

THE Leadership Discipline of Growth™



— Est. 2006 —



SERVING ADVISORS FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS

Name:

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About ClientWise LLC



ClientWise is the premier business and executive coaching firm working exclusively with financial professionals.

We specialize in helping clients optimize growth and maximize revenue by engaging as a knowledgeable partner in accomplishing specific and significant business results. Our full-service coaching program empowers financial advisors, wholesalers, managers and executives to enhance performance through customized, action-oriented solutions based on each client's specific vision and situation.

Our certified coaches are members of the International Coaching Federation (ICF). They adhere to ICF's strict code of ethics and have the experience and insight to work with you on the unique challenges and opportunities you face each day.

Drawing from an in-depth knowledge of the financial industry, ClientWise's mission is to professionally develop industry leaders and consistently raise the bar for industry service, commitment and integrity. Simply put, our singular focus is to help you **get clear, get focused, and get results.**

Introduction

Growth is not a side effect of success. It's a decision made by leadership. Every successful advisory firm eventually faces the same question: How fast should we grow, in which direction, and by what means? According to Harvard Business School's Gary Pisano, sustained, profitable growth is uncommon; only about 15% of firms in the top growth quartile can maintain it for 30 years. Most fall short not because of market conditions but because they chase growth reactively, expanding faster than they can handle, pursuing opportunities without alignment, or confusing scale with value.

For leaders of advisory firms, managing growth requires the same discipline as developing investment strategies or client plans. Pisano's framework underscores three interconnected choices that every enterprise leader must make: the target rate of growth, the direction of growth, and the methods for achieving it.

1 The Target Rate of Growth

Advisory leaders often equate growth with "as fast as possible." Pisano argues that growth should match the firm's *capacity to sustain* it. For a wealth management firm, this means assessing whether its systems, leadership, and culture can handle 12–15% organic growth year-over-year—without relying on market fluctuations or acquisitions. Growing beyond your operational capacity can damage client experience, talent morale, and enterprise value.

2 The Direction of Growth

Growth requires clarity on *where* to play. Do you scale within your core markets, expand into adjacent services like tax or estate coordination, or diversify through partnerships? The right direction should align with your firm's distinct capabilities and competitive advantages, rather than just the size of the market opportunity.

3 The Method of Growth

Ultimately, leaders must choose *how* to grow, through internal development, partnerships, or strategic acquisitions. Each method carries trade-offs between control, speed, and integration. The best growth strategies strengthen the firm's culture and capabilities rather than dilute them.

Notes:



Sustained growth is not accidental. It is the outcome of intentional design, measured pace, and disciplined execution.

Coaching Questions

1. How will the needs and expectations of your future clients evolve over the next five years, and how will your value proposition need to adapt to remain relevant in a highly competitive marketplace?
2. If your firm sustained 15% organic growth annually without capital market tailwinds, what structures, people, and processes would need to change first?
3. What will differentiate firms that grow by design from those that grow by default, and which will yours be?

Organic Growth Readiness Assessment™

Instructions: Rate each statement on a scale from 1 to 10, where:

1 – 3 = Emerging (informal, inconsistent, reactive)

4 – 6 = Developing (partially in place, not yet institutionalized)

7 – 10 = High-performing (consistent, measurable, scalable, documented)



I. Growth Targets and Metrics	Rate 1-10
1. We establish <u>organic growth targets for client acquisition—typically 10% of revenues and 10% of AUM annually</u> —and maintain an opportunity pipeline with clients supporting 5% year-over-year growth in net new assets and revenue.	
2. We have <u>visibility into key growth metrics</u> , including net new clients, net new assets, referral conversion rate, and client acquisition cost (CAC), on both a monthly and quarterly basis.	
3. We <u>measure revenue per advisor and revenue per relationship manager</u> as key productivity metrics linked to compensation.	
4. Our client <u>retention and attrition data are tracked, analyzed, and used</u> in future growth planning.	
5. We regularly <u>review organic growth performance</u> with leadership and use it to inform decisions on resource allocation, staffing, and marketing investments.	

