

The Ultimate Guide

TO FINDING

PROFIT

IN PLAIN SIGHT

BEYOND THE SHOP FLOOR



What could YOUR company do with a 50% gain in profitability?

How much are profit leaks costing you?

- How often do you find yourself putting good initiatives on hold because you “don’t have the budget for that”?
- Do you chase revenue and close new business only to see little or no difference on your bottom line?
- Are you frustrated because you’ve invested a lot in lean, find it hard to sustain, and haven’t seen enough ROI?
- What is it costing you personally to lose sleep wondering how to fund the future of your business?
- Do you find yourself asking why people don’t “get it” ... and why they can’t just “do it”?
- How often do you dream of the day when your business is profitable enough to reward yourself and your people for everyone’s hard work?

Which of These Common Profit-Destroyers
Are You Guilty of?

How Can We...?

- ✓ Find ways to truly engage and inspire employees?
- ✓ Retain our best customers longer
- ✓ Stay well ahead of the competition?
- ✓ Eliminate competing internal behaviors
- ✓ Improve efficiency and effectiveness
- ✓ Drive growth opportunities with minimal risk?

**Profitable companies
focus on 3 things...
creating value...
building value...
and capturing value
every day on the bottom line.
Read on to find out how...**

1. Downsizing employees in tough times
2. Taking a slash and burn approach to cost-cutting
3. Price cutting to match the competition
4. Incremental price increases
5. Increasing revenue for the sake of “growth”

Anne C. Graham
#1 BESTSELLING AUTHOR PROFIT ACCELERATOR



FINDING PROFIT IN PLAIN SIGHT STEP 1

Benchmark Your Target Profit

ARE YOU A PROFIT LEADER IN YOUR INDUSTRY, OR A LAGGARD? FIND OUT

Your first step in becoming more profitable is to shift your thinking from status quo or planning for incremental increases, and take an exponential approach to lead your industry.

The best key performance indicator for this benchmarking purposes is your net profit per employee, something I call Return on People [Download](#) your complimentary copy of the current *Return on People Benchmark Report* and follow the instructions to understand where you are at today... and where you really should be.

Your target number may be far higher than you can even imagine, but is likely far more achievable than you might think:

*You asked us all to plot our "Return on People" on the chart. Unfortunately, at that stage this indicator was actually **negative \$9,955 per employee**. We immediately set a new goal and implemented the Profit Plan you outlined. I am pleased to confirm that we achieved **\$31,671 profit per employee** this year - the **highest profitability levels** in the organization's history.*

Mikel Rhodes, CFO Delta Building Products

Want results like that?

Return on People is a direct measure of productivity AND competitive advantage because it measures **how well you turn talent into value and measures your customers' willingness to pay for that value**. I've been tracking this metric for well over 15 years, and the insights are always invaluable:

- Wouldn't you love to know why Procter and Gamble earns **1.5x** the profit per employee of Colgate?
- Or why Caterpillar earns almost **twice** the profit per employee that Cummins does?
- Or why once-great GE recently **lost** almost \$80K per employee per year, while upstart Fortive, with a very similar business model generates **\$121K** of profit per employee?

And wouldn't you love to know how YOU can join the high-performing companies by going beyond business as usual? This Ultimate Guide to Profit in Plain Sight is for you.

Seeing just how high the bar has been raised by some of the largest companies in the world is a great catalyst for setting your own bar higher and building a proactive Profit Plan to achieve

more, without defaulting to the typical approaches of slashing costs and growing revenues by chasing any business with a pulse – there are horror stories in the Benchmark that show exactly what can happen with those **outdated approaches**, and there's a much more sustainable, safer approach that delivers results.

Unless you're exceeding the Benchmark return for your industry, it's time take a different look at the systems and processes you have in place to ensure you're optimizing revenues (not all revenue is GOOD revenue) and eliminating all of the small, subtle profit leaks above AND below your gross margin line.

