expenses, improve gross profit, employee engagement, CEO Weekly Coaching sessions – this is FEE

Three month follow up half day session on Initiatives – this if FEE

Six month follow up half day session on progress in improving profitability and the progresss on initiatives – this is FEE

### **Marketing Ideas for the PZ**

All standard marketing concepts apply here and I think the best starting point is to make sure you have a good idea of who your target market is with this material.

Go to the GCS website and download the Marketing Power Point presentation for ideas on how to position this workshop and how to explain its value to a potential CEO.

You will find Competitive Positioning, Outcomes, and Differentiators for the PZ program.

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## **Selling the PZ**

As the PZ is a new program, we need to develop Sales Approaches to selling the Profit Zone concept to CEOs.

Unlike the Stages of Growth, this program scales to large corporations and is best utilized in organizations that are open to sharing financial information with employees.

As we gain knowledge and experience in our sales approach, we'll develop ideas and bring these ideas to our GCS training programs.

# Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone

## **TEN Attributes Gained from Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone Program**

**ONE:** Walk away with a winning short-term and long-term view of a company's strengths and weaknesses and turn them into action steps.

**TWO:** Begin the education of the management team on how they impact the company's bottom line.

**THREE:** Get the company focused on the right path to improving performance.

**FOUR:** Remove the hidden barriers that are causing performance to slump, people to disengage and profits to dwindle.

**FIVE:** Raise questions regarding financial aspects of a company that help identify areas of strengths and weaknesses.

**SIX:** Recognize the importance of the 9 activities that impact a company's profit zone.

**SEVEN:** Learn how every single person in the company can help improve profits and reduce costs.

**EIGHT:** Help each and every employee see how their job impacts the company's bottom line.

**NINE:** Reduce the unknown by creating a language around financials that help employees control their destiny.

**TEN:** Tap into the intelligence of employees as they discover new ways of understanding how their time, performance and productivity can help a company sustain profitability.

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## **19 Benefits Participants will Gain from the PZ:**

1. Improve communications among key staff members which will improve team interaction.
2. Introduce a language of growth in order to engage every single employee in helping the company succeed.
3. Identify areas where improvement will make significant changes in the company so that everyone can work with common goals and objectives.
4. Proven research takes much of the guesswork out of managing growth allowing leaders to stay focused on critical issues instead of trying to figure it out as they go.
5. Takes the fear and the unknown out of growing a business to provide a more targeted approach to specific growth issues.
6. Provides a well-thought out road map to maximize performance.
7. Helps improve a leader's ability to address conflict and reduce tension that leads to unproductive behaviors.
8. Uncovers key indicators to allow a company to identify areas of impact and benchmark performance.
9. Helps shorten sales cycles.
10. Identifies or supports core values which can counter the statistic that 71% of employees become disengaged from the company within 6 months after joining.
11. Provides critical management training that encourages managers to focus on empowering employees, leading to employee retention.
12. Allows people to get to the truth of all issues.
13. Become more focused on how to exceed customer success which will mitigate the chances of customer's migrating away.
14. Improve staff satisfaction and productivity.
15. Find closure from past issues.
16. Discover the next best thing to do that will increase performance.
17. Identify real issues based on factual, non-emotional insight through the use of self-diagnostic tools and assessments.
18. Creates a graphical overview of a company's vision for improvement, keeping key initiatives fresh and accessible.
19. Provides a step-by-step process to engage entire company in the planning process once key initiatives are created and shared with employees.

# Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone

## Bibliography

*At this stage you may be interested in exploring some of our source material. Here are a few titles you might find interesting:*

Navigating the Growth Curve by James Fischer. Available through FlashPoint!'s website or contact Laurie Taylor @ [laurie@igniteyourbiz.com](mailto:laurie@igniteyourbiz.com) or 303-588-1286.

Profits Aren't Everything, They Are the Only Thing, George Cloutier, Harper Business

Profit Building: Cutting Costs Without Cutting People, Perry J. Ludy, Berrett-Koehler Publishers

The Art of Profitability, Adrian Slywotzky, Warner Books

The Profit Zone: How Strategic Business Design Will Lead You to Tomorrow's Profits, Adrian Slywotzky & David J. Morrison, Three Rivers Press

Before You Hire a CEO: 8 Disciplines to Increase Financial Visibility and Control, Troy D. Schrock,

Leadership and Self Deception: Getting Out of the Box, The Arbinger Institute

# **Zeroing in on Your Company's Profit Zone**

## **Monthly Teleseminar Training Sessions**

As a part of the overall fee for becoming a Certified Growth Curve Specialist, you will have access to monthly one-hour online teleseminar training sessions.

The purpose of this ongoing education program is to provide you with more in-depth information about delivering Zeroing in on Your Profit Zone, the 7 Stages of Growth and the Hidden Agents. As well as ideas on marketing and selling all the programs and content provided to GCS.

Each month there will be a one hour live teleseminar with Laurie Taylor, founder of the growth curve specialist program. On this teleseminar, GCS will be able to ask questions and bring issues that they need help with.

We encourage you to take advantage of the Live Teleseminar as it will allow you to ask specific questions about your experience with all the programs and information associated with being a GCS.

It's our intent to make sure that your training continues to ensure you experience the financial success we believe is possible.



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## FlashPoint!'s Affiliate Program:

FlashPoint! is offering an Affiliate program to Growth Curve Specialists. This is a way to earn additional income while selling tools that will help your clients better understand the 7 Stages of Growth and improve their business practices. To sign up, contact Laurie directly at [laurie@igniteyourbiz.com](mailto:laurie@igniteyourbiz.com).

### **Navigating the Growth Curve**

Make 50% on selling James Fischer's book, *Navigating the Growth Curve*.

Retail price: \$10.95

### **An Introduction to the 7 Stages of Growth**

Make 50% on selling *The Introduction to the 7 Stages of Growth* audio CD.

Retail price: \$7.95

### **Follow the Money**

Make 50% on selling Laurie's digital *Follow the Money* 4 Volume Set.

Retail price: \$297

### **Destination, Greatness**

Make 50% on selling Laurie's online training program for business owners who need help with the financial aspects of running their business.

Retail price: \$97