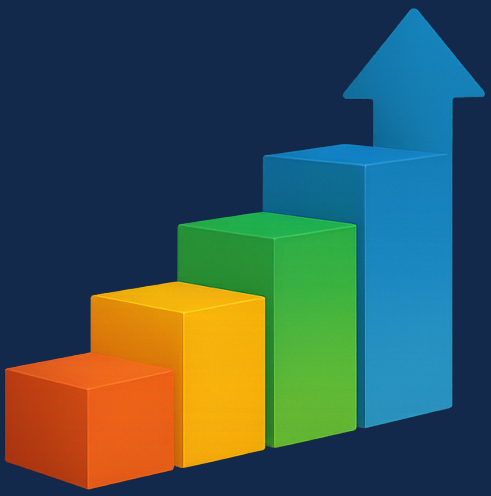
Success isn't random. It's built—one block at a time.

Scale Up Blueprint



7 Essential Building Blocks for Unstoppable Business, Leadership, and Life

Maja Kazazic

From genocide survivor to global strategist—Maja Kazazic shares the blueprint behind her rise.

Scale Up Blueprint

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For the builder in you; the part that refuses to stay small.

Author's Note

I did not set out to write a book about business alone. I set out to write a book about rebuilding—because rebuilding is what life asked of me, long before it asked me to scale a company. When a single moment split my world in two, I learned that progress is not a straight line. It is a series of choices made in ordinary minutes: stand up, fall down, stand up again.

Years later, inside conference rooms and on factory floors, I watched leadership follow the same pattern. Teams didn't transform because they worked harder; they transformed because they learned what to work on, in what order, together. That is what these Building Blocks are: not tips, not hacks, but a structure you can trust when emotion runs high and time runs short.

If you are reading this in a season of acceleration, I'm happy for you. If you are reading it in a season of starting over, I'm with you. Either way, I hope these pages feel like a steady hand at your back. Use the Blocks. Stack them patiently. Let momentum gather. And when you forget—because you will—come back to the first step you can take from where you are now.

You'll also meet real organizations and public figures in these pages—Elon Musk, Taylor Swift, Jeff Bezos, Martha Stewart, Thomas Edison, Brené Brown, among others. You may admire some and resist others. The goal isn't agreement; it's understanding. I have no affiliations, endorsements, or personal ties to any of them. They're included solely to make the ideas concrete and useful.

If a reference sparks resistance, pause and get curious. Growth asks us to learn from a wide range of sources—even those we wouldn't choose. That openness is how we move beyond our limits.
If you're ready, let's begin.

Maja Kazazic is a Bosnian war survivor turned entrepreneur and keynote speaker. After rebuilding her life in the U.S., she founded an IT company and spent the next two decades helping leaders and teams—from startups to Fortune 100—scale with clarity and momentum. Her Scale Up Blueprint distills those lessons into seven practical Building Blocks that blend resilience, systems thinking, and disciplined execution.

Introduction

Why Some People & Businesses Scale Up And Others Don't

The Art of Scaling Up

Success. For years, I believed success was the destination—the reward for surviving, striving, and pushing through. I thought if I worked hard enough, sacrificed long enough, and endured enough, I'd eventually arrive. And then, life would finally feel complete. I could relax. Coast. I'd know I had made it. I had succeeded.

By my late twenties, I had everything I once believed was impossible—especially for someone with my history. I was living in my dream home near the ocean in Tampa Bay, Florida. I had built a thriving IT company and landed a $150,000/year retainer as my very first client—just three months after launching. I created software that beat out giants like Cigna and Aetna. A little girl from Bosnia, who had survived genocide, built something better than Fortune 100 companies. It felt surreal. I had the freedom, the accolades, the life I once thought only belonged to other people. For most, maybe that would have been enough. But for me? It felt hollow. I couldn't describe it, but when I got to this place of success, but it didn't feel like I thought it would. I expected to be elated—ecstatic even—like fireworks going off in my life and heart. I thought that after the initial excitement, I'd feel happy, relaxed, and content. I'd feel confident about where I was and where I was going. But instead, I felt anxious and at a loss. Hollow and isolated, with a gaping void and no purpose.

Because I was deemed "so successful" while living life somewhat in the public eye, it became even harder to talk about what I was really feeling. I was under pressure to perform, to play the role of the woman who had made it. I didn't feel like I had permission to be vulnerable. I didn't want to come across as ungrateful. Five souls in Bosnia didn't survive the bomb that injured me. They never got these chances. And the very thing that once inspired me—my survival—now made me feel ashamed for wanting more. I was afraid that if I spoke my truth, I'd be seen as ungrateful and, even worse, greedy.

