

Newsletter

March 2026



Article1-3
Scaling your Business:
Strategies for Sustainable Growth

Announcements3

Upcoming Training & Events4

Did You Know?5

Article5-8
Short Term Stress Management
Tactics for Business Owners

Scaling your Business: Strategies for Sustainable Growth



Scaling a business is more than just increasing revenue or expanding operations - it's about building a resilient foundation for long-term success. Whether you're a startup ready to take the next leap or an established company seeking to broaden your impact, sustainable growth requires strategic planning, adaptability, and a deep understanding of your market and resources. In this article, we will discuss proven strategies that not only drive expansion but also ensure that your business remains agile, efficient, and aligned with its core values so that you can expand with purpose and confidence.

Advantages and Concerns of Scaling Your Business

Scaling your business allows you to expand your revenue more quickly than you expand your costs of operations, which can bring some powerful advantages to your business. If done correctly, expanding your revenue can increase the relevance of your brand as you impact more markets and interact with more customers, deepen your relationships with existing customers, diversify your revenue streams, improve operational efficiencies if you can operate at scale, and increase your financial stability. However, that does not mean that scaling your business as rapidly as possible is always the best choice. Scaling will test your supply lines and business operations, add complexity to your work, can reduce the quality of your service with individual customers and erode trust, and overwhelm your personnel if you don't take the time to prepare before beginning to expand. If you want to scale successfully and sustainably, you should first create a plan.

Develop Clear Goals

Before you begin scaling, it's essential to have a clear set of goals for the direction in which you want your business to head. This involves defining success for your business in both the short and the long term and setting measurable goals by which to track your progress towards those goals. Ask yourself where your business needs to be a year from now, in five years, or in a decade for you to feel successful. Once you have that vision, determine what metrics can be used to track your progress, such as revenue, employee numbers, numbers of clients, or

whatever other measurable metrics suit your goals. Then, ask whether your current operations align with those goals. If they don't, that may be a good sign to focus on improving your operations at their current size before working towards growth. If they do, develop a roadmap to meet your long-term goals while continuing to adhere to your company's vision.

Build a Scalable Team

The team you begin to scale with will have a dramatic impact on the result of that growth. As your business expands, you will naturally need to rely more on the team you build while your company is small, so make sure those early hires have strong work ethics, share your vision, and have skills that will continue to be valuable as you scale, your team grows, and they transition into managerial roles. Once you have reached the point where you can no longer manage the minutiae of your business, remember that you hired your team with that in mind and empower them to make decisions on your behalf. As your business expands, it can be tempting to start hiring quickly and recruit anyone who seems like they can do the work but focusing on maintaining a smaller team of exceptional staff and adding new, high-quality recruits only where necessary generally leads to more sustainable growth.

Strengthen Your Core Operations

For many companies, expansion comes with the realization that they have been relying on operations that were good enough to be usable on a small scale but create bottlenecks as that scale increases. If your company realizes after these processes become problems, you will need to devote resources to restructuring your processes and retraining your team. Instead, you should plan ahead by developing scalable processes that you can train your team on now without needing to disrupt workflows when the problems become too large for them to manage. Incorporating technology and automation into your standard processes can be a great way to strengthen your operations from the start as well. Consider moving your file storage to digital formats, investing in cloud-based platforms for your business, and utilizing AI to handle simple customer requests. These changes might only save a few minutes when your business is young, but it can save days of work once you've reached the scale you desire.

Monitor Your Financial Health

Scaling your business will require a certain degree of investment before you begin seeing returns. As you begin the process of growth, make sure you maintain awareness of your financial situation so that your growth doesn't overwhelm your cash flow. Forecast your expenses and revenue accurately as the numbers grow so that you ensure that you maintain profitability. Focusing on maintaining efficiency rather than expanding your team and your systems as fast as possible can help with this, but it won't matter how much profit you are setting your company up to make in the future if you can't pay your staff while you grow. If you foresee shortfalls, work ahead to secure loans or investments to maintain liquidity.





