

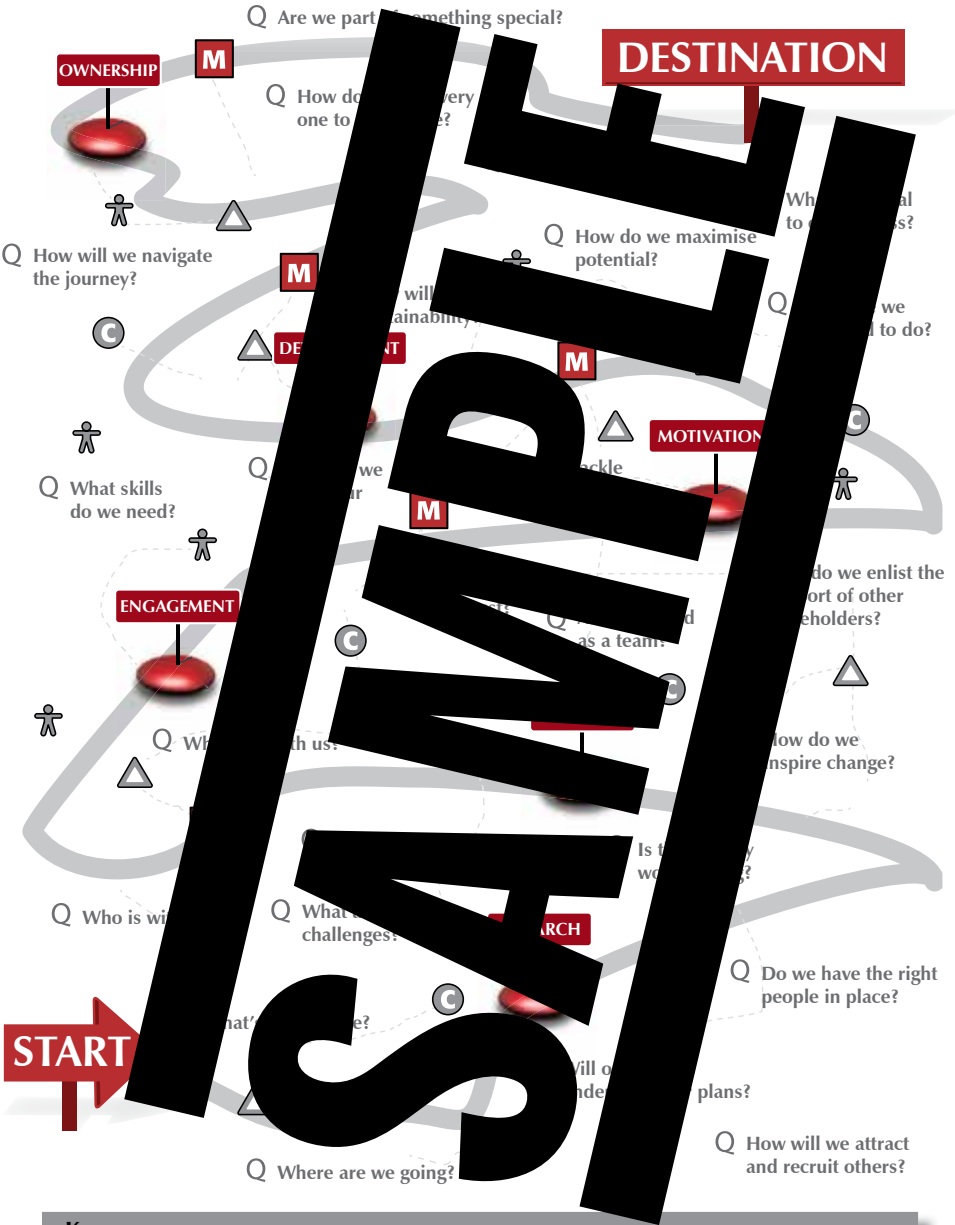
BUILDING THE PYRAMID



the winning (formula)[®] approach
to delivering success on your
organisation's growth journey



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YOUR ORGANISATION'S JOURNEY



Key



Barriers



Changes



Milestones



People Issues

‘*Building the Pyramid* is shortlisted for the CMI Management Book of the Year.’

Chartered Management Institute in association with Henley Business School and the British Library

‘An excellent teaching tool.’