Profit leaks include:

- ◆ Doing business with customers who cost you more than they're worth (but no, you don't have to fire them)
- ◆ Leaving money on the table because you're not sure how to price for value (there is a way to know how, and then create win-wins for you and your customers that have nothing to do with just slapping on a price increase, especially in highly competitive markets)

- ◆ Incurring the costs of issue escalation, problem resolution, and subsequent reworks or compensation.
- ◆ Profit leaks also include the high costs of:
 - attracting new customers
 - losing business to a competitor
 - being leapfrogged by a competitor with a better idea
 - inefficient processes and procedures that slowly but surely drain the life-blood from your company.
 - and more!

Do these challenges sound familiar? The solution is having a systematic set of tools that gives you the confidence to:

- ✓ do profitable business with *every* customer
- ✓ maximize overlooked opportunities to do *more* good business (every business has opportunities, including mine!)
- ✓ eliminate unnecessary costs from your system that shouldn't even be there
- ✓ price for value instead of leaving a penny on the table
- ✓ differentiate from your competitors AND stay ahead of them when it comes to new value-add products or services.

Think that's impossible? What it takes to realize these possibilities are exactly what I've perfected (the hard way) during years of successful turnarounds, and in the profit work that I've done with clients for the past 19 years. My approach is light years away from conventional accounting approaches (you've

already got a competent CFO who helps you with those, right?), and takes a customer-focused, people-centric, and profit-powered approach using a proven system that delivers results.

My clients typically see a *significant* increase in Return on People even before they complete their first month, and that's what I want for you – whether we work together or not...

Within the first 30 days of working through ProfitU™ with no upfront payment, we added enough profit to our bottom line to fund the entire program. Within 3 months our margins were up 5% and individual sales were up 7-13% year-over-year, enabling us to hit breakeven vs a loss of \$20K/month last year, yet we were still able to reinvest in the business. Within 6 months, we achieved the profitability goal we'd set for the entire year.

Wallace Gillard, CEO Wat Supplies

Because it's not really about profit is it? It's about the *possibilities* and *potential* in your business that profit makes possible.

The Return on People Benchmark has increased almost every year since I started monitoring it, and many good companies increased their results even during recessionary periods – but NOT by downsizing employees, as their lesser-performing competitors did.

This *Ultimate Guide to Profit in Plain Sight* highlights many of the proven tactics I've discovered over the years, without having to take a slash-and-burn approach to costs or get rid of good employees.

But there's a challenge. I wrote the #1 Best Seller *Profit in Plain Sight* in 2013 and packed it full of free how-to videos, and yet readers reached out to say that they were still struggling to create the rhythms and discipline to implement for results. It's simple, but not easy.

The ideas in the Guide are yours to use, however you'll also find opportunities to reach out and talk to me about deploying ProfitU™, the comprehensive **in-house, online-learn-by-doing** implementation system that has no upfront cost and means you never have to reinvent the wheel to see significant Take-it-to-the-Bank results plus a dramatic improvement on your Return on People. *Places are limited.*

Continuing to do what you're doing today is unlikely to create a quantum profit leap. The work that I do shows every employee how to focus on profit within their span of control, in a way that's highly engaging and rewarding for them. We all like to win – when you show them how they can play a crucial role in the success of your organization in less time per week than they're spending on email per day, you trigger some pretty amazing leverage.

For now, read on for 52 weeks of highly profitable tips!

Anne C. Graham
#1 BESTSELLING AUTHOR PROFIT ACCELERATOR



FINDING PROFIT IN PLAIN SIGHT STEP 2

The Ultimate Profit Calendar

52 TIPS THAT DELIVER BOTTOM-LINE RESULTS

■ Week 1: Complete *The Profit Plan Checklist* on the next page

■ Week 2: Benchmark and set a new Return on People goal

■ Week 3: Implement a piggy bank strateg to take profit off the top

■ Week 4: Trim unnecessary costs in a systematic way – no slashing.

