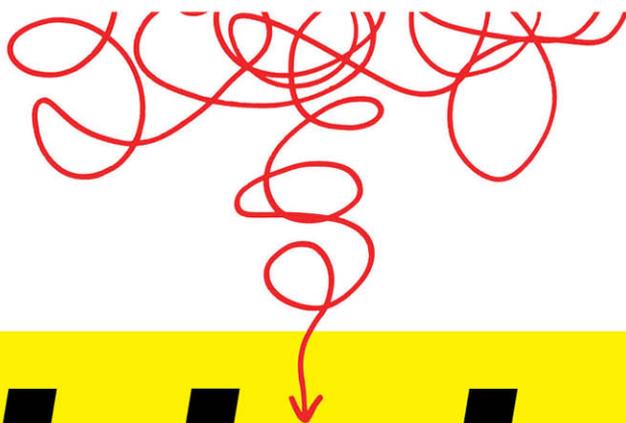


"To win in today's hyper-tough, global business environment, you'd better outthink your competitors . . . Think to Win shows you how."

—JAMES M. KILTS, Cofounder Centerview Capital, Former CEO of Kraft, Nabisco and Gillette, and Former Vice Chairman of Procter & Gamble



Unleashing the Power of Strategic Thinking



Think to

Win

Paul Butler

John Manfredi

Peter Klein

Praise for *Think to Win*

“If you’re going to win in today’s hypertough, global business environment, you’d better outthink your competitors. And *Think to Win* shows you how. It’s the winning approach I’ve used to turn around companies like Nabisco and Gillette and to launch several new billion-dollar businesses.”

James M. Kilts, cofounder Centerview Capital, former CEO of Kraft, Nabisco, and Gillette, and Vice Chair of Procter & Gamble.

“For CEOs and all leaders who want to outthink their competitors, *Think to Win* is a good place to start. The book is loaded with practical concepts and best practices from world-class companies and leaders that can be easily applied to any business. A wonderful read for action-oriented leaders.”

James D. White, Chairman, President, and CEO, Jamba Juice

“*Think to Win* is a winning and elegantly simple approach for cracking the code on thorny strategic issues—pragmatic, straightforward, and powerfully insightful.”

Douglas R. Conant, founder and CEO Conant Leadership, Chairman of Avon Products, former President and CEO of Campbell Soup Company, and coauthor of Touch Points

“*Think to Win* is a winner. It unlocks thinking to galvanize people and companies to thoughtful actions that produce great results. The Think to Win approach of fundamental principles joined with a disciplined process can jump-start stalled businesses and ignite global opportunities.”

Irene Rosenfeld, Chairman and CEO, Mondelez International

“Nothing needs solid strategic thinking more than health care insurance. *Think to Win* is a great place to find the clear principles, disciplined process, and vision that would make a huge difference.”

Francis S. Molloy, former Chief Operating Officer, NY Blue Shield

“Think to Win turns strategic thinking into action and results. For leaders and those who want to be leaders, *Think to Win* offers a proven model that combines clear principles with a disciplined process to achieve superior performance. I’ve used the Think to Win approach to revitalize stagnant businesses, turn around troubled ones, and ignite global growth opportunities. *Think to Win* engages an organization in understanding the realities of the situation, aligning on goals, and driving improvement.

*Daryl Brewster, President and CEO, CECP and former CEO,
Krispy Kreme*

“With so much information and noise coming at us every second of the day, it’s good to have a book that gives us a workable, practical approach for creating a vision and grasping the insights to guide us to success. *Think to Win* not only provides the formula for winning, it also is filled with real world examples to illustrate it.”

*Gary Vaynerchuk, cofounder and CEO of VaynerMedia, a
Digital/Social Media Brand Agency, Video Blogger, Co-Owner of
WineLibrary, author, and public speaker.*

“In very simple, basic, and easy-to-understand examples, *Think to Win* provides a proven framework to help leaders make the right strategic choices, develop a clear integrated plan of action, and, importantly, a methodology to align the entire organization to focus on what really matters in order to win.”

