



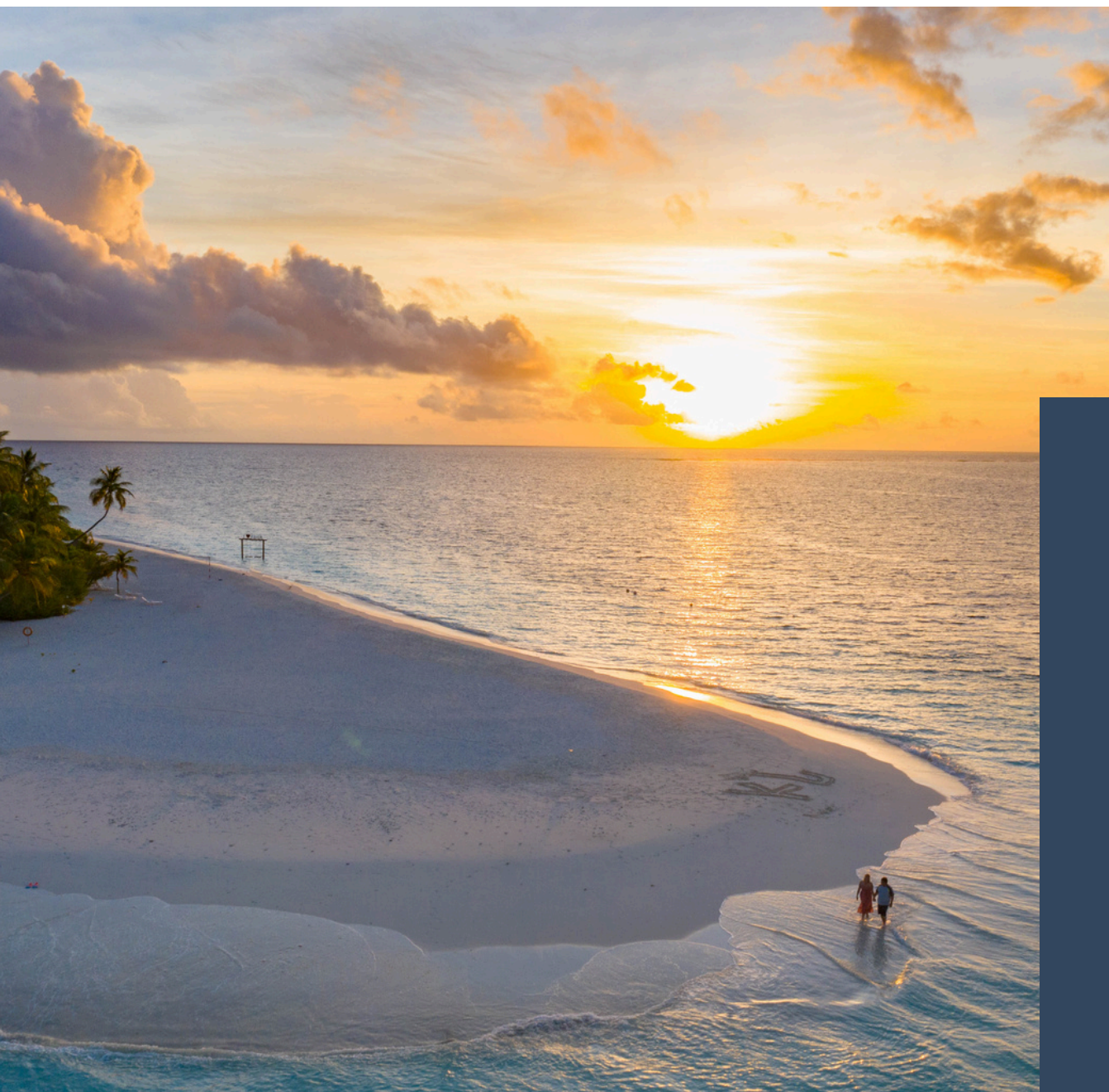
EXIT PLANNING

WHITE PAPER

PREPARING YOUR BUSINESS FOR EXIT: A COUCH TO MARATHON JOURNEY

Effective exit planning maximises value, ensures smooth transitions, and strengthens legacy. Many SME owners reactively approach exits, risking lost opportunities. This white paper introduces a structured, sprint-based strategy for successful business exits.