The truth was, I was grateful. Deeply. For how far I'd come. For everything I had. But gratitude alone didn't fill the void. It didn't quiet the deeper questions that kept surfacing in my heart: ***Is this why I survived? Was this my purpose? Is this all there is?***

No one tells you that reaching your dreams can be disorienting. That climbing your mountain and standing at the top can come with an eerie silence. That after the adrenaline fades, you might find yourself staring out into the distance wondering… *"Now what?"*

No one prepares you for: **Success is not the end.** Getting to the top doesn't mean you can relax. When you've fought to survive like I have, that truth hits even harder.

I came to this country at sixteen, on the brink of death, with nothing but a rock in my hand, a t-shirt on my back, and a teddy bear I used to bite on and scream into for pain because we didn't have pain medication. I didn't speak a word of English. I endured over 100 surgeries. I had to relearn how to walk. It took 15 years for me to be able to

relearn how to run. I finished high school. Graduated college. Built a career. Built a company. All great things.

I wasn't even supposed to be alive. And yet, I had made it. Every box checked. Every milestone reached. Standing on what I thought was the top of my life, at 28 years old….wondering….asking that very same question…. ***Now what? Is this it?***

But my guilt constantly kept pushing that question away. I kept pacifying myself with answers and distractions that weren't even related. But no matter what life still felt unfinished. Like something was missing.

Until one night, sitting in my living room alone, staring at the stars through my window a question struck my soul like thunder and I dared ask out loud and address head on this elephant in the room:

"Is this all there is? Do I just keep repeating the same day for another 60 years and wait to die? Have I peaked? Is this really what I survived for? I went through all of this to get here, and feel…empty?"

It terrified me. But it was also the most honest moment I'd had in years. I did everything I was supposed to do. I had reached the cultural definition of success, and, by those standards, I was done. Yet, success didn't feel complete, it felt empty. I felt uncomfortable and scared thinking that I had peaked and it was only either downhill or more the same from this point on. Those thoughts didn't sit well with me. I refused to believe that the peak of life feels like this. That accomplishing everything you were supposed to is going to feel like this. It didn't makes sense. Life didn't make sense. And that night I felt this deep knowing that there has

to be more to life than "succeeding". Getting to your goals and being done. There had to be something beyond, because if this was it, it would have felt different.

Although the world hadn't told me what to do next, that didn't mean I couldn't go beyond and find out for myself. And after doing deep personal work, I realized something I had never been taught: the goal was never just to succeed. The goal was to *evolve*. To grow. To keep expanding and reaching levels beyond anything I had imagined. That's what we're here for. That's what we're wired for. Not just to survive—but to **Scale Up™.**

To Scale Up™—to dimensions of life and self I didn't even know existed. That's where the real excitement lived. That's where the fulfillment was hiding. In the Art of Scaling Up.

Because if I could survive what I'd survived, what else was possible? If I could scale one impossible mountain, why not another? If I could rebuild myself once, why would I ever stop building?

That night, I made a decision: I would keep scaling. Always. No matter what.

And that single decision changed everything—not just for me, but for every leader, entrepreneur, and organization I would go on to work with.

Why Scaling Up Is the Only Way Forward

That night I realized, success is not the goal. **Growth is.** The moment you stop evolving, you begin to erode. You've seen it happen. So have I. Companies like Blockbuster, Kodak, and Blackberry—once unstoppable giants, now relics of the

past. They didn't collapse because they failed. They collapsed because they stopped innovating. They got comfortable. They stood still.

The same thing happens to people. They land the dream job. Build the business. Reach the goal. And then they pause. They stop asking what's next. They stop stretching. They settle. Before long, the very success they worked so hard to build becomes the weight that holds them back.

"The average lifespan of companies on the S&P500 dropped from about 75 years in 1937 to just 18years by 2011."

Even giants can become irrelevant without continuous growth. Staying comfortable is the silent threat.

One of the most natural forces in the universe is evolution—constantly expanding toward a better, more refined version. That's why scaling up comes so naturally to all of us. It's why millionaires and billionaires keep making more money. Why successful companies keep getting bigger. Not because they're greedy. Not because they need more to pay the bills. But because once survival is no longer the goal, growth becomes fun. When you're no longer chasing security, you start taking bolder, more meaningful risks. You stop fearing mistakes because you know they won't take you down—they'll teach you. They become data. Insight. Fuel.