*Ed Shirley, former President and Chief Executive Officer Bacardi
Limited, former Vice Chairman, Procter & Gamble, Global
Beauty and Grooming.*

“*Think to Win* distills the authors’ decades of experience in turning around troubled businesses and igniting growth in mature businesses into a practical approach that engages and empowers the entire organization to think strategically and act with urgency. Its real-world case histories are as entertaining as they are instructive.”

*Bryan G. Stockton, former Chairman and Chief Executive
Officer, Mattel, Inc.*

“*Think to Win* demonstrates that winning is not just about planning. The best-laid plans are worthless unless they’re communicated broadly, understood widely, and viewed with a sense of urgency to act. This book gives us the essentials for bringing everything together—from thinking to planning to acting to winning.”

Brian Kelley, President and CEO, Keurig Green Mountain

“*Think to Win* shows business leaders how to extend strategic thinking out of the purview of the ‘elite few’ and into the company culture as a whole. It’s a simple, proven approach to analyzing and solving old or new challenges and provides a common language anyone at any level in the organization can understand.”

*Joseph E. Scalzo, President and Chief Executive Officer,
Atkins Nutritionals, Inc.*

“For those leaders who have struggled to improve strategic thinking throughout their organizations, *Think to Win* provides a tried and tested approach that works with companies large and small. And since the best-thought-out plans in the world are worthless unless you make them happen, *Think to Win* has a roadmap for executing with excellence.”

*Richard H. Lenny, former Chairman and CEO,
The Hershey Company*

“*Think to Win* shows the benefits of thinking both strategically and simply. The ability to think-plan-act with clarity makes a difference. Organizations perform better over time with leaders and managers who can spot and avoid things that are distractions and time-wasters and focus on the few things that produce sustained results.”

*John A. Quelch, Harvard Business School, Charles Edward
Wilson Professor of Business Administration*

“If you want to help your organization grow, *Think to Win* is a must-read book. With the constantly changing demands of all business, day-to-day challenges dominate our lives. But strategic thinking has never been more important. And *Think to Win* shows how strategic thinking can become part of the fabric of every organization and every person in it.”

Kelly J. Haecker, The WhiteWave Foods Company, Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President

“*Think to Win* is more than a fool-proof approach for making strategic thinking accessible to everyone. It’s a way of looking at all aspects of business with an open mind that challenges all assumptions, engages the entire organization, and drives superior performance.”

Jim Holbrook, President and CEO, Post Consumer Brands

“*Think to Win* shows business leaders the importance of ensuring strategic thinking is not viewed as the purview of the “elite few” and is embedded in the company culture as a whole. It’s a simple, proven approach to analyzing and solving old or new challenges and provides a common language anyone at any level in the organization can understand. This is the key to turning strategy into execution and delivering superior marketplace results.”

Sandra (Sandi) E. Peterson, Johnson & Johnson Group Worldwide Chairman and member of the Executive Committee.

“Paul, John, and Peter have hit a home run with *Think to Win*. Strategy is not about budgeting, and it’s not executing to incremental goals. It’s thinking differently about what can be done and how to make that happen. What’s needed is different thinking combined with a shared language and tools to make it happen. They’ve pulled it off. *Think to Win* is about how to differentiate your business in the eyes of target customers and create the conditions where they would rather work with you than with anyone else. This is so much easier said than done. The good news is the authors have been implementing these ideas for many years and have a track record of success.”

Norm Smallwood, coauthor of Results-Based Leadership and The Leadership Code

“The five principles of *Think to Win* are a game changer in strategic thinking. The brilliance is in the simplicity of the process, which begins by ensuring you ask the right questions so you identify the right area to focus upon. This book is practical, filled with case examples and how-tos. The process works for organizations and for individuals. Utilizing these five principles is definitely a formula for winning!”

