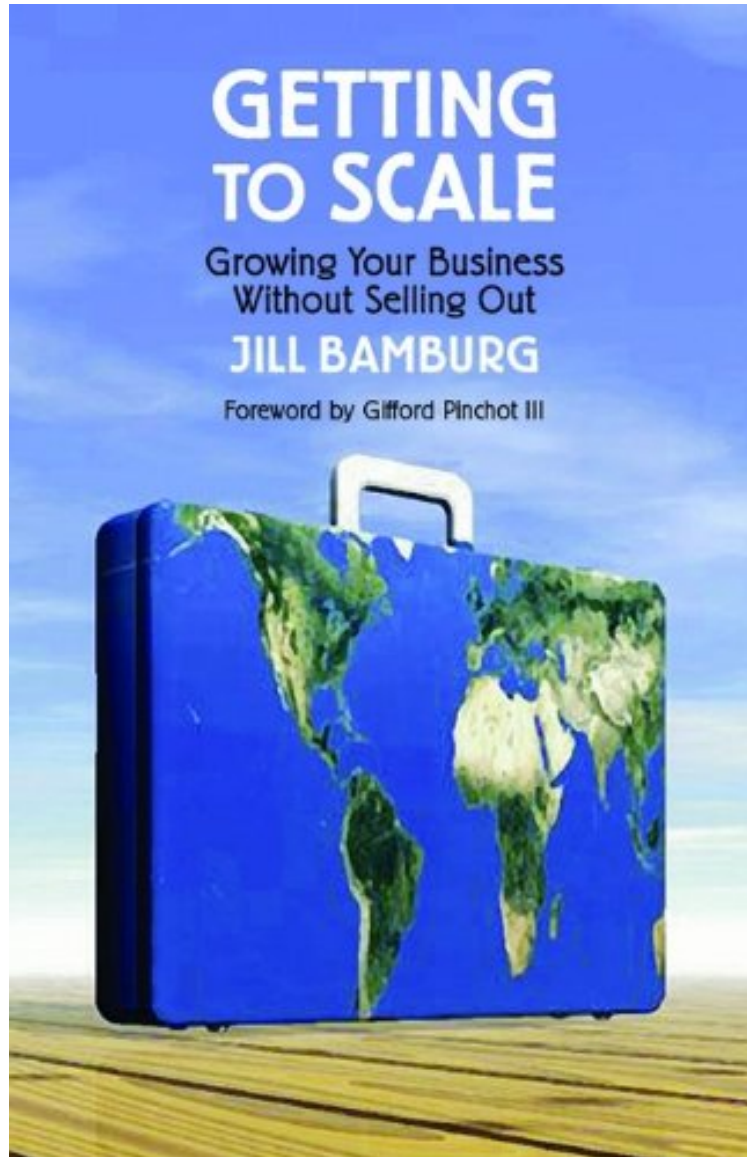


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Getting to Scale: Growing Your Business Without Selling Out

Jill Bamburg

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Jill Bamburg : Getting to Scale: Growing Your Business Without Selling Out before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Getting to Scale: Growing Your Business Without Selling Out:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Bryan FurmanGreat!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Big Doesn't Have to be EvilBy Shel HorowitzTackling head-on the issue of whether it's possible to grow a socially responsible company into a large enterprise while maintaining the original mission-and addressing the planning failures of companies like Ben Jerry's, who saw their mission compromised after they sold out-Getting to