■ Week 5: Identify who your most profitable customers are

■ Week 6: Meet at the executive-level with make-or-break clients

■ Week 7: Calculate your Net Promoter Score with key clients

■ Week 8: Ask your customers what's driving them crazy... and fix it

■ Week 9: Develop a dashboard to track customer profitability

■ Week 10: Deal with your donkeys: underperforming employees

■ Week 11: Determine what drives perceived value for your customers

■ Week 12: Develop a dashboard showing penetration per customer

■ Week 13: Implement profit sharing

■ Week 14: What's the best thing a customer could say? Go earn that

■ Week 15: Have each employee identify 3 high-value activities

■ Week 16: Focus in a systematic way on small improvements

■ Week 17: Fix the 5 service issues that drive 80% of unnecessary cost

■ Week 18: Create a "gold standard" customer experience

■ Week 19 Shift your mindset from product/service to solutions

■ Week 20: Engage employees from all depts in profitable *behaviors*

■ Week 21: Collect customer testimonials and referrals

■ Week 22: identify leading indicators for profit, not just lagging indicators

■ Week 23: Give each person a profit-related metric & measure them on it

■ Week 24: Retain just 5% more clients each year to triple real growth

■ Week 25: Ask your customers how you can do more business together

■ Week 26: Check out ProfitU™ - it delivers results quickly & easily

■ Week 27: Raise prices by up to 5% for unprofitable customers

■ Week 28: Increase your piggy bank profit target by at least 10%

■ Week 29: Ask customers what they want your product to DO for them

■ Week 30: Decide how to be distinctive & better vs competition

■ Week 31: Have every employee ID "their" client: internal OR external

■ Week 32: Implement an accountability system for value-add

■ Week 33: Review client complaint data to fix problems for good

■ Week 34: Figure out why YOU gladly pay more sometimes.

■ Week 35: Drive out the costs of customer & employee churn.

■ Week 36: Train for the Customer Experience, not Customer Service

■ Week 37: Decrease discounts by at least 1%

■ Week 38: Charge what you're worth.

■ Week 39: Recognize and give credit for what is working well

■ Week 40: Squeeze your lemons. Use service issues to innovate

■ Week 41: Evaluate the Customer Experience across all touchpoints.

■ Week 42: Move all your products up on the emotional value scale

■ Week 43: Develop a welcome/onboarding program for customers

■ Week 44: Monitor Retention rates, Repeat business, & Referrals

■ Week 45: Identify which of your products are commoditized

■ Week 46: Adjust functional value to match customer needs

■ Week 47: Add emotional value to trigger loyalty

■ Week 48: Fine-tune experiential value & eliminate touchpoint service issues

■ Week 49: Develop and implement a framework for lifecycle innovation

■ Week 50: Confound the competition with hard-to-copy innovation

■ Week 51: Make dormant customers a compelling offer to return.

■ Week 52: Lather, rinse, repeat these Profit Tips... or ask for help.



Your Profit Plan Readiness Checklist

DO YOU HAVE THE KIND OF PROFIT PLAN THAT WILL GENERATE TAKE-IT-TO-THE-BANK RESULTS?

