

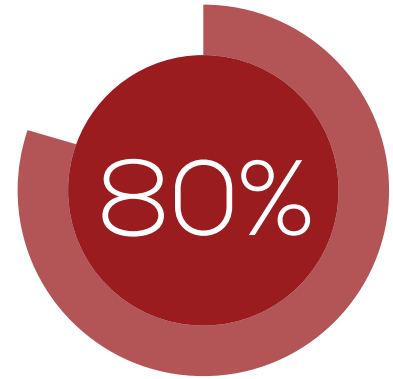


# UNDERSTANDING **ORGANIZATIONAL REWILDING<sup>®</sup>**



# ReWild Your Business

According to Bloomberg, **80%** of all U.S. entrepreneurs who start a business fail within the first 18 months.



But the reality is that even those who do make it past this first gauntlet can struggle for much of their existence with low revenue and inadequate management.

Over the last three decades of ongoing research, the professionals at The ReWild Group have observed and worked beside leaders of over 1,300 companies.

Our prime conclusion is that most setbacks and lack of growth in a company are due to leaders focusing on surface pain instead of discovering the root causes of the challenges the company faces. As organizations grow and add employees, they become more complex—featuring interrelated, dynamic elements that further obscure the root causes of challenges.

The outdated “problem-solving” approach of isolating one problem and attempting to fix it does not address the underlying issues. What businesses need is a methodology that clearly identifies and addresses the root causes behind these barriers to growth. Our solution is the methodology we’ve coined as **Organizational ReWilding®**.



# The Effects of Rewilding

A few years ago, we stumbled across an unfamiliar scientific concept that became the genesis of our company; this concept is “**rewilding**.”



**Rewilding** is an approach used to regain the natural balance and vitality in nature's ecosystems. In 1995, the ecosystem of Yellowstone National Park—the first national park in the world and the second-most visited park in the U.S.—was rapidly disintegrating. The expanding elk population was defoliating the park at an alarming rate. Yellowstone Park was on the verge of becoming a barren landscape, where many of its resident species could not survive. While the surface issue of too many elk was in plain sight, an enduring solution to this issue was not clear.

The U.S. Forest Service Rangers and team of scientists knew they needed to act quickly. So, after 70 years of wolves being absent from the park, they chose to reintroduce several packs of grey wolves into the ecosystem.

Amazingly, within a short six-year span, the park dramatically transformed. As one might expect, the elk population was reduced, creating smaller but healthier herds. But what was more remarkable (and more impactful), is that the remaining elk population avoided open valley areas so as not to be easily trapped by the new

predators. Saplings sprouted in the once barren meadows, providing material for beaver to create new dams. Berry bushes and underbrush created shelter for small mammals. These in turn provided more food for growing populations of badgers, foxes, and birds of prey. Rapid tree growth gave homes to an increased population of songbirds. The riverbanks were reinforced with wild grasses that were no longer over-grazed. Every level of the trophic chain (food chain) began to flourish again.

Balance had returned to Yellowstone's ecosystem through one simple change—the reintroduction of packs of wolves. The insertion of this key species served as a catalyst that rippled all the way down to how the rivers and streams flowed through the park.

There are powerful parallels between nature's ecosystems and human business organizations. Many of the businesses we have encountered exhibit the same loss of vitality that Yellowstone was experiencing in the mid-1990s.

This led to our formulation of a way to apply the principle of rewilding in nature to human organizations.



# The Inception of Organizational ReWilding®

AS WE RESEARCHED THE INTRICACIES OF HOW SCIENTIFIC REWILDING IMPACTED YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, WE OBSERVED THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF THE TRANSFORMATION:

## 1 FEATURED A COMPLEX ECOSYSTEM

Yellowstone's ecological system was comprised of complex relationships between flora and fauna. Part of the complexity comes from the sheer size of the park—over 3,400 square miles of wilderness, an area larger than the States of Rhode Island and Delaware combined and nearly the size of the nation of Cyprus.

## 2 MAY NOT HAVE APPEARED THAT BAD

An untrained eye may not have considered the situation in Yellowstone that dire. The lack of vegetation and animal species mirrored other places in the U.S. Yet to someone familiar with the Park's past, the erosion of the ecosystem was painfully obvious.

## 3 OBVIOUS SYMPTOMS, UNCLEAR SOLUTIONS

The obvious problem was the overpopulation of elk. In the earlier years, an increase in hunting reduced the elk population but did not achieve a broad, lasting impact. Addressing the surface symptoms did not restore balance.

## 4 NOT SELF-REPAIRING

The Park could not solve its imbalance without the involvement of humans, because it was the human eradication of wolves in order to protect domestic livestock that started the decline.

## 5 UNSEEN FORCES AT WORK

Think about this fact—not a single creature alive in the Park on the day the wolves were introduced had ever seen a wolf. Yet natural, instinctive relationships, involving life and death, facilitated the ripple effect through the trophic chain. Structures – though invisible and not used in decades – spontaneously communicated the new reality of the wolves' presence, and the environment responded.

## 6 DEPTH OF IMPACT UNEXPECTED

Reintroducing a keystone predator had the intended results of reducing elk population. But even the experts who championed the rewilding approach were amazed by the total transformation; the breadth, depth, and speed of change were simply unexpected.

THESE **SIX ASPECTS** OF NATURAL REWILDING HAVE DIRECT PARALLELS TO THE ECOSYSTEMS FOUND IN HUMAN ORGANIZATIONS:

## 1 FEATURES A COMPLEX ECOSYSTEM

Like Yellowstone, human organizations feature a complex system of interrelated, dynamic, and living resources. The level of complexity in human organizations is also impacted by size—in this case, by the number of employees.

