



grow



Anax Logistics

Moving the next generation
of rainmakers



Grow's coaching methodology inspired Anax to revisit the why, who, where, and what of our business

Forget crystal balls and cultivate an adaptable core instead

If change is the new constant, businesses with a resilient heart and an eye on the future are more likely to deliver successful outcomes.

Improving business performance often focuses on clearly articulated strategies, definite goals, and structural change - a checklist of to-do's in a rigid order that must be ticked to signify completion with little flexibility.

However, even if a robust model for growth and development is mirrored by all, with no crystal ball to predict the future - or magic wand to make it happen - how can a business create tomorrow's competitive advantage today?

On paper, Anax Logistics Group was a solid success. Established in 2007 in East London, Anax had roots as an enterprise development company providing non-core services to Mercedes-Benz Manufacturing South Africa Ltd.

The company started with just five employees and has since grown to a thriving fleet solutions operation that now employs over 260 people and is steadily increasing its profitability, with an annual revenue turnover of over R100-m.

It has four facilities and operating units across South Africa, nine alliances and affiliations, and

is a BBBEE Level 1 company that prides itself on the tagline "Shipments delivered on time with no hassle". However, as with many businesses that have experienced rapid growth, some areas within Anax needed ironing out.

To stay ahead of the game, businesses have to be agile, think and act quickly in response to the environment in which the changes occur, and be prepared for rapid refinement.

Logistics, warehousing, and automotive sectors face increasing competition and mounting pressure to perform both internally and externally, which naturally created a fair amount of pressure for this company.

In an industry dominated by change, Anax needed to ensure its people were comfortable stepping outside of their comfort zone and engaging with new ideologies and practices to help the business transition to where it needed to be.

With Grow, Anax Logistics uncovered and realigned what the business stood for and why it was unique in its industry. Most importantly, Grow helped this business embrace the mindset that every challenge carries with it an opportunity - one only needs to look closely to figure out where the opportunities are.

Support, purpose and validation

When businesses go through periods of change, it's common to attack the most obvious immediate problems with vigour and without hesitation. That's understandable and might make good business sense in some situations. However, it is also advisable to look back at the "big picture" to see what is still working and what might need to change.

When Anax first met with their Grow coach in January 2021, the fleet industry across the whole of the African continent was experiencing a landslide of challenges, made worse by the Covid-19 global pandemic.

These included the ever-rising cost of fuel, high fleet maintenance costs, missions control and changing environmental regulations, fleet productivity and safety, and general management problems of geographically dispersed fleets, to name just a few.

Unable to defend itself against lockdown regulations and social distancing practices, Anax could have put the business through painful rounds of downsizing and then sat back and watched their sales and profits erode and their stock valuations tumble. Instead, the business chose to fight back and turned to their Grow coach for help.

Natasha Mqgibelo, general manager of Anax, explains how the Grow model of coaching and mentoring was a natural fit for Anax and instrumental in helping the business embrace a future-ready way of thinking – even in times of global catastrophes.

"Grow's coaching system inspired Anax as a Group to revisit the why, who, where, and what of our business. Why are we here? Who are we doing this for? Where are we right now, and where do we want to be?"

What is it that we actually want to achieve? GROW helped us redefine the objectives we had when we first started the business and revisit our purpose," says Natasha.

"Personally, my Grow coach has helped me be more accountable for the business and to differentiate between the buzzwords - 'urgency' and 'importance'.

With Grow's leadership, I realised how much time I was spending reacting to urgent issues, which demanded an immediate response, versus how much time I was spending working on important projects or strategic initiatives that would move Anax forward. Before collaborating with my Grow coach, I believed urgency and importance were one and the same. Now I know they aren't.

My coach at Grow also made me more aware of the value of being more open to seeking advice. I tended to shy away from asking for advice, but I know now that seeking guidance is not a weakness; it's a strength and an important element of teamwork."

Natasha continues to say that above all, Grow helped her realise the importance of future forecasting and the importance of creating a foundation designed to withstand storms, no matter which forms they take.

"I always looked at the future growth of Anax as "baby steps", focussing my attention on what the business wanted to achieve tomorrow, next week, or next month. Now I look ahead. Where do I want Anax to be in the next decades, and more? A long-term vision has enabled me to keep reaching for 'the next level'."



Adopting a winning attitude

Becoming an adaptive competitor can be difficult, especially for large, established businesses such as Anax. Before working with Grow, Anax was oriented toward managing scale and efficiency. Their hierarchical structures and fixed routines lacked diversity and flexibility, both of which can mean the difference between your business flourishing and failing down the road.

After implementing several tactics put forward by their Grow coach, Anax was able to see just how beneficial adaptive changes can be.

During the Productivity SA Gala Awards dinner held in November 2021, Anax was recognised for its elite performance in fleet solutions during one of the most challenging times in recent history.

After working with their Grow coach for just eleven months, Anax was the proud recipient of eight prestigious awards for Bulk Vehicle Operator (BVO) Of The Year.

Previously, Anax had won coastal awards, but they had never secured any major regional accolades, nor won awards as numerous or varied as these.

Anax attributed this achievement to the help of his Grow coach, who gave managers in the different depo centres the insight they needed to perform at a higher level and the power of a clear value agenda. This alignment was achieved by involving the operational managers being in the strategy formulation process to facilitate buy-in at all levels of the business.