Dana Robinson, coauthor of Performance Consulting and Strategic Business Partner

“*Think to Win* is powerful and insightful. Applying the principles of *Think to Win* allows leaders to move their businesses forward by knowing what’s most important for their consumers and customers and then acting.”

Rob De Martini, President and Chief Executive Officer, New Balance Inc.

“*Think to Win* is an important and timely book. The principles and practices outlined by the authors, when applied to any organization, will not only build capability in leaders to quickly identify and address business challenges, they also serve to unify organizations around a common language. All are essential to win in the marketplace.”

Edward F. Lonergan, former Chief Executive Officer of Chiquita Brands International, Inc. and Diversy, Inc.

“*Think to Win* is that one book that every executive must read and must have their teams read. Their model for strategic thinking is a proven approach to help teams face complex business challenges and achieve extraordinary results. Their approach can be easily implemented and woven into the fabric of an organization so that this becomes the way you think and work.”

Andrea G. Procaccino, CMT, Vice President and Chief Learning Officer, New York Presbyterian Hospital

“Smart and simple. Those two words describe the *Think to Win* philosophy and approach. In our hyper-accelerated world, we need a durable yet flexible approach to making the right things happen to grow and sustain our business. *Think to Win* gets after the right balance of discipline, focus, alignment, and flexibility. Finally, a model that focuses on outcomes, not just activity.”

*Joe Garbus, Vice President of Talent and Leadership,
Celgene Corporation*

“*Think to Win* is a wonderful resource for leaders who want to create an atmosphere where there is an openness and willingness to share knowledge and develop effective strategies that deliver great results.”

*Dr. Leon Bruner, Senior Vice President for Scientific and
Regulatory Affairs and Chief Science Officer,
Grocery Manufacturers Association.*

THINK TO WIN

UNLEASHING THE POWER OF
STRATEGIC THINKING

**PAUL BUTLER
JOHN MANFREDI
PETER KLEIN**



New York Chicago San Francisco Athens London
Madrid Mexico City Milan New Delhi
Singapore Sydney Toronto



CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
INTRODUCTION:	1
CHAPTER 1: New Thinking for Winning	5
CHAPTER 2: Principles for Winning	15
CHAPTER 3: What It Takes to Win	39
CHAPTER 4: Key To Winning	67
CHAPTER 5: Vision: Seeing the Future of Winning	83
CHAPTER 6: Strategies: Making the Right Choices	101
CHAPTER 7: Confronting the Elusive: Moving from Planning to Acting	117
CHAPTER 8: Bringing Everything Together: From Thinking to Acting to Winning	139
CHAPTER 9: The Winning Never Ends: Anchoring Change	163
EPILOGUE: Turning Over the Hourglass	183
APPENDIX A: Organizational Alignment Survey	189
APPENDIX B: Think to Win Situation Assessment Diagnostic: Situation Assessment Tool for Consumer/ Customer Marketing	197
GLOSSARY	211
INDEX	215

Introduction

Is there a simple approach to decision making and strategic thinking that can really work? Winning, especially in today's environment of global hypercompetitiveness, must require complex algorithms and abstruse conceptual paradigms that go well beyond easy comprehension. Something that can be easily understood, quickly applied, and not only identify great strategic options, but also great approaches to execute them, really can't exist. Or can it?

Yes, it can. And we've written *Think to Win* to show how it does.

There is nothing wrong with the hundreds of other approaches presented in books, business review articles and academic research treatises that promise great strategic thinking results. But they do have limitations. Most are intended for the select few who have backgrounds enabling them to comprehend, integrate, and apply these advanced concepts and approaches. Others are more broadly accessible but require extended rigorous training to allow the approaches to be applied. And still others work in certain categories or sectors, or on certain issues and problems, but not widely, and almost never across the board.

And this is where and why *Think to Win* is different. Its easy accessibility; its understandability at a near universal level; and its usefulness across an entire range of business, professional, and personal issues are exceptional. We know of nothing that even begins to approach it.