Charles Handy, author and business philosopher

‘This is not just another ‘how to’ book on delivering a strategic plan. John Stein draws on the power of storytelling to influence and inspire using one of the greatest organisational development challenges known to man. He shares his tried and tested winning (formula)® to take us on a highly valuable learning journey, maximising the leadership potential in us all.’

Professor Laurie Wood, former Executive Director, Enterprise and Development, University of Salford

‘Our verdict – a FIVE STAR RATING. In contrast to the many heavyweight business books, the style of the book is easy to get into and would work well as a teaching aid for managers in any organisation.’

Talk Business Magazine

‘In the past decade our business has grown tenfold. John and his original book deserve much credit. The core messages in the updated *Building the Pyramid* are the same but subtly improved. It’s a first class read, easy to follow with simple messages – a clear vision, engage with your people, culture is everything. Business leaders will benefit from reading and using the lessons it shares.’

David Pollock, Chief Executive Officer at Chess Telecom

‘Stein has certainly done his historical homework, but it’s in the small nuggets of general management wisdom where he’s most enlightening.’

CIPD People Management Magazine

‘John Stein’s wealth of experience has been packaged into this ‘leadership route map’ and I think anyone reading this easily accessible volume will gain a number of great insights – or a whole template for their own journey.’

Lloyd East, Regional Chief Executive Officer at RSA Middle East

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‘John’s use of an iconic universally known structure and its construction to explore leadership, change and success has real impact. All the tips and examples are relevant today and extremely useful in helping to understand the complex nature of the subject. A very easy read and a book I thoroughly recommend.’

Peter Coley, Head of Learning at St Mungo’s Broadway

‘*Building the Pyramid* is an informative and insightful book highlighting the leadership behaviours and activities required to achieve success on the growth journey. It should be shared with everyone connected with an organisation when there is a need to launch a new journey or refresh and refocus colleagues on an existing one.’

Adele Ventre-Downey, HR Consultant and former Head of HR at Alternative Futures Group

‘*Building the Pyramid* is a concise, compelling and different read for any business leader. Most of all, it captures the challenges we all encounter on our journeys whilst we strive to build our own pyramid. The book is also much more than a leadership tool. Rarely do you find a leadership framework that is relevant outside senior management, yet *Building the Pyramid* is relevant for the whole team to be engaged in the journey, without exception.’

Ian Blackhurst, Chief Executive of entu UK plc and co-owner of Sale Sharks Rugby Club

‘Recommended reading.’ **HR Grapevine Magazine**

‘If you are intent on creating something special, if you are committed to a growth journey or a period of change within your business then I would urge you to pick up a copy. The framework behind the book is tried and tested – I know because I have been part of the success it has driven.’

Joe Haworth, Commercial Director at Job Worth Doing

‘Stein has been using the story of how a pharaoh builds his own pyramid as the basis for a successful leadership training course. It’s an interesting approach and he covers a lot of ground in the book’s 128 pages.’

Scottish Business Insider Magazine

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‘I found *Building the Pyramid* an inspirational and compelling read. There is a phrase in the book ‘simple is powerful’ and John Stein has managed to achieve this in abundance.’

Patricia Walsh, Global Chief HR Officer at Squire Patton Boggs

‘*Building the Pyramid* is an essential part of any business leader’s tool box. It articulates clearly how to adapt to change, which is a constant in today’s business world. You can easily take elements of the book, or adapt the whole roadmap contained in the story to improve your leadership skills enabling effective engagement across your team.’

Les Torrance, Senior Director at Sykes Global Services

‘John Stein’s unique vision and insight has been captured in an easy-to-follow format. A must read for any entrepreneur seeking clarity in the chaotic business world of today.’

Will Rees, Entrepreneur and Director at Direct Online Services

‘John Stein’s winning formula approach to navigating the ‘business growth journey’ is enlightening, insightful and pragmatic. *Building the Pyramid* explains how to communicate your plans, engage, develop and motivate everyone connected with your business. It also demonstrates how to maintain people’s enthusiasm and appetite towards helping you achieve your goals. John’s insight into the modern business is nothing short of genius and his approach is proven many times over.’

Chris Morrissey, Managing Director at Lily Comms

‘April Book of the Month.’ **HRDirector Magazine**

‘*Building the Pyramid* is a truly memorable book using a simple story to great effect to highlight a practical business growth model. It gives structure to thinking and planning for the difficult things including getting buy-in, creating vision and ultimately achieving success.’