II. Lead Generation and Marketing Engine	Rate 1-10
6. We have <u>established lead generation</u> as a formal process supported by a consistent firm-wide system.	
7. Our <u>marketing system</u> actively promotes our <u>team brand</u> , generating inbound leads through digital campaigns, SEO, events, and referral programs.	
8. We create <u>thought leadership content</u> (e.g., blogs, podcasts, webinars) that aligns with our growth goals and target clients.	
9. We use <u>data and analytics</u> to track lead conversion, campaign performance, and ROI across marketing channels.	
10. Our firm's <u>brand presence</u> remains consistent and <u>differentiated</u> across digital platforms, client communications, and prospect interactions.	
III. Capacity and Team Readiness	Rate 1-10
11. We have the <u>capacity measures in place to grow organically by 12–15% year-over-year</u> , excluding market lift or M&A.	
12. Advisors spend <u>at least 70% of their time on client-facing or growth-focused activities</u> (such as prospecting, planning, and relationship management).	
13. We have <u>dedicated support staff and centralized functions</u> that enable advisors to focus on growth instead of administration.	
14. We perform <u>regular time audits</u> to identify and eliminate non-growth activities across roles.	
15. Our <u>succession and development plans</u> ensure continuity and provide the necessary capacity to support incremental client growth.	

IV. Client Experience and Referral Flywheel	Rate 1-10
16. We've created a <u>structured client experience model</u> that generates referrals and new introductions every year.	
17. We have a <u>documented process</u> (e.g., <u>The Loyal Client Advocate Program™</u>) for requesting and tracking referrals from clients and centers of influence.	
18. We regularly <u>measure client satisfaction and advocacy</u> (NPS, testimonials) and convert feedback into actionable improvements.	
19. We <u>deliver value-added touchpoints</u> that go beyond portfolio reviews (family meetings, legacy planning, tax coordination).	
20. Our <u>referral and advocacy engine</u> generates predictable inflows of qualified prospects.	
V. Growth Infrastructure and Leadership Alignment	Rate 1-10
21. We maintain a <u>firm-wide organic growth plan</u> that integrates marketing, sales, service, and capacity targets to drive overall growth.	
22. <u>Growth accountability is distributed among the leadership team</u> rather than being held by a single partner or producer.	
23. We perform <u>quarterly growth reviews</u> to assess progress, identify bottlenecks, and determine resource needs.	
24. Our <u>CRM and data systems</u> provide visibility into pipelines, client segmentation, and conversion metrics.	
25. We invest annually in <u>training and coaching</u> that enhance prospecting, communication, and relationship management skills.	

Notes:

Scoring Guide

Calculate the total of the ratings from the 25 questions:

200–250:

Enterprise Ready

Growth is built into your culture and systems.

150–199:

Scalable but not yet repeatable

Sharpen process and accountability.

100–149:

Developing

Growth depends more on individuals than on systems.

Below 100:

Reactive

Growth is episodic and vulnerable to changes in the market or personnel.



Organic Growth Readiness Coaching Questions

1. Vision of the Future

If your firm achieved 15% year-over-year organic growth for the next three years, not including the impact of capital markets, what would your business look like? What would have to evolve in how you lead, operate, and prioritize to sustain that pace?

2. Purpose of Growth

Why is growth significant to you personally? Why is it essential to your team members? Why is it important to your clients? What happens if you stop growing?

3. Ambition and Scale

If there were no constraints such as capital, talent, or time, how much organic growth would you pursue, and what would that level of ambition communicate about the kind of firm you're building?

4. Enterprise Thinking

How does your thinking need to shift from "growing production" to "building enterprise value"? What decisions would look different if you prioritized enterprise growth first?

5. Future Capacity

What must be true inside your firm (e.g., structure, systems, leadership, and talent) for you to sustain 12–15% organic growth without relying on markets or M&A?

6. Cultural Commitment

When growth becomes part of your firm's DNA, what does it feel like for your team —pressured, purposeful, or natural? How do you want to shape that experience?

7. Growth Legacy

Three years from now, what do you want your team, clients, and partners to say about how you led growth? What story should your results tell about your leadership and vision?

In Closing: Growth by Design, Not Default

Sustained growth is a deliberate act of leadership and strategy. It demands clear choices, consistent execution, and the discipline to decline what doesn't align with your firm's purpose and capacity.

The most successful companies grow intentionally. They recognize that growth without purpose can devalue as much as it can add value. Good leaders strike a balance between ambition and preparedness, making sure that the growth rate never exceeds the organization's ability to deliver outstanding client results and uphold its cultural values.

