



From Freelance to Agency

Peaks and Pitfalls of Growth

Keynote Template Credit: Cristina Robinson



Kevin Howe

President & Founder at **Three29**

Twitter: **@three29media**

Email: **khowe@three29.com**

An Overview

1. Quick History of Three29
2. Working In vs Working On
3. Changes in Your Role With Added Growth
4. Hiring and Firing
5. Money
6. Resources

A space shuttle is shown launching, ascending vertically with a large, billowing white plume of smoke and fire. The shuttle is white with a black nose cone and a black main body. In the foreground, the launch pad structure is visible, including a tall service structure and various support equipment. The background is a clear blue sky with some light clouds.

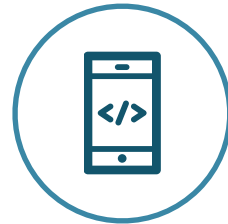
A Quick History

From my house to 6 offices in 5 years

What we do at Three29



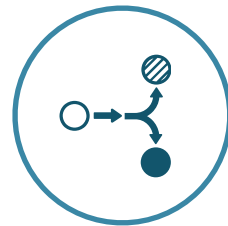
Web Design & Development



Mobile App Design & Dev



Search Engine Optimization



Conversion Optimization



Social Media Engagement

A blue-tinted photograph of a long, straight road stretching into the distance between snow-capped mountains. The road has a dashed white line down the center and yellow dashed lines on the sides. The mountains are covered in patches of snow, and the sky is overcast.

Why am I here?

Because no one talks to us about running a business

You learn a lot when you fail miserably

1. Lost a 5 figure contract because I didn't send a follow up email.
2. Developed an entire app in 5 weeks that we weren't paid for
3. Hired a developer who no-showed on his first day
4. Penalized 5% of our quarterly payroll because we didn't have a box checked in our payroll system...3 times

A blue-tinted background image of a wooden desk. On the desk, there is a calculator, several coins, a stack of coins with a percentage symbol on top, and a notebook. The notebook has the text "DON'T JUST STAND THERE" written on it in a bold, sans-serif font. The overall scene suggests a business or financial context.

DON'T
JUST
STAND
THERE

In vs On

The difference between working IN your business and ON it.

What is “Working In”

When you're involved in producing the actual product or service your company provides

