CEA SURVEY
MOMENTUM AHEAD: UNLESS D.C. MESSES IT UP
Inc. 500 CEOs are more concerned with managing growth than with politics.

Which attribute is most accurate in describing your success?

- See Opportunities: 40%
- Persistence: 38%
- Leadership Ability: 10%
- Salesmanship: 4%
- Understand Business Principles: 8%

Most admired entrepreneurs:
1. Steve Jobs
2. Elon Musk
3. Richard Branson
4. Mark Cuban
5. Bill Gates
6. Jeff Bezos
7. Mark Zuckerberg
8. Tony Hsieh
9. Warren Buffett
10. Marcus Lemonis

How much of your growth has been funded internally versus externally?

- All Internal: 58%
- Most Internal: 20%
- About 50-50: 12%
- Most External: 9%
- All External: 1%

How would you rate the following as obstacles to your company’s growth?

- Finding Good Staff: Major Obstacle
- Getting Financing: Not an Obstacle
- Keeping Up with Demand: Major Obstacle
- Unpredictability of Demand: Major Obstacle
- Taxes: Major Obstacle
- Government Regulations: Major Obstacle

Why?

“As the economy rebounds from a failed economy, there is more opportunity for businesses to be creative, and flexibility for growth.”
- Tracey Clark-Jeffries, Capital Consulting Services

“Our current sales have been steadily increasing, and I see consumers who are willing to purchase more expensive, high-end product.”
- Andrew Oakes, Fresh Roasted Coffee

“I can control my business. I can’t control the economy.”
- Ethan McFfee, Bois Blanc Sports

“We are in a hot market and don’t see things changing in the short run. Many of my customers are finally ready to hire us.”
- Mike Cottmeyer, LeadingAgile

“Access to capital is significantly improving for us.”
- Stephan Aarstol, Tower Paddle Boards

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72% of Inc. 500 CEOs said they actively strive to achieve a good work-life balance.

93% of Inc. 500 CEOs said managing and leading are two different things.

45% of Inc. 500 CEOs said they have taken two or more weeks of vacation in the past year.

74% of Inc. 500 CEOs said their companies have an effective leadership pipeline. 60% say they have no formal mentorship program.

70 PERCENT of Inc. 500 CEOs said they are in favor of raising the minimum hourly wage. That’s a repudiation of some conventional economic and political wisdom that a rising minimum stunts job growth. The CEOs are more than willing to pay up—finding qualified workers is the bigger issue.

31 PERCENT of Inc. 500 CEOs said if they were voting today in the 2016 presidential election, their choice would be none of the below. Nearly 64% said they were opposed to “religious freedom” laws that some states have adopted.

What leadership skills do you lack, and how do you compensate for that?

“Communicating consistently. I tend to put my head down on a project and go dark for weeks. I’m trying to delegate more.”

JAMES MARKS, Whiplash Merchandising

“I seem to be able to spot opportunities, outline a plan, etc. But I need someone to help with the ‘last mile’ details. I knew this and so went looking for someone who complemented me.”

RON WILLE, BlackTab Group

“I lack patience as a leader. I am an extremely driven individual and expect those around me to be the same. I work on this constantly by trying to set clear expectations for my team and to explain my impatience clearly.”

ANDY LATIMER, Bluewater Media

What is your political affiliation?

Are national politicians concerned with the needs of small to midsize businesses?

What is your exit strategy?

HAVEN’T THOUGHT ABOUT IT

IPO

SELL TO PARTNER(S)

SELL TO EMPLOYEES

SELL TO ANOTHER COMPANY

PASS ON TO MY FAMILY

PASS ON TO PARTNER(S)