



## Andy Bass

**Founder and principal of BassClusker Consulting, who helps leaders to bring their strategic goals to fruition more quickly and completely, wherever possible using resources they already have**

By tapping into existing underappreciated potential, clients are able to grow their businesses with Andrew more quickly, typically with no or low capital investment, thereby achieving stretching growth goals and attendant personal rewards or fulfilment,

## Andy's biography

### Andy Bass' Background

Andrew Bass has worked across a wide range of industries and sectors including professional services, [technology](#), media, health, financial services, packaging, automotive and education. Some of the organizations he has worked with prefer to remain confidential. Those who do not have included Aon Risk Solutions, KPMG, DLA Piper, L'Oreal, all three emergency services, AAH Pharmaceuticals, the NHS, and International Automotive Components Group. While based in the UK, Andy travels extensively and has worked on projects in the US, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Finland, Mexico, Russia and China.

Renowned international authority on [management](#) consulting Alan Weiss says this: "Andy Bass is that rare consulting talent who appreciates the synergy between strategic direction and committed support. He sees the job through until the client sees the practical results." Andrew has taught consulting at Warwick and Aston Business Schools, and is a visiting faculty member at the Aston Centre for Executive Development.

His writings are required reading on courses at Aston and at McGill, and he is on the 'Big Thinkers' panel of experts for #oglivychange, the [innovative](#) behavioural [change](#) practice of Ogilvy & Mather. In addition to presentations and workshops for a range of business and public sector organizations on strategic decision-making, leading change, creating buy-in and conflict resolution, Andrew has spoken at both the Cheltenham and Edinburgh Festivals of Science on aspects of communication and perception. Andrew has a PhD in Software Engineering from Aston University, and a BSc in Computer Science and

Ergonomics (the application of human sciences, especially psychology, to design), also from Aston. Andy's work has been published on Forbes.com and in Career Development International, Legal Week, and Managing Partner magazine as well as in leading journals on systems thinking and organizational change. He is author of the book *The Performance Papers: Incisive Briefings for Busy Leaders*, published by Bookshaker. An active member of the Birmingham (UK) business community, Andrew is mentor for start-up accelerator Entrepreneurial Spark (supported in Birmingham by Nat West), a former member of the West Midlands Regional Advisory Board of the leadership education charity Common Purpose, a former Board Director of the business lobbying and networking group Birmingham Forward, and former advisor to the Birmingham Future Mentoring Scheme.

Outside of work, Andrew has dabbled in the dangerous world of stand-up comedy (with decidedly mixed results!), and plays lead guitar in a tribute band dedicated to the music of Canadian progressive rock band Rush.

## Andy's talks

- **How To Grow Your Business Faster: Start With What Works**

Senior leaders are understandably concerned about how to manage growth, especially against today's backdrop of uncertainty, shaky morale and rapid changes to workplaces. The good news is that most organizations are more resourceful than they think.

In his new book, "Start With What Works: a faster way to grow your business", Andy Bass argues that businesses are full of underappreciated potential, human and otherwise, and that the fastest growth opportunities may come from identifying and capitalising on this 'hidden gold'.

To benefit, we need to look beyond our habitual ideas about our people, our products and indeed our whole businesses.

Key takeaways

- Why it makes more sense to start with what works, and what stops us.
- How we miss hidden resources
- How to find and tap into hidden resources in your organization
- Tools you can take back to your next team meeting

While it's easy to focus on problems, applying your own work – a powerful alternative is offered by starting with what works.

- **Decommoditize Your Business**

What do you do when prospective customers can't (or won't) acknowledge the difference between you and your competitor, and all they're interested in is getting a deal?

Is this happening with your business...

- The conversation is all about price
- You have to get more and more efficient just to hold your margins
- Customers don't respond to your supposed points of differentiation
- Salespeople are too quick to offer discounts
- You're doing a lot of stuff for free in an attempt to separate yourself from the competition

It is really easy to be commoditized. Everyone has access to the same 'best practices'.

Everyone has access to the same business school theories. Everyone has access to the same tools. Everyone seems the same.

You need to be different.

(This is not about being wild and crazy – it's about identifying your unique resources and putting them together in ways that make you different – BETTER – than the competition.)

### **Key takeaways**

- Why value is in the mind of the customer
- How best practices, benchmarking and other popular management methods fight against your differentiation advantage
- Finding the differences that make a difference (warning: engineers often will hate this)
- How starting with what works is the royal road to true differentiation
- Ways to get started.

- **Stand out in your career by 'decommoditizing yourself'**

Fed up of being processed by the job market? Recruiters, recruitment platforms, HR departments, formal qualifications and even the standard appearance of your LinkedIn profile all conspire to make you look as much as possible like every other candidate. That's so employers can make "apples-to-apples" comparisons.

So how do you stand out? You could try and manage your image, your 'impression' and your 'personal brand', and those things can help. But only if there's really something substantially different behind the image.

People often look outside for answers, but they can achieve more than they think by discovering hidden value in resources and talents they have already. My experience coaching leaders has taught me that seeking this hidden value can bring big leaps forward. In this session, we'll look at how you can tap into what you already have, to give you a strong, differentiated growth direction for your future success.

- **Decommoditize your business function**

In most organizations, one finance function looks pretty much like any other. Same for HR, IT and various kinds of administration. These functions easily become commoditized. It makes them vulnerable to outsourcing, or even AI.

What if you could rethink the way you serve your internal customers so that you become differentiated in comparison to these threatening competitors?

The functions haven't traditionally had to compete. But now they need to approach the problems strategically. Andy will draw on lessons from his book, "Start With What Works" to show you how to do just that.

### **Key takeaways**

- Why the modern functional department needs a competitive strategy
- How best practices, benchmarking and standards work conspire to turn you into a commodity.
- Finding your unique sources of competitive advantage
- Engaging your stakeholders in new ways.
- Safe ways to get started