

# The Strategies

Why they thrive. How they treat employees. What they plan to do over the next year. How they intend to cash out. (They're not headed to Wall Street.)

## How would you define the competition in your industry?

Stiff

**48.7%**

Moderate

**30.9%**

Modest

**13.8%**

Slim

**6.7%**

## What are the two most important factors in your company's success?



**67%**

Good employees



**37%**

Hard work



**36%**

Effective strategy



**29%**

Willingness to change



**10%**

A good idea



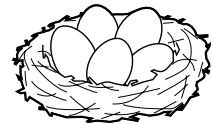
**6%**

Good timing

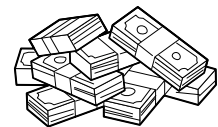
## What benefits do you offer?



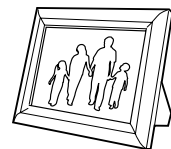
Health insurance  
**95.2%**



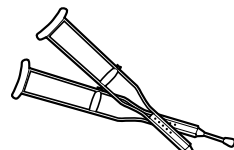
Retirement plan/401(k)  
**83.9%**



Bonus plan  
**76.9%**



Life insurance  
**59.4%**



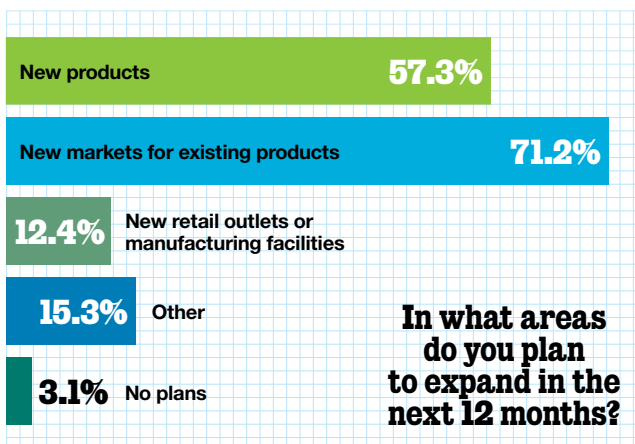
Disability insurance  
**56.5%**



## Cashing Out

**62%** of Inc. 5,000 CEOs have an exit plan. The most popular options?

1. Sell the company to a private buyer (**72.6%**)
2. Go public (**28.2%**)
3. Transfer ownership to employees via an ESOP (**22.3%**)
4. Leave the company in part or in total to partners (**15.3%**)



## In what areas do you plan to expand in the next 12 months?

**37%**  
sell their products or services via the Internet

**97%** of companies plan to add staff in the next 12 months

## Top six advertising strategies

Word of mouth  
**72.6%**

Print  
**51.9%**

E-mail  
**51.8%**

Search engines  
**44.5%**

Direct mail  
**42.6%**

Banner ads  
**28.3%**