P IDENTIFY YOUR MOST PROFITABLE CUSTOMERS & CLARIFY PROFIT POTENTIAL	R KEEP YOUR BEST CUSTOMERS LONGER LEVERAGE THE 5RS	O ELIMINATE WASTED COST OBBLITERATE OPERATIONAL SLUDGE	F SKYROCKET MARGINS FEARLESSLY PRICE FOR VALUE	I CREATE HARD-TO-COPY COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE INFINITE ROI OF INNOVATION	+T TAKE IT TO THE BANK USE THE EBITDA BOOTCAMP TO BUILD YOUR WAR CHEST
<p><i>The Top 10% of manufacturers earn double the profit of the other 90% - The top 1% earn 10x the profit of the typical company. Are you a leader or a laggard? Find out.</i></p>	<p><i>67% of customers will choose a new supplier when they feel you're indifferent to their needs. Most companies rely on less than 10 customers for the profits (not the sales) that keep them in business</i></p>	<p><i>When you obliterate the sludge that caused customers to leave, 20-40% of them will return. Retaining just 5% more of your customers can lead to profit improvements of 25-95%</i></p>	<p><i>Just a measly 1% discount can result in a 16% decline in profits</i></p>	<p><i>More than 50% of new inventions fail to achieve commercial success. But innovations that solve real problems sell like hotcakes.</i></p>	<p><i>The number 1 issue for every company is to turn profit on paper into cash in the bank. 99% of business leaders have good intentions but fail to take action.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Every person in the company can identify our most profitable customers, not just our largest customers. ■ We have a proven process to help our customers remain profitable for us. ■ We have a highly effective profit sharing program that focuses our people on the right behaviors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We have a systematic approach that builds multiple relationships at every level so that when a buyer leaves, we never lose the customer. ■ We have a proven process to help get customers who are costing us more than they're worth, back on track. ■ Our entire sales team has segmented their customers based on growth potential, and uses a visual tool to pinpoint exactly where they can easily close new business with them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When problems occur, we resolve them fully and for good; we do not have to deal with the same problems over and over again. ■ We have taken the time to identify the most common service issues we cause our customers, and have tools in place to eliminate the cause. ■ We have an early-warning system in place to ensure that we never allow new customers who will eventually cost us more than they're worth, into of our business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Like Apple, we never discount. Instead we are seen as the gold standard in our industry and can price for value. ■ We have multiple ways to evaluate and optimize our pricing strategies so that we don't leave money lying on the table. ■ We know exactly how to systematically test price increases before fully deploying them, to ensure that we never lose business from our best customers based on price. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Functional value of our products and services is no more, and no less, than what our market desires. ■ We have optimized the Emotional value of each of our products and services, to eliminate any desire by the customer to switch. ■ We have systematically created Experiential value at every touch-point, providing a seam-less experience that eliminates unnecessary costs and increases perceived value. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We have a weekly process to eliminate unnecessary costs across the company, not just in operations, so we never require drastic cuts. ■ We are easily able to say "yes" to all good opportunities to invest for growth that come our way ■ We have a war chest for change, so that we can weather the bad times without drastic cuts and thrive in good times.
<p><i>Just getting every customer to breakeven can effectively double your profitability.</i></p>	<p><i>Between 5-30% of customers could buy more from you. And just a 2% increase can deliver 50% more profit</i></p>	<p><i>70% of calls to customer service reflect some failure by the supplier. Just 5 categories of issues account for 80% of those unnecessary costs.</i></p>	<p><i>Sealed bids don't always have to be the lowest price. Change the playing field to make sure you're the only fully-compliant vendor, and price for value.</i></p>	<p><i>Innovation is the specific instrument of entrepreneurial minds, and it endows existing resources with a new capacity to create unlimited prosperity</i></p>	<p><i>Simply finding 1% everywhere as you eliminate the waste that continually creeps into every business is enough to increase profit 16% or more.</i></p>
<p>You'll experience this and more in your 1st Semester of ProfitU™...</p>	<p>You'll experience this and more in your 1st Semester of ProfitU™...</p>	<p>You'll experience this and more in your 2nd Semester of ProfitU™...</p>	<p>You'll experience this and more in your 3rd Semester of ProfitU™...</p>	<p>You'll experience this and more in your 4th Semester of ProfitU™...</p>	<p>You'll put more than enough money in the bank within 30 days to fund all of ProfitU™</p>

If no upfront payment was required for the proven strategies & tactics that deliver significant profit increases, covered by an unconditional guarantee, would I have your attention? www.ProfitU.co

Anne C. Graham
#1 BESTSELLING AUTHOR PROFIT ACCELERATOR



FINDING PROFIT IN PLAIN SIGHT STEP 4

10 Take-it-to-the-Bank Results

JUSTIFY THE ROI FROM IMPLEMENTING A PROVEN PROFIT PLAN

1

• Set higher yet achievable goals when you benchmark against the best... and implement smart practices to take your place with them

Anne showed me the holy grail of increasing profitability. Sean McGuinness, CEO, Tompkins Industries

2

• Save time by getting crystal clear on who your most profitable customers are... not just your biggest customers, who are often unprofitable for you

We took our Profitable Customer Ratio from 2:1 to 5:1 within 1 year – a huge boost to profitability. When we involved our reps in the process, they got it instantly and made the commitment to take this to 100:1 with our biggest 100 customers. Alain Ouzilleau, President, Cabico

3

• Reduce risk when you connect in a meaningful way with your best customers... because it sets you apart from the competition