Nicola Bramwell, Managing Director at Qaigen Ltd

‘There is no denying the value of the message and guidance this book provides. It’s very entertaining, it’s simple and it’s common sense.’

Ray Davis, Category Judge, Chartered Management Institute

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‘Unusual but quirky! the book brings into play tactical and operational approaches to dealing with moving the journey along and this is supported by a range of materials late in the book from case studies to fifty important points to remember to deliver success on the journey.’

HR Network Scotland Magazine

‘I found the book a real goldmine of fresh thinking. It provided a waffle-free insight and prompted me to think differently (and I hope better) about how my colleagues and I can get things done effectively via people. Highly recommended and a real ‘find’”

Fred Best, HR Business Partner at National Oilwell Varco

‘This book really is a must read for anyone interested in business – it offers not only tips on running a company but explains why particular changes and ideas are important. It is cleverly written, inspirational and includes many messages which stay with you long after you finish reading the book.’

Charlene Feeney-Seale, Senior Associate Consultant at PwC

‘*Building the Pyramid* is ideal for forward-thinking leaders, particularly those with an entrepreneurial focus. HR professionals will also benefit from the insight it offers about the role of the leader on the journey and the use of John Stein’s winning formula framework in helping to inspire, manage and deliver change. The first step to gaining wisdom is realising that we may not have it. *Building the Pyramid* will ask lots of rich questions about your own journey and help you to identify many of the answers.’

Carl Fitzsimons, Group HR Director at MW Brands

‘John Stein has found a unique way of simplifying, into six key stages, the multifarious components involved in engaging an organisation to achieve a common goal – namely Growth! We have found this framework essential in guiding our people towards our £100m sales target – which we achieved in 2014! If you are a leader, serious about Growth, *Building the Pyramid* is a ‘must read’ but be prepared to be challenged...’

Gary Dewhurst, Founder and Chief Executive Officer at gap Personnel

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Building the Pyramid

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The winning (formula)[®] approach to
delivering success on your
organisation's growth journey

John Stein

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“It soon became obvious that we
were but on the threshold of the discovery”












Howard Carter

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Introduction

Steering an organisation on its unique growth journey is one of the biggest personal challenges facing all leaders. Although the end goal, the destination may stay the same, the conditions experienced on the journey will be different within six months, and different again within a year.

Why? Because internal and external issues and events will constantly change the commercial landscape in which the organisation operates.

Navigating the landscape has become the new core requirement of the 21st century leader. To support this need, meet the challenges ahead and deliver success, a more flexible, adaptable leadership approach is needed to keep everyone connected with the organisation on track – a framework that adapts to changing conditions on the journey.

The winning (formula)[®] is a powerful performance framework with a proven track record of equipping leaders and managers with the knowledge and skills required to successfully grow, develop and transform the fortunes of their organisation.

Building the Pyramid describes the workings of the framework and how it can be applied to help leaders and their teams succeed on their journey.

The Journey Context

Journeys are a part of all of us. We spend most of our lives on a journey to somewhere, whether a change of location, a career path, even a new relationship.

We start out dreaming of the future, full of hope and ambition. We set off into the unknown with fear and excitement. We experience despair and frustration but also overcome the most difficult hurdles. We celebrate key milestones and dine out on reaching seemingly impossible goals.

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Is that life or business? The answer is either. The growth journey is no different to any other life journey, and is just as rewarding.

However, very few leaders view the workplace experience in the context of a journey. The day-to-day pressures of managing the organisation can get in the way of thinking of work as anything other than an intense process of actions, activities and decisions. More's the pity.

All leaders dream of building a successful, growing and sustainable organisation. Likewise, their teams dream of being part of the same workplace experience.

Pursuing that dream should be seen as an adventure for everyone connected with the organisation. The journey to achieving sustainable growth should be lived and enjoyed by all, and this includes suppliers, partners and other stakeholders.

As this book will show, purpose and a sense of belonging are important to everyone in every organisation. They make the difference between people merely going through the motions or giving their all. With everybody feeling a connection to the growth journey, morale improves, productivity increases, efficiency improves, retention rates remain high. People are more engaged.