Stay Adaptable

Even if your business plan extends 10 years into the future, you can't really know what will happen in that time. Adhering too rigidly to a plan can cause serious damage to your growth, especially if market changes make the original plan irrelevant. As your company grows, ensure that you are maintaining awareness of your changing market situation and reviewing your business plan regularly for feasibility. If you realize your forecasts no longer feel reasonable or decide that market shifts have altered your goals, spend the time to create a new plan rather than letting commitment to the plan you've already made slow your progress. If you trained your team and achieved buy in early, keep them in mind during these reviews. They may have noticed changes you didn't or be able to contribute ideas you haven't thought of.

Announcements

South Dakota-based DBE firms that wish to be reevaluated for participation in the updated SDDOT DBE Program are encouraged to submit their Personal Narrative (PN) and Personal Net Worth (PNW) Statement by March 27.

Submitting your reevaluation documents by the March 27 target date will help ensure your firm is eligible to participate as a certified DBE once SDDOT completes the review process and resumes full DBE participation on federally funded projects. Timely submissions also support SDDOT in developing its triennial DBE goal by providing an accurate baseline of active, eligible DBE firms.

Firms may submit their PN and PNW documents by emailing Kyle.Watkins@state.sd.us, or they may contact Kyle at 605.773.4906 to request a SharePoint folder for secure document upload.

Under current IFR requirements, all South Dakota DBE firms are temporarily listed as inactive until they complete the reevaluation process.

- Firms that do not submit the required documents will remain inactive, and their participation on projects will not count toward DBE goals.
- Firms that are not interested in moving forward at this time should notify Kyle Watkins of their decision.
- Firms that are unsure may choose to submit their documents at a later date; reevaluation can occur anytime, but firms will remain inactive until it is completed.

If you have any questions about the reevaluation process or IFR requirements, please contact:

Kyle Watkins, SDDOT DBE Program Coordinator

605.773.4906

Kyle.Watkins@state.sd.us

Upcoming Training & Events

- Mar. 25** **Government Contracting Federal Finding & Applying**
Webinar | Wed., March 25, 2026 | 6:30 P.M. CT | Cost: \$10
[Learn More>](#)
- Mar. 26** **Learn How To Use LinkedIn To Enhance Your Small Business**
Webinar | Thur., March 26, 2026 | 6:30 P.M. CT | Cost: \$10
[Learn More>](#)
- Apr. 2** **Cybersecurity Basics: Business Email Compromise**
Webinar | Thurs., April 2, 2026 | 1:00 P.M. CT | Cost: Free
[Learn More>](#)
- Apr. 7** **Doing Business with the States**
Webinar | Tues., April 7, 2026 | 9:00 A.M. CT | Cost: Free
[Learn More>](#)
- Apr. 8** **HR for Small Businesses - Benefits & Payroll**
Webinar | Wed., April 8, 2026 | 3:00 P.M. CT | Cost: \$25
[Learn More>](#)
- Apr. 22** **Unlocking Profit Potential: A Masterclass in Construction Work in Progress**
Webinar | Wed., April 22, 2026 | 12:00 P.M. CT | Cost: Free
[Learn More>](#)



Did you know?

Support and Resources Available for Preparing Your Personal Narrative

Project Solutions Inc. (PSI), the Supportive Services provider for SDDOT, is available to assist South Dakota DBE firms with drafting their Personal Narrative (PN) as part of the DBE recertification process. Firms seeking individualized assistance may schedule a one-on-one meeting with a PSI consultant by emailing dbe@projectsolutionsinc.com.