I've collected an unbelievable amount of information from the Value Creation Conversations. I'm amazed by how many opportunities there are to grow our business with our clients and easy fixes that can help improve our relationships with them!!!! In 30 years of business I've never had so much fun collecting this type of information, what a tool! Wallace Gillard, CEO WAT Supplies

4

• Significantly increase your bottom line by retaining your best customers longer... and apply your Ideal Customer Avatar to identify new markets

*Just when you think there's **nothing else you can do** to improve your bottom line, Anne will enlighten you to practical, achievable new possibilities.* Brooke Christiansen, Canalta

5

• Increase sales almost effortlessly ...when you stop good revenue from leaking out to your competition

*Anne showed me some easy steps to improve profitability in my company. The best part is that I can get these improved profits without increasing overhead: **an infinite ROI.*** Kristi Zadderley, CEO Startec

6

• Reduce your operating costs and improve efficiencies beyond the shop floor... when you get the sludge out of your systems by solving problems for good

*I've looked to manufacturing to increase profits. Anne came at the issue from **another angle**, and delivered results.* David Doepker, Founder & CEO, Doepker Industries

7

• Stop leaving money on the table & close your profit leaks... when you learn how to price for value

*In one focused question I was provided with specific tools to increase my bottom line **by at least 38% immediately**, and with discipline, even more.* Richard Wilson, President. Craftsman Specialty Products

8

• Expand your competitive edge when you innovate in uncommon ways... which they won't be able to easily copy.

*I recommend anyone who is looking for **new and creative ways** to develop and market products or services to work with Anne.* Nicholas Weichsler, Manager, Global Service Sales and Channels, Cisco

9

• Solve the real problem of employee engagement... when you make it a game they want to win, with clear goals, measure progress, and reward the right behaviors

*I love the fact that the ProfitU involves the **whole team** and has a positive spillover effect on all of our accounts – ProfitU makes moving the ball forward much easier for a CEO.* Wallace Gillard, CEO, WAT

10

• Take real profit to the bank every month... using a forgotten strategy that you actually used as a child.

Terrific "outside the box" ideas focused us on using existing resources to super-charge our profits. Gregg Filman, Value Partners Investments

What are you waiting for? ProfitU™ delivers these results in less time per week than you're spending on email. Limited places are available. Find the details at www.ProfitU.co



FINDING PROFIT IN PLAIN SIGHT STEP 5

Why Bother? Why Now?

WHAT IF YOU NEVER HAD TO WORRY ABOUT PROFITS AGAIN...

3 REASONS YOU DON'T THINK YOU NEED A PROFIT PLAN

1

We're already profitable.

Great! The good things you're already doing are the perfect foundation for leading your industry in Return on People and building a stronger war chest that will fund change with ease.

2

My CFO has it covered.

Terrific! A strong CFO is an invaluable asset, trained to look at tangible aspects of your business. ProfitU™ takes a very different approach from what your CFO does, focusing on optimizing the less-tangible customer and employee behaviors that create or destroy profit every day.

3

We already invest in professional development

Even better! When you already have a learning culture, you'll find that ProfitU™ is the icing on the cake, because instead time away learning generic information, your team is working together in-house to apply specific strategies and tactics directly to your unique business.

10 WAYS YOU'LL LOSE MONEY WHILE YOU SETTLE FOR STATUS QUO



1 You'll settle for less than your potential

6 You'll never have a war chest as a buffer in time of change



2 You'll chase costly marginal customers



7 You'll keep working long hours, with few results to show



3 You'll discount just to hit the numbers... and damage margins

8 You'll keep doing things twice instead of getting it right the first time



4 You'll never succeed in pricing for value, not just for inflation



9 Customer turnover will continue to cost you



5 Well-intentioned employee behaviors will actually destroy profit

10 You'll watch your competition beat you to market



The goal of ProfitU™: I no longer worry about profitability, I have 110 people who pay attention to it every day. - CEO

ProfitU™ is self-funding with NO upfront investment, so you never have to "find the budget". You are covered by my unique-in-the-industry "Whatever it Takes" Guarantee. www.ProfitU.co

There's a gap between where you are today and where you would like to be.