So we've written *Think to Win (TTW)* to disclose the power of this approach by providing the principles and processes that propel *TTW*, along with many illustrative case histories and examples, based on our decades of experience as senior leaders of several top global companies and as consultants to scores of others. In this book, you'll find first-person accounts, composite case studies, and guidance from experts.

We provide a simple, proven approach for analyzing issues, challenges, and any difficult problems whether they've been around a long time, or suddenly hit you broadside. Our approach strips away all the complexity.

We offer a system and language that work at an individual level and also throughout the organization. It's a unifying process and language—a common approach from the top of the organization to the bottom, no matter where anyone is located across the country, or around the globe.

Think to Win eliminates assumptions, guesswork, and misunderstandings from the get-go. Things get moving immediately, and the tools and frameworks we offer in this book facilitate the flow. The net effect goes well beyond producing one-time wins. It becomes part of the new culture that defines the on-going success of any organization. Success becomes something people can begin to count on and invest in—financially and personally. Attitudes change when it becomes common knowledge that the organization is both an exciting and a fulfilling place to be. People bring their best selves to work and the organization thrives.

This is a timely and important book. The ability to think-plan-act makes a difference. Research supports it and our experience confirms it. Organizations that perform better over time have leaders and managers who know how to differentiate between those things that are distractions and wasters of time and energy and those that produce sustained results. That *ability to differentiate* is strategic thinking at its best.

There are real standouts among companies—the winners, the think-to-win powerhouses—that have become game changers in their sectors. This book shares what we have learned from some of the best thinkers in business. And it reveals the inner workings of several of their companies.

We think all of it will give you incredible insights on how to win. And that's what *Think to Win* is all about.

New Thinking for Winning

What if we could show you a new way of thinking—a fast, sure-fire way of assessing, questioning, and determining what is important? A new way of thinking about problems and taking advantage of opportunities? A new way of quickly communicating what's going on, what you're going to do, and what impact your actions would have?

That would be *Think to Win*, a dynamic new approach to thinking simply, yet strategically. That's *TTW*, *Think to Win*.

This book will help you think to win by giving you the same tools that the winning CEOs and senior managers use every day. They're not likely to share them with you, but our step-by-step approach will. And *TTW* is so easy that strategic thinking becomes a habitual part of your life. It will help you do a better, smarter job for your company, and it can also lay out your game plan for moving up the ladder, or even reinventing yourself and finding a better position in an entirely new field.

Thinking simply and strategically matters! For the past 20 years, we have applied TTW in hundreds of situations. We've done it with our own companies, and with companies we've worked for. It has solved problems both large and small and maximized literally thousands of opportunities. Whether the organization is a Fortune 500 company, an educational or medical institution, a governmental agency, a small business start-up, a philanthropy or other nonprofit, a family wrestling with major decisions like college or retirement planning, or *you*, plotting out a career trajectory, TTW will point you toward the best outcomes. And it will do it quickly, as well.

We explode one persistent myth about the strategic thinking process: that it is long and cumbersome. Even if that were true in the past, it's not now. TTW is not protracted thinking, the kind that eventually coughs up a 500-page doorstep-type plan that is shelved upon completion. We empower people to create plans that are living documents, guiding decision making on a daily basis. Strategic thinking as we practice it—Think to Win, TTW—is real, actionable and accessible. We're talking about *think-plan-act*—the kind of thinking that quickly galvanizes individuals, companies, and other organizations to produce positive results.

Many companies have generated remarkable successes by creating traditions of strategic thinking. By instilling this capability throughout the organizations, companies such as Keurig, Jamba Juice, Procter & Gamble, Gillette, and New Balance have enjoyed years of dynamic growth. We have included a discussion of just a few here, but in each chapter you will find additional stories of think-to-win successes.