If you were unable to attend one of the live Personal Narrative Workshops, SDDOT has posted the full PN Workshop video on the DBE website to help firms prepare their narratives. Several supporting resources are also available, including:

- [PowerPoint slides from the PN Workshop](#)
- [PN Workbook to guide PN development](#)
- [USDOT's Interim Final Rule homepage](#)

Firms are encouraged to review the workshop recording and available materials prior to submitting their narrative or before scheduling a one-on-one meeting with PSI.

Below are direct links to the PN Workshop video and SDDOT's DBE Reevaluation page:

- [SDDOT Personal Narrative Workshop Video](#)
- [SDDOT DBE Reevaluation Information](#) (top dropdown menu on the page)

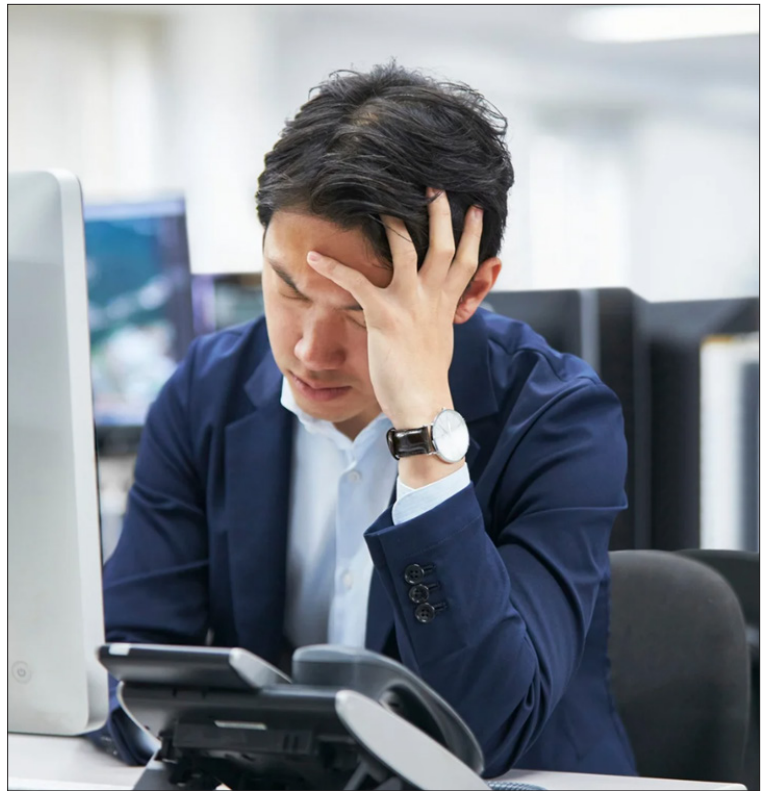
Short Term Stress Management Tactics for Business Owners

There's no question that running a small business can be a rewarding and enriching journey, but it is also a road filled with pressure, unpredictability, and anxiety for many business owners. From managing employees, to ensuring a steady cash flow, to meeting customer expectations, to staying on target with business goals while the market constantly shifts, business owners can find themselves juggling multiple roles and making constant decisions in a daily hustle to keep their companies afloat. In an environment like this, stress can build quickly and quietly until it overwhelms you and impacts your health, your personal life, and your professional performance. While the best ways to handle stress long term are found in habits that reduce the presence of stress and improve your health over time, no strategy will completely eliminate stress from your life, and even the best long term improvement methodologies can seem pointless when you feel like you are drowning right now. With that in mind, today we'll look at common causes of stress and some ideas you can put into practice in the moment when you feel overwhelmed to give yourself the peace of mind needed to make good decisions for yourself and your business, even in the most strenuous of situations.

Common Sources of Stress for Business Owners

Reducing stress starts with understanding stress, and while the specific causes of your stress will be unique to your situation, understanding a few general sources can help you categorize your stressors, and by labeling them, make them feel beatable. Let's look at a few common stressors small business owners face so that the next time you feel your stress mounting, you can take a beat to determine the nature of the stress and work from a place of understanding.