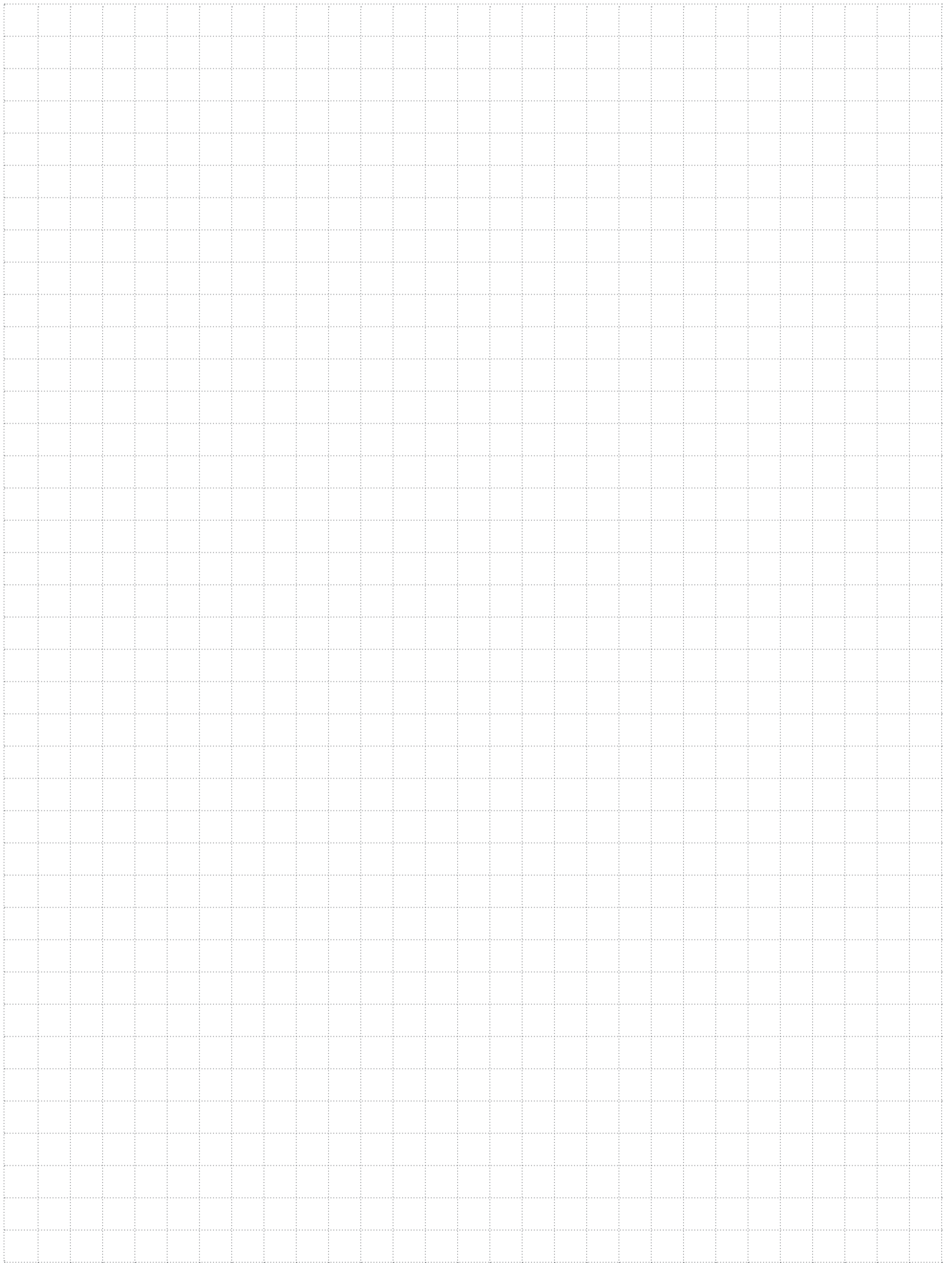
Every leader must determine three key things:

- ❶ **The Rate** – The level of organic growth your firm can sustain profitably and predictably.
- ❷ **The Direction** – Where your unique skills and relationships provide a lasting competitive edge.
- ❸ **The Method** – How you will grow through talent, process, or partnership in ways that strengthen the business instead of weakening it.

Growth done well attracts opportunity, talent, and trust. It improves the client experience, deepens team engagement, and increases enterprise value over time. Growth done poorly drains capacity, weakens systems, and distracts from purpose.

This assessment serves as a mirror for leadership readiness. It invites you to evaluate not only the systems supporting growth but also the mindset that drives it. Companies that understand their rate, direction, and method of growth, and act with discipline, will build lasting enterprises that endure across generations.

The real measure of leadership is not how much a firm grows, but how intentionally and sustainably that growth is achieved.



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