In the commercial world the positive impact on sales revenue, profit and cash – the most important requirements of any growing organisation and the aspects that dominate leaders thoughts on a daily basis – are immense.

The Need for a Framework

The challenges to running any organisation and steering it on a growth journey are of course, manifold. You know that remaining competitive is important to your long-term success. Managing the expected growing pains, improving operational efficiency, implementing change, improving the customer experience, engaging your people and developing a high-performing culture will form part of your overall strategy.

On top of that, you are faced with three main leadership challenges that will dramatically affect your organisation's performance.

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These are:

1. Developing and leading a vision for the organisation to which everyone will commit
2. Aligning strategy to operational goals and objectives
3. Executing the strategy and delivering the plans for growth

Address each of these areas successfully and your growth journey will surpass your expectations.

But this is all easier said than done. You and your fellow leaders may have a clear vision for the organisation in your mind. But does everyone else in the company share that vision, in order for it to become a reality?

Your strategy might sit nicely with your operational goals on paper, but what happens if a major competitor steals market share, throwing your operational goals to the wind? Will your leadership be as effective in the face of the pitfalls that might lie ahead?

The reality is there will be many events to throw you off-course. Economic conditions will play their part, markets will change, key people will leave when you least expect it and internal conflicts may come to a head.

The most important role for the leader is to keep everyone on track, and guide them through these constantly shifting sands. To do that, you need a framework.

A framework allows people to stay focused on the task ahead rather than worrying about the changing view out of the window. When people are focused on the task, they are united in achieving it and confident in doing so.

Without a framework, the temptation will be to tackle each obstacle as it comes. That sticking plaster approach may be right for the time and satisfy an immediate need, but it does not offer a long-term solution that will contribute to the development of a sustainable growing organisation. That is the essence of a framework.

This book highlights how it can be achieved.

The winning (formula)®

The winning (formula)®, as demonstrated in *Building the Pyramid*, is a simple, unique and powerful performance framework that focuses on the six most important areas of strategic and operational focus required by leaders and others on the growth journey.

The six areas are as follows:

1. The attraction and recruitment of talent
2. The alignment of strategy to operational performance
3. The engagement of others via the development of leadership capability
4. The creation of a strong workplace-performance climate
5. The powerful use of knowledge, expertise and talent via learning
6. The demonstration of behaviours important to maximising the organisation's potential

Leadership focus on these areas will guarantee success.

The six-stage award-winning approach enables leaders to:

- Understand the commercial landscape and the challenges facing them on the journey
- Produce a route map to help them navigate others to their destination
- Enlist support and commitment from others to the plans for growth
- Execute the strategy and deliver the goals and objectives set for the organisation
- Maximise the potential and talent of each individual in the organisation
- Build an agile, successful and sustainable organisation

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The approach has enabled our clients to achieve spectacular growth results – in excess of £500 million of additional revenue and resulting profits.

The framework is research-based, tried, tested and proven to work for leaders in small, medium-size and large organisations. And it is no sticking plaster. It is no management fad or initiative. It continues to be used by many of our clients nearly a decade after they were first introduced to it.

Why the success? In 1995, we decided to embark on our own unique journey and try to understand what really worked in the world of business. We spent years researching the world of leadership, strategy, engagement, performance, motivation and growth.

And we also researched people and their attitude to work. We needed to understand individuals and what made them tick – even more so now, with the ‘Facebook generation’ of socially aware, inter-connected individuals entering the workplace and into leadership and management positions.

It wasn’t easy to get right. We tried and failed, tried again and succeeded, and then tried and failed again. And we kept on trying until the winning (formula)[®] became the powerful approach that it is today.

Victor Hugo once said ‘simple is powerful’ and this applies to our framework. We have stripped away what we believe are the factors which get in the way of delivering growth and have produced an approach which has delivered spectacular results for our clients.

The framework is flexible in terms of its use by leaders in any organisation. It can be used in a linear step-by-step basis when an organisation wishes to embark on a new and exciting growth journey; the appointment of a new leader, a change in strategic direction, a merger, acquisition or the need for a fresh start, for example.

Alternatively, it can also be used tactically by leaders to re-energise and re-focus the people in their organisation at key moments on their journey on any of the six areas highlighted in the formula.

The winning (formula)[®] approach to delivering performance and growth will transform your organisation and the people working in it. The framework will enable you to create and lead a truly inspirational organisation.