As a Designer You're

- Designing Wireframes, Websites, Mobile Apps, Etc

As a Developer You're

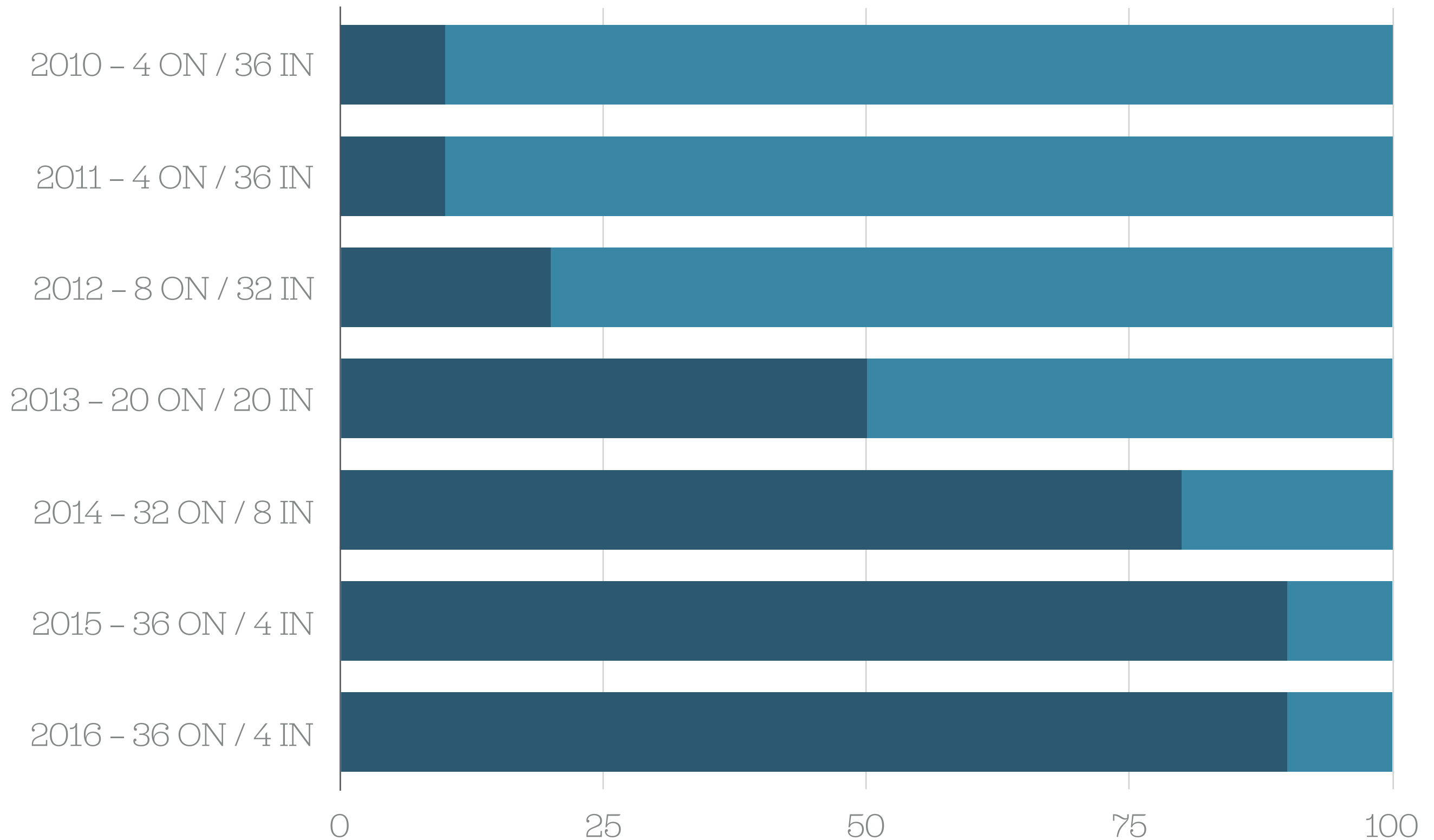
- Developing WP Themes, | Databases, Etc

What is “Working On”

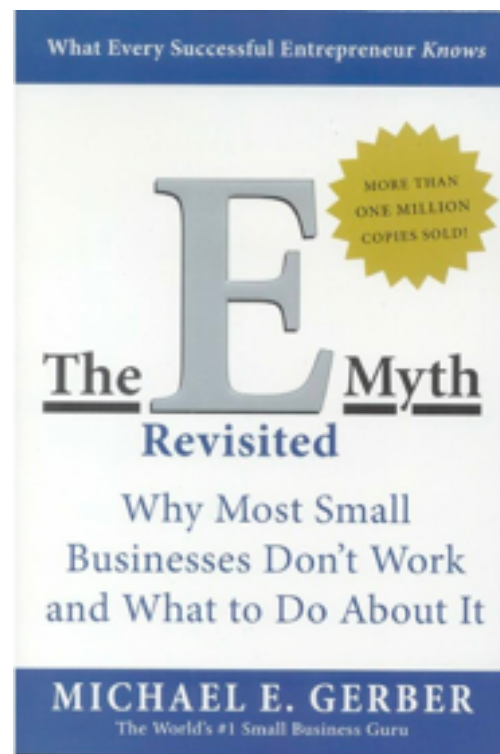
When you're maintaining your sales pipeline, networking with professionals, developing sales presentations, managing client engagement, meeting clients, etc.

Working On means you're ensuring that your business can keep running.