Do you really want to spend the time to reinvent the wheel or attempt to develop the tools and discipline to do all this on your own?

Or would you rather be focused on your area of expertise – your people, your customers, and your business?

Let's close the gap.

Schedule a call to discuss your business or simply reach out with questions:
ProfitU@AnneCGraham.com

Not quite ready to take action?
Get the details: www.ProfitU.co



ProfitU™ is my area of expertise, with tried, tested, and proven step-by-step how to's that make it easy.

There's no travel, and no downtime.

Every week the contemporary online university format leads your team through small, powerful learning modules, and shows them exactly how to implement and see tangible results... in less time every week than you're spending on email per day.

And we make it a game they'll want to win

Anne C. Graham
#1 BESTSELLING AUTHOR PROFIT ACCELERATOR



THE STORY BEHIND PROFIT IN PLAIN SIGHT?

6 Winning Strategies 60+ Profit Accelerators

DISTILLED BY EXPERIENCE , PROVEN BY RESULTS

About Anne

Anne C. Graham has inspired business leaders across North America to put the profit, passion, and growth back into their business.

Known as the #1 Best Selling Author of *Profit in Plain Sight* and a sought-after speaker, she vividly illustrates every big idea and AHA! Moment to ensure that participants never see their business challenges in the same way again, and that participants leave with steps they can take immediately to see impact.

After 25 years as a corporate turnaround expert working in very diverse industries from the Fortune 50 to small and mid-size companies, Anne developed ProfitU™, the innovative online learn-by-doing system for leaders and their teams who are serious about profitability. She loves sharing the practical roadmap for take-it-to-the-bank results that she wishes she'd had during her many years as an executive.

Anne believes in paying it forward and has served as a Director for the Association for Manufacturing Excellence plus she has held leadership roles in several other industry associations and non-profits. She delivers provocative workshops annually at the world's largest Lean Conference.

When not mentoring leaders to achieve higher goals than they ever thought they could, Anne's favorite thinking, writing, and relaxation spot is on the back deck of her boat, anchored in a quiet bay on the West Coast of BC.

Skim down to the bottom of [this page](#) to find out Anne's life-changing "Why" for what she does, and how it all came about. It's a valuable learning experience for any leader.

About ProfitU™

Many leaders read great business books... yet grapple with the challenge of translating concepts into implementation tools.

Many leaders invest in professional development and executive programs for their teams... yet struggle to engage their employees in applying what they've learned.

Many leaders are disappointed by consultants who may or may not deliver tangible results, and who take their knowledge with them when they leave

ProfitU™ is the solution to those challenging problems - this proven in-house, online-learn-by-doing system shows you AND your team exactly how to implement the P.R.O.F.I+T Plan in just 90 minutes per week – less time than every person spends on email every day!

Your team is guided every step of the way with specific learning and implementation to-do's, timelines, accountability tools to keep everyone on track, engaged, and committed, and scoreboards that turn the process into a game that everyone wants to win.

I'm a resultant, not a consultant. That means I'll work with you at **no charge for the first 30 days** to find the money to pay the ProfitU™ fees, so that you're never out of pocket.

You'll be fully supported and mentored by me after a **live, game-changing workshop** where you and your team rank your customers on profitability with an innovative, intuitive approach that gets everyone onside to improve profits in the blink of an eye.

And, you're covered by my **"Whatever it Takes" Guarantee**, which is unique in the industry. As long as you and your team do the work, I'll do whatever it takes to make sure you see results, at no additional cost.

What have you got to lose by finding out more? ProfitU may or may not be the right fit for you, but why not [schedule](#) a 30-minute call – not so I can give you a sales pitch, but to talk about your current Return on People status and profit challenges. I guarantee that whether we decide to work together or not, you will leave our call with at least 1 actionable strategy or tactic that will impact your bottom line. If it makes sense for us to work together, I'll send you further details – no obligation.

Anne, you're so good at synthesizing, understanding, taking chaos and complicated issues and transform them in clear and simple challenges. You're an inspiration, a great coach and a role model to me; doing all the above with intelligence and humor.

Alain Ouzilleau, CEO, Cabico