Scale documents a number of companies that have managed to stay both profitable and responsible while growing, in some cases, to annual revenues in the nine figures. The book even cites examples of how the founding owners can sell the company while ensuring the continuity of a mission driven by more than a purely financial bottom line. Several of these enterprises involve manufacturing or other capital-intensive activities, where economies of scale are directly related to the ability to succeed. And from my perspective as the owner of a one-person business who has deliberately chosen to stay small--and who believes strongly that market share is an irrelevant concept to most microbusinesses--this was a real eye-opener. It was, in fact, quite refreshing to read stories of successful companies that started very modestly--some of them with just a few hundred dollars, ranging up to 6-figure startup costs--companies that had figured out how to build their businesses so that the social mission was so closely entwined with the essential core of business success that it could not be compromised. In keeping with the message of my own book *Principled Profit: Marketing That Puts People First*, Bamburg not only pays attention to the advantages that socially/environmentally responsible companies have in the marketplace--but also shows how to maintain those advantages while scaling up far beyond the dreams of most socially motivated business owners, but also how to leverage that growth to do greater good in the world. A couple of my favorite quotes; the second is in the context of growing a nonprofit, but I think it applies equally well to social change-oriented for-profit businesses: When the company's value proposition is directly tied to the firm's social value proposition, it becomes a lot easier to make day-to-day business decisions, to avoid values conflicts, and to address the "legacy" issues to ensure that the social values of the firm will outlive the founder's direct involvement. The pieces fit together and reinforce each other in a way that is almost magical. (p. 16) Start something with the low-hanging fruit... Somebody will usually say, "Well, I want to do something and then take it to the hardest place in the world. We're going to go where the need is the biggest. Well, that's great, but...the vast majority of people actually don't live in the very worst places in the world... Find the place where you can actually develop a model and make it work... Then you start saying, "OK, now we can start taking this to slightly harder places." (Martin Fisher, co-founder of KickStart, a nonprofit technology transfer firm working primarily in Africa, p. 130) I'd describe this one as required reading in any business course I might teach. Shel Horowitz's award-winning sixth book, *Principled Profit: Marketing That Puts People First*, demonstrates how to build a business around ethics, environmental sustainability, and cooperative practices--and how to develop marketing that highlights those advantages. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Case Collection and Synthesis By S. Albertson I think the first reviewer missed the point (or several points) about this book. As the title indicates, the book *is* about "getting to scale" and growing beyond being "small" and "local." While she doesn't at all dismiss small and local businesses, these aren't the focus of her book. Maybe her next one will be, but this one isn't. Any book that is a collection of case studies by definition leaves some examples out (like Whole Foods). Bamburg describes a wide range of companies, and it's impossible to compare them just based on the balance sheet or income statements. She provides the data available to give the reader a sense of the size of the enterprise. Where it's lacking, I'm betting it's because the company may be privately held and unwilling to make this information available. Not unusual at all. "Small Giants" is a great book, and in my opinion, complimentary to Bamburg. In the same way that no company is "pure" from a sustainability point of view, it's not clear to me that 100% local businesses represent the solution to our problems. There are things that I need (and yes, want) that are not produced in my bioregion, and companies that have figured out a least-harmful way to procure these things for me are ones that I will support. And I'm betting many of these are companies that have "gotten to scale" in the way Ms. Bamburg writes. This book isn't a manual, but a collection of example companies that have been successful, grown to a certain level of scale, and have not sacrificed the values and intentions they started out with. Are they perfect? No. Do some of them make things that I don't like? Absolutely. But I learned a lot from Bamburg's excellent book, and I think anyone interested in businesses that are attempting to tread lightly on the planet and treat people with respect and dignity should read it.

Ben Jerry's. Stonyfield Farm. The Body Shop. Tom's of Maine. All leaders in the socially responsible business movement--and all eventually sold to mega-corporations. Do values-driven businesses have to choose between staying small, selling off, or selling out? Jill Bamburg says no. Based on intensive interviews with more than thirty growth-oriented, mission-driven entrepreneurs--including American Apparel, Give Something Back, Wild Planet Toys, Organic Valley Family of Farms, and Village Real Estate--her book explodes the myths of scale from both ends of the spectrum. She debunks both the limiting "small is beautiful" approach as well as the "you have to sell out to grow" mandate.

About the Author Jill Bamburg is the dean of the MBA program at the Bainbridge Graduate Institute (BGI; www.bgiedu.org), a new institution offering an MBA, certificate programs, and short courses with a focus on sustainable business. She is a founding faculty member of BGI, has spearheaded the development of its unique curriculum, and has lived the lessons of getting to scale as the organization has grown from 10 students to more than 100 in four years. Her academic experience also includes seven years of teaching marketing, strategy, and general management to midcareer managers in the Graduate Management Program at Antioch University/Seattle. Before

moving into management education, Bamburg served in a variety of marketing roles at Aldus Corporation, the inventors of desktop publishing and creators of the PageMaker software program. It was at Aldus that she first became interested in questions of scale as she survived its rocket ship growth from \$11 million to \$180 million in revenues, from 52 employees to over 1,000, and from a single product to more than a dozen. She is a lifelong environmentalist and spent her 20s living and working in Wyoming, including eight years of community journalism experience in Jackson Hole and a year and a half as the publisher of High Country News. For the last 10 years, she has served on the board of the Positive Futures Network, the publisher of YES! magazine. Bamburg lives on Bainbridge Island with her daughter, Katie Gao.