And that's when something magical happens. You start pushing boundaries you never thought you could. You begin

reaching heights you never even dreamed of. Because people—and businesses—that thrive? They don't stop scaling. They stretch. They grow. They lead. They change the world. Which is why the only way forward… is to keep scaling up.

Why Working Harder Isn't the Answer

When it comes to scaling up, most people think the answer is to work harder. More hours. More hustle. More grind. But scaling isn't just about effort—it's about **elevation**.

It's about aligning your **mindset**, your **strategy**, your **environment**, and your **support** system so that growth becomes your default setting. Because real growth doesn't come from trying harder. It comes from building smarter.

Scaling isn't a personality trait. It's a process. A repeatable system. A way of thinking, operating, and evolving. It's about creating a culture—within yourself or your organization—where evolution is expected. Where momentum is the norm. Where breakthroughs are inevitable. It's about rising to the next level of existence, where scaling up becomes as natural as breathing—and the only way forward.

The Scale Up Blueprint™: Your Roadmap to Exponential Growth

After decades of navigating my own journey—first to survive, then to thrive—I became obsessed with understanding what separated those who broke through from those who stayed stuck. I studied world-class leaders, high-performing teams, fast-scaling companies, and

individuals who defied the odds. What I discovered was both surprising and empowering: they all had a piece of the formula. Some focused on discipline. Others emphasized mindset. Some leaned into vision, strategy, or support. They mostly focused on the parts that they were lacking, their weak point, completely ignoring and taking for granted necessary building blocks that they already possessed.

Take Simon Sinek's iconic concept: "Start With Why." It's brilliant. It's accurate. And for many companies, it works, especially for those that already have other foundational elements in place. But here's what often gets missed: companies that already have a strong purpose may still struggle if they lack support systems, structure, or discipline. Leaders who succeed using Sinek's framework tend to assume it's the strategy without realizing it only works so well because the other pieces were already in place.

Now look at Mel Robbins' "5 Second Rule." It's a game-changer for those who need help building discipline. But for organizations that already operate with structure and are lacking clarity, purpose, or strategy? It doesn't move the needle in the same way.

These aren't failures of the strategies. They're gaps in the system.

That's when I realized: no one has the full structure. Each popular method was offering a piece of the puzzle. But what about the whole picture? What's the formula that works regardless of where you're starting, or what you're missing?

That's how the 7 Building Blocks were born.

After years of research, reflection, and real-world implementation, I discovered that sustainable success is built on **seven essential building blocks**. Even more important, they have to be stacked in a specific order. Each building block is a foundation for the next. Miss one, and the whole system starts to wobble. But when all seven are aligned and strong scaling becomes inevitable. That's what this book is about.

The **Scale Up Blueprint™** is a framework designed to unlock unstoppable growth. It's the structure behind lasting transformation—whether you're building a business, leading a team, or scaling your life. And it works. Whether you're just starting out or you've already hit a plateau and want to reach new heights. Inside, you'll learn how to identify and strengthen each building block. How to shift from hustle to high-leverage strategy. How to escape the plateau trap and generate momentum that builds on itself. This isn't theory. It's a proven system. It's your roadmap.

This Is Your Moment

The fact that you're here means something. You're not reading this by accident.It means you're done settling for "good enough." It means you're ready to reach higher—for your life, your organization, your mission, your future. And that's where growth begins. The moment you realize you want that next level. I am proof that scaling up isn't reserved for the lucky or the chosen. It's available to anyone bold enough to ask: **"What if there's more?"** For you, your family, your organization, your life.

So take a breath. You're not starting from scratch. **You're starting from strength.** And I will show you the way. The

next level is already within reach. Let's Scale Up™.
Together.

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Want to go deeper?
You've just read the beginning of Scale Up Blueprint. There's so much more waiting for you – including the full 7 Building Blocks that will help you scale your business, leadership, and life.

Find out where to start:
Take the free Scale Up Archetype Quiz to discover which of the 7 Building Blocks you need most right now.

👉 www.MajaKazazic.com/ScaleUpQuiz

Ready to preorder the book?
Scale Up Blueprint is available now for preorder. Reserve your copy and be the first to receive bonus resources, early access, and companion tools.

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