



# A Cure for Destination Disease

BY GARRETT SULLIVAN

All contractors start out expecting to succeed, but even those that work hard have to win the race against bankruptcy at first. With discipline, focus and a dose of luck, a few are able to beat the odds and avoid being among the 50 percent of contractors who will go out of business in their first five years. Once past that point, some will be able to move beyond day-to-day survival and figure out how to get their company into the jet stream of success.

If you are one of these fortunate contractors, congratulations! But beware: Getting too comfortable with your current accomplishments can bring about a nasty malady called destination disease. It's an illness that strikes when a business arrives and remains indefinitely at a set level of success. Destination disease isn't just about business, either. All too often in life, we make an unconscious decision to pull off the path, believing that we're as fulfilled

as we'll ever be.

But living a balanced life requires you to look beyond merely succeeding as a contractor. You must also consider how you want to make your mark on the world. Many people believe wealth, recognition and status are the most important goals, but that may miss the point. It's only when you begin to use your time, talent, and resources to serve others that you'll be fully content. This stage of life has been referred to as The Transition, when one moves from success to significance. It's a profound milestone that not everyone gets to experience.

Do you love what you do but also feel that it doesn't matter in the wider world? If so, you should be giving some thought to building your legacy, and freeing up some time away from your business to do so. You may even decide it's time to sell your business and shift into a new role.

## As you consider the implications of The Transition, here are some questions to contemplate:

### Your Legacy

*How would you want others to describe you at your funeral?*

*What behaviors and values do you want your life to reflect?*

*How do you want to contribute long-term to your organization? To your community?*

*What do you want to leave behind for those close to you?*

### Defining Your Future Role

*Define the primary responsibilities of your future role. How will they differ from your current responsibilities?*

*How do you feel about the planned changes to your responsibilities?*

*What do you think you will enjoy most/least about your next role?*

*What will be the roles and responsibilities of the new business owner(s)?*

*How can they best contribute once the initial transition period is completed?*

### Your Development

*How will you continue learning to develop yourself?*

*Who will help chart the details of your new role and how?*

### Your Support Structure

*Who will be the major internal and external stakeholders in your new role, and what will they expect of you?*

*What will you expect of these individuals? Are they prepared to support you?*

*What can the incoming business owner(s) do to support your success?*

*What tools and other resources do you need to be successful?*

*What new or existing relationships do you need to cultivate to be successful?*

If you recognize that you've been struck by destination disease, understand that it takes time and patience to move from success to significance. Just as being a contractor requires taking risks, moving into The Transition means operating outside of your comfort zone. Significance is not

the same as planning and completing a construction project at a set date. Rather, it's a process of learning to love what you do and feel and that you are making a difference in the lives of others. Once you reach it, nothing else will satisfy.

*Garrett Sullivan is president of Sullivan & Associates Inc. and acts as a trusted confidant to contractors as well as helping them clarify, simplify and achieve their goals and vision. Connect with him at GSullivan@SullivanHi.com, www.SullivanHi.com or 808-478-2564.*