Trusted Everywhere

The rejuvenation of the Duracell Company demonstrates the power of TTW to totally transform a company's culture as well as its performance. When Mark Leckie was named president of Duracell, he faced a formidable challenge. The famed battery maker was in real trouble. Market share had been plummeting for 11 straight quarters and earnings were sinking. When it was acquired by Gillette, Duracell was expected to be one of its

elite brands. Instead, it turned into a disaster. As it faltered, it started dragging down Gillette's performance with it, becoming, in the words of a leading business magazine, "the central culprit in Gillette's fall from grace" (from "Can Gillette Regain Its Voltage?" *BusinessWeek*, October 15, 2000).

What was wrong? The Duracell management team was not the problem. Most team members were long-tenured pros, people attuned to all the ins and outs of battery demand. They knew, for example, that during the holidays, prominent placement of battery displays in the toy department gave sales a big boost. And that two days before a hurricane hit, consumers would rush to hardware stores and home improvement centers to stock up on emergency supplies, especially extra batteries. To spur impulse buying year round, they displayed batteries in multiple locations storewide.

There was no question that the Duracell team was dedicated. Team members' work ethics were strong, anything but impediments to performance. Their plans were well-drawn and detailed. Their implementation approaches were well aligned with their plans, and their field resources were marshaled around the right tasks. Leckie had a lot of confidence in them.

Product quality also was not the problem. To the contrary, in an effort to one-up competitors, Duracell had introduced the Ultra, a premium battery with greater longevity, and a premium price to go with it. Designed for the newest generation of power-hungry electronic devices, the battery was supposed to lure tech-savvy customers away from its rivals. The managers who conceived Ultra had migrated to Duracell from Gillette, where trading up consumers was a long-standing strategy for Gillette blades and razors. But instead of grabbing market share from competitors, Ultra sales had come from Coppertop, Duracell's mainstream brand. Even worse, as Ultra and Coppertop were battling for share at retail, rival brands and private label batteries swooped in to undercut them at the lower end of the price spectrum.

To get to the core issues, Mark Leckie listened intently to the presentations by each of his top-level executives. When these managers compared notes afterward, they noted a baffling pattern. All of them had spent a lot less time briefing their new president than they had expected. They had barely begun when Mark would say, "Got it. Let's move on."

What could he see that they could not? How was he absorbing information so swiftly? Mark Leckie was using the power of TTW. He was rapidly analyzing the input his team had given him and using a series of questions, screens, and filters that enabled him to gain insights quickly. The process allowed him to establish a framework that highlighted connections and patterns, and put them into context. TTW not only gave him the power to isolate the problem, but it also enabled him to identify a solution and to plot a series of actions to be taken.

As is true with many insights, Duracell's core problem was obvious—hiding in plain sight—once it was identified. It was Ultra's premium pricing. From the outset, Duracell had assumed that consumers would be willing to pay more for its high-performance battery. But would they?

Products with a premium price must not just be better, they have to readily be *perceived* as better. It's easy for people to tell that a high-priced Gillette blade shaves a lot closer, more smoothly, and more comfortably than a lower-priced competitor.

Not so with batteries. To consumers, batteries are judged on how long they last. But that's very hard to tell. Consider the AAs in a TV remote. Even bargain batteries will power a remote for about three months—long enough for people to forget when they last replaced them. In a busy household, not many consumers would notice that the Ultras lasted longer. And even fewer were willing to pay 30 percent more.

Mark Leckie realized that his team hadn't fully explored the pricing issue. After Ultra was launched, inertia took over. And implementing the Ultra strategy was leading the company over the cliff.

Once the flawed assumption was identified, Leckie steered his team on a major course correction that had a broad and far-ranging impact on virtually every aspect of how the company operated. Duracell restructured how resources were allocated and revisited how it approached marketing, market research, and technical innovation. As pricing gaps with competitors were narrowed, unnecessary costs were removed throughout the company. Research budgets were trimmed, and the company's

efforts were redirected away from breakthrough innovations and toward new incremental ways to become more competitive. Sales repositioned Duracell with vendors to increase its presence on mainstream brand shelves. Since the Duracell brand had maintained its excellent reputation with consumers, marketing was redirected to capitalize on this brand trust.