In vs On Hours Per Week



Resource



The E-Myth
by Michael E. Gerber

<http://a.co/apLoV5V>



Doing Less of What You Know

The changes to your job that you most likely don't know how to do

What I used to do

Develop Proposals

Meet New Clients

Run Kick-Off Meetings

Design Wireframes, Websites, Mobile Apps, Email Marketing, etc

Develop WordPress Themes, Email Marketing Campaigns

Present Client Designs

Manage Projects From Start to Finish

Generate Invoices & Follow Up with Clients That Didn't Pay

What I do now

Meet New Clients

Entertain Current Clients

Write Proposals & Respond to RFPs

Put Out Fires

Run Kickoff Meetings

Everyday Tasks of Running a
Business

Work On Three29

Who we've hired so I can Work On T29

1 VP of Technology

1 Director of Client Services

2 Account Managers

2 Designers

6 Developers

1 Digital Strategist

1 Office Admin / Accountant

Resource



EntreLeadership
by Dave Ramsey

<http://a.co/e0xT2FD>



Hire Slow, Fire Fast

The process we use to find talent

What are we looking for in a new hire?

1. Cultural Fit
2. Fit the job description
3. Ability and desire to learn/grow

Phase 1

Can you send an email?

We post a job to Indeed, Craigslist, Linked In, Dice, etc.

We filter applicants and send an email with 15 questions in it

- Facebook or Twitter?
- What Instagram or Snapchat filter should they get rid of?
- Where would you take a friend for drinks?
- How would your last boss describe you?

Phase 2

Can you communicate?

Candidates who can email well are given a phone interview.

If you can hold a conversation via phone, you are invited in for an interview with their hiring manager and myself.

Phase 3

In-Person Interview

Meeting with the hiring manager and myself to discuss the job, their skills, and see if they are a cultural fit.

Developer candidates are given a written test to take during this interview.

Designers must present sample work and discuss the project's merits.

Phase 4

Take Home Interview

Developers must break out a page that includes PHP, MySQL, jQuery, Bootstrap, etc.

Designers must design a simple email blast, landing page, or ad campaign.

Account Managers need to write a series of emails and rebalance projects that are over booked.

Phase 5

Personality Profile

All candidates who are given a take home test are also given a DISC profile

Test places candidates in a graph that helps us understand their personality.

Phase 6

Team Interview

Final 2 - 3 candidates are brought back to have a team interview with 6-10 Three29 team members

This is our last culture fit check-point

Team votes on the candidate

Popular vote wins

Why such a long process?

1. A bad hire takes months to recover from
2. We owe it to people coming to work at T29
3. The cursed iMac that went through 5 developers in 18 months



Parting Ways

What would you say you do here?

Parting Ways

1. Do it Quickly
2. Be Honest
3. Be Respectful

Resource



Good to Great
by Jim Collins

<http://a.co/al7HGbb>



Guilt of Billing

“Pay me what you owe me, don’t act like you forgot” – Rihanna

Resources

F*ck You, Pay Me
Mike Monteiro

<https://youtu.be/jVkJVRt6c1U>

You shouldn't
have any guilt

Value Your Services

You are running a business, even if it's just you freelancing

Do not be afraid of losing the client

Have a written contract in place

Find an ally in the company, usually they are not in the AP department

It's okay to fire a client

Collections 101

1. Stop Work Immediately
2. Do not let a client go more than 15 days late, ever.
3. If a client won't pay, they aren't a client you want.



People In Your Corner

You can't survive in a bubble .



Sounding Board

My Wife



CPA

Sean Boyd
sean@boydcpas.com



Business Coach

Sandra Swenson-Scott
sandra@clearvisioncoach.com



In Summary

The good and bad to be aware of

Grow Smart

1. Working In your business creates products and services, Working On your business keeps it alive and growing.
2. As you grow your role will change, prepare for it and put people in place to fill those voids
3. Hire carefully and deliberately
4. Watch F*ck You Pay Me Twice
5. Just because their in your circle, doesn't meat their in your corner



Thank You

three29.com