## 2 MAY NOT APPEAR THAT BAD

When a person is on the inside of a company, it's possible to be blind to areas that are unhealthy or lack vitality. "That's how it's always been," or "It's still better than the last place I worked," are common justifications. Could it be that most people have never experienced a thriving work environment?

## 3 OBVIOUS SYMPTOMS, UNCLEAR SOLUTIONS

What is obvious to the business leader is the surface symptom; the connection to the root cause is rarely obvious. Leaders are often too busy or lack the tools to identify root causes. Without a methodology to connect the symptoms to the cause, leaders are stuck playing "whack-a-mole," reacting to each new day's events instead of proactively preparing for the future.

## 4 NOT SELF-REPAIRING

A business would not exist without a founder. There are no scientific forces that would have caused the organization to spontaneously spring up. Leaders must be intentional to identify the missing elements and actively infuse them into the business ecosystem. Otherwise, the business will continue to decline.

## 5 UNSEEN FORCES AT WORK

While human organizations do not exhibit the same depth of instinctual structures as nature, many reactions within a business occur seemingly without effort. Leaders don't have to fix everything about the business. Instead, they need to infuse the right elements and unseen forces often resolve the other challenges on their own.

## 6 DEPTH OF IMPACT UNEXPECTED

When any key systemic element of a business is absent, the entire organization suffers. Infusing these elements does achieve the expected improvement; however, the ripple effects that spread throughout the organization will go beyond expectations and occur in unanticipated ways.

We have applied the principles of rewilding ecosystems in nature to complex, adaptive human systems found in business organizations. The combination of rewilding and human organizations is what we have termed **Organizational ReWilding®**.

Organizational ReWilding® is a growth methodology that identifies and infuses key systemic elements that are missing in a business. It is through the infusing of the missing key system elements that the business' ecosystem establishes an expanded state of resilience, vitality, and dynamic order. The result is a business that is high-functioning and highly profitable—one that is exceptional.

# What Makes Organizational ReWilding<sup>®</sup> Unique

**Organizational ReWilding** differs from other business frameworks—a difference that is reflected in the name (and recognized as a registered service mark by the USPTO). While the traditional view is to treat businesses like complicated machines with intricate, separate parts, Organizational ReWilding's view of businesses is based on the model of a healthy ecological system. We do not approach businesses as machines that need to be fixed, but rather as dynamic, living systems filled with interrelated elements.

One way to understand our philosophy is to consider the job of a beekeeper versus a watchmaker. The beekeeper's primary role is to foster an environment that supports the bees to produce honey. To do that, he must respect the hive as an intelligent, self-organizing, adaptive organism. A watchmaker, on the other hand, works in a world of precision and control. When something breaks, a watch is incapable of self-repair; an outside force is required to fix it.

The more mechanistic way to business solutions is always a siloed approach; the problem is isolated and then "fixed," but without accounting for the dynamic nature of the organization as a whole. Businesses are made up of people, which makes them primarily relational entities—living, interactive, and constantly changing.

That's why the best approach to creating a healthy, sustainable business is to treat it like an ecosystem, not a machine.

**We don't fix businesses. We ReWild them.**

# The Organizational ReWilding® Stages of Growth

In 2006, the original version of the **7 Stages of Growth** was introduced in the book “Navigating the Growth Curve.” Ongoing research since its introduction has resulted in an expanded version—Organizational ReWilding Stages of Growth. This powerful business growth methodology is based on the different Stages businesses traverse. Each Stage features distinct rules that create the environment for sustainable, profitable growth.



The Stages of Growth methodology was developed over 30 years of ongoing research and observation of more than 1,300 small and midsize businesses across dozens of industries. The research uncovered discrete, identifiable, and predictable patterns that directly impacted a company’s ability to sustain growth.

Since its introduction, this revolutionary concept has been recognized for its uncanny ability to diagnose, prescribe, and predict what occurs in businesses. The Stages of Growth provides insight to business leaders, shedding light on how to navigate rapid growth, fight stagnation, and maintain a healthy business ecosystem at every Stage.



# The Elements of an Exceptional Business

JUST AS THERE ARE KEY COMPONENTS THAT MAKE UP A HEALTHY ECOSYSTEM, THERE ARE **11 ELEMENTS** THAT MAKE UP AN EXCEPTIONAL BUSINESS. THE ELEMENTS ARE NOT A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL; THE PRIORITY OF THESE ELEMENTS IS BASED ON AN ORGANIZATION'S STAGE OF GROWTH.

Identifying what elements are missing or underdeveloped in a business—and then infusing those elements into the ecosystem—is the essence of Organizational ReWilding. Though each element stands on its own, a powerful synergy is created as additional elements are infused into the organization.

Each new element addresses the root cause of a business's challenges, setting off a ripple effect of positive change and growth. The result is an exceptional organization that is more resilient and capable of navigating growth; both high-functioning and highly profitable.



The missing elements in a business's ecosystem are identified by our network of Certified Advisers, who employ a variety of proprietary tools and assessments. The elements are infused by applying a structured package that addresses the needs and issues specific to that area.



# Join the Movement +

**OUR MISSION**—to multiply the number of exceptional businesses globally—is founded on the principle that work is a fundamental part of human existence. Much of who we are is impacted by the work we do. When people are part of an exceptional workplace, they can apply their natural talents, grow as individuals, and develop new skills. They then return to the home and society as the best version of themselves.

As we multiply the number of exceptional businesses, the impact reverberates throughout our homes, our communities, and our world. We invite all business advisers and business leaders to join the movement at [www.rewildgroup.com](http://www.rewildgroup.com).



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