It worked. Mark Leckie's strategic reimagination jumpstarted a turnaround and put Duracell on a new path to profitability. Correcting course gave him the opportunity not only to reinvigorate the Duracell brand, but also to give his team a valuable analytical tool. All Duracell managers received training in TTW and were encouraged to apply the approach to issues both large and small. Now that the company was moving forward again, Leckie knew that the thinking capability he had harnessed to solve one serious problem would also empower his staff and improve day-to-day decision making.

Vital Child's Play

Keeping an established brand fresh but familiar requires a balance that's a challenge to maintain. Sales of Lego, one of the most iconic toys for baby boomers, started falling as the Internet revolution took hold. Children and grandchildren of boomers deserted the classic building blocks in favor of TV, movies, and online entertainment. Initial efforts to appeal to this new digital generation were not successful. And after repeated failed efforts, bankruptcy loomed.

Using a TTW precept led to the key insight. Lego realized it must focus on *one vital issue*. It had to capture the imagination of millennial kids without abandoning what made Lego so popular with their parents—the ability to use their blocks to *tell a story*. And stories need people—characters—not just buildings. So by licensing figures from *Star Wars*, *SpongeBob SquarePants*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and other popular shows, Lego not only invited young people to put themselves into the action, but it also opened the door so they could use their favorite characters to make up their own stories. Thinking simply yet strategically helped the company innovate while staying true to

its origins. And it set the stage for the explosive growth that has made Lego a global brand.

Taking the Long, Strategic View

Keurig pioneered the single-cup coffeemaker and saw explosive growth as a result. As Michelle Stacy, former Keurig president, and her management team launched their thinking about the future of the company, their key strategic insight was the need to focus on *long-term potential*, not just on short-term profits. It was a choice that paid huge dividends.

Keurig had started slowly, with a small range of coffee strengths and flavors along with a high-end brewer that cost \$900. In the beginning, the company marketed exclusively to offices, where the \$900 price point was less of a hurdle. Keurig's strategy included a plan to market to residential consumers eventually, but deliberately deferred action. This think-to-win mindset allowed Keurig to gain an in-depth understanding of consumer wants, learning from its experience in commercial venues. It also created consumers who understood the product advantages and wanted it for their homes. The added time allowed Keurig to cost-engineer the brewer and lower the price of its coffeemaker.

The data compilation and insights paid dividends. When Keurig started selling to the home market, the product took off. Over a five-year period, Keurig's sales rocketed and drove Keurig Green Mountain sales from approximately \$500 million to \$4.5 billion, and in the process transformed the way people brew coffee—both in the office and at home. Keurig machines now sit in more than 18 million kitchens, and cost between \$79 and \$199 apiece. Single-serving coffee pods are available in Keurig's own Green Mountain brand and also in Folgers, Dunkin' Donuts, Starbucks, Peet's Coffee & Tea, and many other brands.

"Programs that transform take patience," Michelle says. "People who make great leaders of breakthrough innovation programs always ask the *What if* question. Speed to market, probability of quick return, and profitability mindsets have to take backseats to truly delivering a product that delights the consumer in every aspect." Thinking that wins.

Object Lessons—Why Companies and People Fail

In contrast, many companies have inflicted great harm on themselves by failing to think strategically. While some, like Duracell, reinvent themselves and enjoy years of dynamic growth, others keep on digging themselves into deeper and deeper holes.

Doubling Down on Bricks and Mortar

When Blockbuster began, it did movie rentals better than anyone, and the market rewarded it. Families roamed the aisles of Blockbuster stores, selecting titles—and movie night snacks—to take home. But success was short-lived. Blockbuster's brick-and-mortar model showed signs of vulnerability as soon as Netflix rolled out its more convenient direct-to-consumer mail-order service. Blockbuster took note, but failed to respond. As technology advanced and Netflix added an on-demand streaming video capability, Blockbuster again failed to react. Company leadership was certain that consumers still wanted a “real store,” where they could see—and touch—their choices. Rather than challenging this assumption with hard facts and data-based analysis, Blockbuster doubled down on bricks-and-mortar, adding more stores, which placed an even greater strain on its faltering model. Bankruptcy soon followed.