What's worth noting is that two of the depo managers who won awards are women operating in a predominantly male-dominated sphere of logistics.

The "boys' club" is still - to a degree - typical in logistics, especially in areas such as the Eastern Cape. For two women to make significant impacts in a field that has previously catered to male employees shows excellent progress in terms of gender equality in the workplace. aligned and engaged with where the new business was headed. Their Grow coach enabled Anax to develop

Back to the drawing board

higher levels of employee engagement and help the business become far more proficient in the deliverance and communication of its strategy.

With Grow's involvement, Anax has not only turned its strategy into a growth tool for the business but an effective sales and retention tool.

Now, when Anax pitch to new prospects, they include their long-term strategy, highlighting their long-term winning aspiration and describing their sandbox and demonstrating their unique and valuable position as part of their sales pitch. By providing a clear strategy that communicates to customers what the business stands for, how it operates, and why it deserves their business, Anax has been able to secure new projects and new clients they had battled to close previously.

Anax was also able to grow despite the Covid-19 pandemic and the hard-hitting impact the virus has had on businesses, particularly those in the region of Eastern Cape, maintaining their current contracts and even securing new agreements, many of which Anax had been chasing long before Covid-19 struck.

Anax is proud to announce that the business has extended their contract with Mercedes-Benz (MB) and is working with the luxury vehicles company's Inkanyezi Project, which will see 23-seater Sprinter Inkanyezi busses converted locally at Mercedes-Benz's East London conversion facility.

Demonstrating their hunger for growth and change, the business has also secured the confidence of Shell and the sole mandate to operate the oil major's Eastern Cape routes, an accolade previously reserved for major industry players, indicating a coming of age for Anax in the logistics industry. The business is part of Total SA's Siyakhula enterprise development programme for bulk fuel transportation and is currently finalising a new contract with another global oil major.

The image shows two women standing on a wooden staircase. They are both wearing dark blue blazers with the 'ANAX GROWTH' logo on the left chest and bright orange skirts. The woman on the left is also wearing a gold necklace and a gold bracelet. They are both smiling at the camera. The background shows the wooden railing and steps of the staircase.

The big picture

Since Grow collaborated with Anax, **the business has implemented several profound changes** in line with their Grow coaches recommended 10-year BHAG.

One of which included close scrutiny of the business's geographies, ultimately resulting in the decision to close one of its regional branches in Johannesburg to make way for a greater focus on growing and centralising the Eastern Cape division.

Another significant change came from shifting the business's ideology that its BEE status was its most important selling point.

While the right BEE score can be an authentic source of long-term competitive advantage, it was not Anax's only trump card, and helping the business come to this realisation was an essential part of its growth process.

Another hallmark of the business was its ability to effectively navigate change, both inside and on the peripheries. Although these events naturally created surprise and uncertainty, Anax viewed leadership changes in their business as an opportunity to fill vacant leadership positions with fit-for-purpose resources able to position them for future growth.

Anax's Grow coach was able to provide some helpful guideposts for a successful, planned transition. By assisting with the transition, he helped directors, managers, and staff navigate the often-murky waters of a leadership transition, managed fears, and developed a culture of succession thinking.



A strong and formidable future

Perhaps one of the most difficult challenges of any business is **adequately preparing for the future**. Even with the most thorough research and best available information, knowing what lies ahead is hardly a science. Tomorrow remains a mystery. It always has. It always will.

Sure, we can make plans, make predictions, hope for the best and prepare for the worst. Sometimes we get lucky. However, how does a business ensure that those “lucky” days happen more often than not?

With the help of their Grow coach, Anax has aligned its mission to lead from the front with well-executed business growth and expansion strategies.


The business has set a trend that significantly influences the growth of professional women in the logistic sectors. This trend is sure to become a legacy for generations to come.

It has invested in human capital, creating a team of talented professionals prepared to take on new challenges as the business grows. It has selected tenders that have enough capacity or range to expand on current offerings.

And, most of all, it has readied itself for change - because it knows and understands the future isn't going to sit around and wait until you're ready.

What Anax has achieved in the past few months is just the tip of the iceberg. The business intends to continue building on clearly defined structures and strategies geared towards even more growth and raising the bar with new practices and new ways of embracing change.

Anax is on the leading edge of a self-reinforcing process, promising even greater acceleration ahead, fuelled by ample enthusiasm and positivity. This presents enticing opportunities to not only drive competitiveness but to flourish.

An aerial photograph of a plane's wing against a clear blue sky, with a hazy horizon line. Below the horizon, a landscape of rolling hills and fields is visible. A large green rectangular box is overlaid on the lower left portion of the image. To the right of the green box, there is a geometric logo consisting of four curved, quarter-circle shapes arranged in a cross pattern. The top shape is white, the left is light green, the right is dark green, and the bottom is light blue.

When things don't seem clear, it's time to **find focus.**

When you're at the top. Everyone's looking to you for the answers. You're the leader, thinker, decision maker, mentor, planner and doer. Sustained growth and scaling up weighs on your shoulders. Yet, so many questions ruminate in your head.

When you are feeling stuck or overwhelmed yet committed to a sea change, you need a thinking partner to help you see the wood for the trees. An impartial sounding board with years in the seat and war stories to share. Don't lose sight of the bigger picture, and don't do it alone.

Grow. Helping businesses find clarity and the confidence to lead with it.



Build your business with **clarity and confidence.**



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