Format of the book

Building the Pyramid demonstrates the winning (formula)[®] framework in action, through the use of a simple story set in ancient Egypt. It is an original interpretation of the challenges facing leaders and how success can be achieved. The storyline format of the book is also supported by leadership learning points, visual interpretations of the journey landscape, personal exercises and checklists, as well as information from clients on their use of our framework over the past few years.

Lessons learned on the Pharaoh's journey include how to:

- Attract, recruit and retain talent
- Lead the 'change' required to deliver success
- Harness the power of vision and values
- Increase levels of engagement across the organisation
- Build a positive workplace culture
- Align strategy to operational performance
- Inspire others to maximise their potential

More importantly, *Building the Pyramid* demonstrates how to successfully navigate colleagues on the journey towards the creation of a more agile, successful and sustainable organisation.

One of the most energising journeys any person can experience is the growth journey.

Best wishes on your journey, wherever it may take you.

John Stein

Founder of the winning (formula)[®]

Building the Pyramid

Advice to a Pharaoh

The Pharaoh had been ill for several months and knew she did not have long before she would make her next and final journey, from life to death. The sun-god Osiris was, she hoped, ready to receive her. She had ruled the Kingdom of Egypt for over twenty-five years, and in that period had maintained Egypt's position as the wealthiest country in the world.

The people loved their Queen and she had served them well. From the start of her reign, she was an ambitious and fairly demanding Pharaoh, one with a clear idea of what needed to change. Now at the end of her reign, she was equally clear on the planning required for her death.

The most important part of this meticulous planning involved the building of her pyramid, which had taken some sixteen years to complete. The Royal Architect had designed a truly impressive monument. An enthusiastic workforce, happy to help the Pharaoh plan for her journey to the stars, had completed the pyramid ahead of schedule.

The final part of the Pharaoh's preparation involved a meeting with her son, the young Prince, who would follow in his mother's footsteps. On her death, he would be crowned Pharaoh in turn. The Prince, called Smendes, was a fine young man but whether he was ready to rule was, at least to some, a matter of concern. The Queen hoped to address this by imparting some of her long-developed wisdom.

The Pharaoh called Smendes over.

“You have learned a great deal in my reign and I hope you are ready to receive the crown and the throne,” she began. “When I have passed to the next life, there are three things you must do. If you carry them out, you will have a successful reign and a peaceful and harmonious life as the King.”

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“The first thing you will need to do is to look after your people and they, in turn, will look after the kingdom. You may soon be the ruler of Egypt, but without the support of your people you will never achieve great things.”

While he felt this was fairly obvious, the young Prince nodded in agreement.

“Secondly, begin the process of building your own pyramid as soon as you are King, because the construction could take up most of your reign. The task will be fraught with challenges, frustrations and many difficulties; you must persist though, to ensure your own passage to the next world.”

“Finally,” she continued, “In building the pyramid, you will need a strong and capable team of advisers, scholars and officials. The best advice I can give you is to spend time with a man you will not yet have met. He is known by some as the Sage or the True Scholar. He is wise in many things and is the man, above all others, who will help you. He holds the secrets to building the pyramid. He has the formula; talk to him son,” the Pharaoh said.

The young Prince was confused as to who this man was, but he could see the Pharaoh tiring, and decided he would tackle his mother the following day.

He kissed her goodnight and whispered “I will see you tomorrow.”

His mother looked at him: “Remember my advice,” she replied.

In the middle of the night the Pharaoh died. The young Prince was woken to be given the news, and handed a papyrus copy of his mother’s final words, written by her physician.

The inscription read: ‘Great is a great one whose great ones are great.’

It would take Smendes many years to appreciate the significance of those words.

When it came to the late Pharaoh’s funeral, the meticulous planning she had carried out with the Prince and the court officials ensured that the ceremony was conducted exactly as she would have wished.

The Pharaoh's body began the journey from her palace, along the Nile on the Royal Barge. Thousands lined the banks, paying their last respects to a beloved Queen. Her coffin was taken into the Queen's Chamber within the pyramid and lowered into the Sarcophagus, surrounded by prized possessions, gifts to the gods and materials designed to support the success of her journey.

The young Prince's new journey began with his return to the palace for a banquet celebrating the life of the deceased Pharaoh. After the banquet, he received each guest and personal condolences were offered.