Overwork: Starting a business usually involves long hours of hard work, often at unusual times. There's a lot riding on you, and as your company grows and hires staff, a lot of people depend on you. This can lead to feelings of guilt when you're not working, or a sense of obligation to give everything you have to your job, but that mentality can quickly generate large amounts of stress.



Isolation: Long hours make it hard to feel plugged into your community, and it's easy to finish a long day of hard work and skip socializing, or to let your position of authority create distance between yourself and your employees in the workplace, but humans are social creatures, and isolating yourself from that connection causes stress, too.

Scale: Business owners frequently deal with problems that are larger in scale than those faced by people in other careers. Big problems, or even lots of little compounding problems, can feel overwhelming and difficult to focus on, which can quickly leave you feeling like you're drowning.

Finance: Every business faces periods of economic hardship. Whether it's uncertainty in the market as a whole or unexpected problems with your business model, reductions in revenue or fluctuations in your bottom line can create massive spikes in anxiety.

Burnout: No matter how passionate you are about your business, facing the myriad sources of stress over a long period of time can make it hard to feel excited about work, which only compounds the existing problems and creates additional stress.

These are not the only sources of stress, but they provide a solid baseline of common causes that might encompass some of your specific stressors. This can help you begin developing solutions and remind you that you're not alone in your anxiety by reminding you that you're dealing with problems other people have overcome before.

Short Term Stress Management

The easiest way to start your journey to a healthier relationship with stress is to focus on short-term solutions to your immediate stressors so that you can overcome your immediate anxieties and return to a strong foundational point from which to develop healthier long-term habits for your wellbeing. Let's discuss a few tactics you can use to reduce stress in the moment, whether you're feeling overwhelmed right now, or want some tools in your back pocket for when you deal with stressful moments in the future.



Deep Breathing: Short, rapid breathing is a common response to stress. Disrupting that response by focusing on slow abdominal breathing mimics calm patterns, which can trick your body and mind into calming themselves down. The need to focus your mind on your breath also gives your brain a break from focusing on the stress itself, which helps prevent mental spiraling and gives you a chance, after a moment's rest, to tackle your troubles from a fresher, more relaxed perspective.

Taking Breaks: It's easy to let stress consume you and make you feel like you need to do nothing but work on the problem until it's solved when a stressor appears, but this can result in sub-par answers to your problems, which only leads to more stress. Taking a break to focus on something other than the source of your present stress will help your decision making when you return to it. Use this time to put yourself in a situation that's physically different from the one you will be in while dealing with this stressor. If your work sees you sitting at a desk, get up and take a walk. If you are always on your feet, sit down and relax. Disrupting your situation creates distance from the stressor, and helps you relax.

Focusing on Solutions: When a problematic situation arises in your business and causes you stress, it's all too easy to let the uncertainty of the situation overwhelm you. Focus your thoughts not on the problem itself, but on finding solutions, and you can make the problem feel like a solvable challenge, which decreases its power to create stress.

Breaking Down Big Solutions: Big problems have big solutions, so it's possible that even after you have shifted your thinking to focus on solutions you might still feel overwhelmed. When that happens, it can help to break the solution down into smaller, more manageable tasks and focus not on solving the entire problem at once, but improving the situation one piece at a time. This will also give you a chance to see which aspects of your current stressor can be handled by someone else and delegate those tasks to other people, reducing your workload.

Celebrating Wins: A great way to disrupt stress is to inject positivity into your situation. Once you know how to deal with your current problems, take time to celebrate the little victories and moments of progress as you work towards achieving your desired solution.

Stress is an inevitable part of entrepreneurship, but it doesn't have to derail your life or diminish your drive. By incorporating quick, actionable stress relief tactics you can stay grounded and resilient in the face of daily challenges. These small shifts don't require major time investments, but they can make a big difference in how you show up for your business, your team, and yourself, and can give you the space to begin making long-term changes that reduce the presence of stressors in your life.