The Way the Cupcake Crumbles

Crumbs was a successful specialty baked goods company that caught the crest of the cupcake wave. Unfortunately, it assumed the wave would be endless. The company began as a mom-and-pop bakery in an upscale neighborhood of Manhattan. Its stylishly decorated offerings were so popular that customers waited in lines that stretched onto the sidewalk and around the block. Everybody loved the wide selection and innovative flavors, including red velvet, cookie dough, and caramel macchiato. On the strength of excellent word of mouth, Crumbs opened more branches in the New York metropolitan area. As cupcake mania swept the country, Crumbs went public and expanded nationally.

Food trends come and go, however, and failure to anticipate change can be fatal in any business. When the cupcake craze lost

steam, Crumbs was unprepared. The fickle public began moving on to the next new thing, but the bakery did not diversify its product line to include other bakery choices. As the long lines of waiting customers disappeared, the losses mounted. Crumbs closed its doors, filed for bankruptcy, and was eventually acquired by an investment partnership.

No Longer Addictive

Smartphones get smarter all the time. Innovation is a constant, and it takes a lot to stay on top. Not long ago, BlackBerry was the most coveted cell phone in the United States, with an almost cult-like following of devotees who proudly referred to themselves as “CrackBerry addicts.” Today, most of BlackBerry’s former enthusiasts have kicked the habit.

BlackBerry’s decline was sudden and steep. On the way down, management did everything but think to win. Importantly, they never saw the big picture or connected the dots to properly assess the market dynamics. The company was so convinced of the appeal and power of its superior hardware—the actual BlackBerry mobile unit with its built-in keypad—that it completely underestimated the importance and appeal of encouraging the development of applications. The then struggling Apple company saw its importance as a key to future growth.

To add to its poor judgment, BlackBerry also downplayed the value of individual consumers, preferring to focus on large corporate accounts and bulk sales. As a result individual users were soon making their way to iPhone, Android, and others that focused on engaging the individual user with smartly designed hardware plus a vast array of apps. Today BlackBerry commands less than 3 percent of the U.S. market and is struggling to stay afloat.

These examples of successes and failures offer compelling evidence of the effectiveness and need for Think to Win and the TTW approach. When leaders think to win and invest in enhancing the thinking capability of their people, individuals at all levels and in more functions are more willing to contribute. Moreover, the quality of what they offer improves. TTW gives them new analytical skills, making their insights more relevant and more valuable. People take ownership; they take pride. They

feel good about being part of an organization that has a bright future, a place that encourages them to step up, and a place where they can see they are making a difference. TTW becomes part of the new culture that represents ongoing success.

It's a funny thing about success—it's habit forming. Success becomes something to be expected, something people begin to count on and invest in—financially and personally. Attitudes and behaviors change when employees at all levels share a common belief that their organization is an exciting and fulfilling place to be. Everyone brings their best self to work, and the organization thrives.

That's a key reason we're passionate about Think to Win. It changes not just organizations, but individuals. Structured yet flexible, TTW grabs the power inherent in asking the right questions, focuses that energy on what matters most, and harnesses it to find solutions. In the process, we think you'll become excited, engaged, and energized.

How do you begin Think to Win? We have assembled everything you need. In the next chapter, we start detailing the principles and step-by-step process that define TTW. We will also show you how to use TTW tools and frameworks and give useful examples of how TTW works in real time. We invite you to come with us as we unleash the power of Think to Win and put that power in your hands. We assure you that you'll be surprised and excited by how quickly TTW changes your thinking and the results you'll achieve. So let's get started.

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