

# Market leader

## How to beat the pace of change and transform your company

INTERVIEWED BY JAYNE GEST

It's no secret that the pace of change in business is accelerating, and it will only go faster in the future. At the heart of it all — technology.

New technological advances are adopted every day across all spectrums of business. Technology allows employees to do more with fewer resources so employers can deliver more savings to customers, which ultimately fuels their success in the market.

“We had a similar health care freight management business about eight years ago, which was eventually sold. Our current company, Vantage Point Logistics, is in the same industry but is geared toward using technology to drive operational efficiencies in freight management services,” says President and CEO Rob Doone. “With the use of technology, today we're twice as efficient as we were in the other company.”

*Smart Business* spoke with Doone about the key components to transformation and innovation that are so critical for companies today.

### Why is it important for companies to keep up with technology?

It's the only way to compete effectively. Companies simply cannot maintain the status quo if they want to stay in business. If companies continue to do things the way they used to do them 10 years ago, or even frankly five years ago, somebody else in the market will find a way to do it better, leaving you in their dust.

### How can companies determine what parts of the business to transform and where to stay put?

The key is to pay attention to what's

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going on in the market. Often, people think they can simply ask their customers what they want. This can be tricky because customers don't always know what they want.

Invest in becoming an expert in your customer's business and seek to *identify what your customers need* versus what is available today. Bring solutions to customers now that help address their current needs and future issues that you see on the horizon.

This means living with one foot in today's world and one foot in the future. It means placing small bets and setting guardrail checkpoints along the way to re-evaluate and ensure you're going down the right path.

### Are there signals executives should watch for to know they are on the right track?

Your customers will tell you if you're on the right path because they'll either consume the solutions you take out to the market or not.

For example, at VPL, we developed new technology that is delivered in a Software as a Service model, which allows customers to cut us out of the picture and provide freight management services for themselves. Why did we do that?

The answer is simple — we know

that this is what our customers want and need, and if we hadn't done this, someone else would have beaten us to the punch.

### What are the keys to making these transformations quickly enough?

You need to build a team with diverse experiences and perspectives who aren't afraid to fail. Encourage constructive debate because alternative viewpoints lead to better solutions.

It requires people who can look at the world differently and seek out the opportunities.

Just like you have people who are dedicated to the functions that you deliver for your clients today, you also need people who are focused on innovation and transformation. If people are tied to the day-to-day grind, they can get easily distracted from future planning and long-term thinking.

However, it's not always easy. So, talent is the key to successful transformations.

You need to create an environment that people want to work in. Yes, they want a nice office environment, but more importantly, they want to like the people they're working with, they want to be challenged, and at the end of the day, they want to feel like they're making a difference. ●