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Executive Summary

Exiting a business isn't just about selling—it's about maximising value, ensuring a seamless transition, and leaving behind a strong legacy. However, many SME owners approach exit planning reactively, leading to missed opportunities, undervalued sales, or failed negotiations.

This white paper outlines a structured, progressive framework for exit preparation, inspired by the principles of marathon training. It highlights the risks of poor exit planning, key timelines for maximising value, and the benefits of a sprint-based approach to financial and operational optimisation.

Business exit planning is often overlooked or approached at the last minute, resulting in financial instability, reduced sale value, and operational inefficiencies.

At MyController, we believe exit planning should follow a structured approach—like training for a marathon—where preparation is progressive, strategic, and designed to build financial strength over time.

Lack of Planning 48%

48% of business owners do not have a formal exit plan, leaving them vulnerable

Insufficient Preparation Time 81%

81% of business owners regret not preparing for their sale, realising too late that they could have maximised their valuation

+30%

Profit

Structured exit planning boosts valuations and profitability. Businesses optimising financial strategies before selling can earn 30% more profit. Strengthening operations and efficiency in the three years before an exit can increase profits by 10%–30%, improving their market position and securing better deals.

Research Sources:

MyController: Research & Analysis

Gallup: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/657362/small-business-owners-lack-succession-plan.aspx>

Exit Planning Institute: <https://exit-planning-institute.org/2023-national-state-of-owner-readiness>

Yell Research: <https://about.yell.com/media-centre/1-in-3-business-owners-say-a-better-work-life-balance-is-their-top-priority-for-2024>

Strategic Growth Research: <https://www.sgfe.co.uk/business-exit-statistics-uk/>

Ideas 42 research: <https://www.ideas42.org/project/understanding-barriers-to-succession-planning-among-small-business-owners/>

Charles Stanley Research: https://assets-live.charles-stanley.co.uk/uploads/files/Guides-and-Reports/Exits_in_the_UK.pdf

Weatherby's Bank Research: <https://www.weatherbys.bank/insights/the-ma-landscape-in-2025/>

The Risks of Poor Exit Planning

A rushed exit strategy can have serious consequences:

- **Missed Valuation Opportunities:** Inadequate preparation can result in undervalued business sales, lost revenue, and weaker negotiation leverage.
- **Operational Disruptions:** Without streamlining systems and financials in advance, business transitions become chaotic, making deals more likely to collapse.
- **Reduced Buyer Confidence:** Disorganised records and inefficiencies can create uncertainty for potential buyers, leading to lower offers or failed transactions.

A well-structured exit plan mitigates these risks and ensures a smoother transition for all stakeholders.

Many business owners underestimate the complexity of an exit. Without early preparation, companies often scramble to fix financials, align operations, and package the business at the last minute—leading to lost value and stressful negotiations.

EXIT PLANNING HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN FIVE STEP



Starting five years before exit allows business owners to:

- ✓ **Strengthen** financial stability, ensuring a clean balance sheet and cash flow reliability.
- ✓ **Improve** business independence, reducing reliance on key individuals for daily operations.
- ✓ **Refine** competitive advantage, making the company attractive to buyers or investors.
- ✓ **Structure** leadership succession, allowing for a smooth transition post-sale.

Our Approach



5 Years Out **Elite Training Plan**

- Expanding market position and brand equity.
- Leadership development and succession planning.
- Financial structuring for long-term investor appeal.



3 Years Out **Intermediate Training Plan**

- Strengthening profitability through cost efficiency.
- Optimising revenue streams to increase net profit.
- Preparing for investor due diligence by improving financial clarity.



12 Months Out **Sprint Training Plan**

- Intensive pre-sale optimisation through 8 Sprint Cycles and 46 targeted sprints.
- Financial restructuring for maximum valuation.
- Documenting and tracking KPIs to improve buyer confidence.



Gregory Parrish, **FCCA, FCMA, MBA**

We help businesses maximise value on exit through expert valuation, financial planning, and business improvement strategy. With experience from SMEs to multinational corporations, we ensure accurate assessments, seamless transitions, and strong financial positioning pre- and post-sale.