At the end of the procession of guests was one man who was particularly eager to meet the Pharaoh to be. This was the person of whom his mother had spoken.

When his turn came, the scholar bowed deeply before the Prince.

"Your mother was a great woman; she will be sadly missed," he said in a deep, slightly accented voice.

"True," the young Prince replied. "See the number of people who have turned up today to wish her well on her journey."

"Why do you think so many people wish to honour her?" asked the Sage.

The Prince was surprised by the question, but replied, "because she was the Pharaoh, and because she was loved."

"Indeed, sir," replied the Scholar with a slight smile, knowing that there was more to it than this.

"Please tell me how I should address you?" asked the Prince, eager to make progress. "My mother said you are called the True Scholar or the Sage, but you must have a name."

"Your mother always addressed me by my family name, Prem, which was my preference as I am not an enthusiastic adopter of titles."

"Then," said the Prince, "I think we'll use that. My mother told me before she died, that I should come and talk to you. I believe that you sometimes

offered her advice. Will you give the same service to me?”

“When you are ready sir; you have a great deal to do in the next few months. I will be happy to speak to you when the time is right.” Again he bowed to the younger man.

“Then I will contact you,” said Smendes.

“As you wish sir,” although Prem knew this would prove to be untrue. He shook the Pharaoh’s hand and left.

Ten days later, the coronation took place and Smendes was crowned Pharaoh, supreme ruler of his people and the most important and powerful man in all of Egypt.

He began his reign remembering his mother’s advice to look after the people, build the pyramid right away and consult with the Sage.

Regarding the people he felt that, as long as he continued with his mother’s policies, this would be sufficient. His officials assured him that the people were happy and content.

He would, therefore, concentrate his efforts on the building of his pyramid and would begin that journey later on in the year. He was determined that his would be the perfect pyramid, a magnificent structure unlike anything previously created. Contrary to his mother’s advice though, he did not intend to use Prem – after all, why should he? As a prince, he had been trained for the role of Pharaoh and had spent many hours in the company of his mother and her advisers, listening to them as they planned her pyramid. He knew more about pyramid building than any scholar did.

He spent the remainder of the year assembling his team of managers and advisers, arguably the most important part of his planning process. He had learned that the strength of this team would reflect the strength of his workforce and, ultimately, the quality and standard of his pyramid.

His team would involve a mixture of youth and experience. Some of his mother’s people would be invited to take up positions on the project, alongside new blood.

He started with the appointment of his architect, an expert in pyramid design. Other appointments followed swiftly and a team of specialists and scholars covering disciplines such as tool making, food, clothing, safety, storage and security supported his senior advisers.

In keeping with his mother's advice to 'look after the people', he appointed an expert to attend to the needs of the workforce.

One of the older advisers asked if a plan would be produced to help focus everyone's minds on their great task.

The Pharaoh replied that he had confidence in their abilities and that there was no need to spend time on an unnecessary exercise. A Pharaoh had never produced a plan before and he wasn't about to start now.

The following morning he announced to the people of Egypt that they were about to embark on a new journey, to build the Pharaoh's pyramid.

About the Author

John Stein is the founder of the winning (formula)[®] and a champion of growth.

He is widely recognised as a leading authority on the human performance issues facing organisations on the growth journey, and has dedicated his career to working with leaders and their teams to build agile, successful and sustainable organisations.

In a world of constantly changing commercial landscapes, he focuses on developing the navigation skills of the 21st century leader. He is often described as an ‘organisational lighthouse keeper’ by his clients and peer group as a result of the knowledge, support and guidance he is able to offer them on their unique journey.

He has worked with small, medium-size and large organisations and has the rare privilege of experiencing the highs and lows of the growth journey with ambitious founders, entrepreneurs, chief executives, directors and their teams.

John is an award-winning practitioner, conference speaker and facilitator of leadership away-days and strategy events. He is able to engage with individuals at all levels in any organisation, and uses a unique blend of research data, humour, pragmatism and commonsense to inspire others to maximise their potential.

For more information about John and the winning (formula)[®]

Website: www.the-winning-formula.com

Twitter: [JohnStein_TWF](https://twitter.com/JohnStein_TWF)

Linkedin: [linkedin.com/in/johnsteintwf](https://www.linkedin.com/in/johnsteintwf)

John can be contacted by email at john@the-winning-formula.com