



Creative & Small Business Leadership Advisory Services

**Helping artisans evolve into
thriving entrepreneurs.**

Steven Morris
MatterConsulting

Working Together

We shape our self
to fit this world
and by the world
are shaped again.

The visible
and the invisible
working together
in common cause,
to produce
the miraculous.

I am thinking of the way
the intangible air
passed at speed
round a shaped wing
easily
holds our weight.
So may we, in this life
trust
to those elements
we have yet to see
or imagine,
and look for the true
shape of our own self,
by forming it well
to the great
intangibles about us.

— David Whyte
from The House of Belonging
©1996 Many Rivers Press

I help Artisans Evolve into Entrepreneurs.

The artisan sector (AKA Artisan Economy) is the second largest employer and one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the developing world. Businesses in this sector create products from a driving purpose and services defined by human connection.

My work with entrepreneurs is a framework to evolve your artisanship into entrepreneurship. It's one that allows entrepreneurs to build confidence in their business acumen, while keeping the soul of your artisanship alive.

The work I do harvests and activates the driving principles of your belief-driven business, while building that practical tools and skills for your business to take root and flourish. I guide entrepreneurs through a journey to successfully grow your business, whether that means evolving your creative business from a maker to leader, launching a tech start-up, or expanding your artisan products into a world-class brand.

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Prices and packages are subject to change as appropriate.

“How we choose what we do, and how we approach it...will determine whether the sum of our days adds up to a formless blur, or to something resembling a work of art.”

— Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, author of FLOW, Living at the Peak of Your Abilities

Investing in Your Evolution

“It’s lonely at the top.”

“No one thrives in business alone”

“Your business should work for you, not you for it.”

Three (mostly) truisms about leadership in the business world.

I also believe, because I’ve lived it and seen it, that business can be a work of art and an act of beauty. Sure, it can offer the abundance of profit, but it can also provide more deeply nourishing dividends. You can have “it all” you just have to evolve into it that world of possibility.

Some of the best businesses known to humankind are built by maker-artist-entrepreneurs. People who dreamed big, experimented, rolled up their sleeves and broke conventions. You know their names Jobs, Gates, Hewlett, Packard, Ben & Jerry, Knight, Oprah, Spielberg, Branson, Hurley, and Chouinard. Just to name a few. All were or are artist-maker leaders. All constantly, steadily and thoughtfully evolved.

No business will be more evolved than its leader.

Your own evolution, as an individual and a business leader is an investment. If you want your business to grow, you have to evolve. Leaders I work with are looking for clear outcomes for their business, but they also want a life. They want to see the connections between their business investments, their profit and how their business works for them. They need their problems solved so they can thrive. Rightly so. It’s their job and my job, too.

The impetus behind any evolution—as a leader, a business or brand—is an economic goal. At least at first.

Ultimately it’s a people thing—leadership, culture, customers, partners, investors, donors. It’s no longer enough for brands to just deliver a good service or decent product, look good, and be seen. Consumers and employees are insistent on being aligned with meaningful attributes that create alignment in values. This requires evolved business leaders.

Choose Your Evolution Experience

The options below invite you choose the level of support that will help you thrive amidst the wild-ride of 2020 and beyond. I'm here to provide you with guidance, tools and community support to help you realize your vision—with love at the core and business-smarts.

Evolutionaries Leadership Community

\$110

PER MONTH / 20 SPOTS ONLY

Two Virtual meetings per month:

1. Evolutionaries Monthly Themed Group Meetings with Steve and occasional special guests.
2. Evolutionaries Monthly Virtual Salon Discussion to explore wide-ranging group explorations in a trusted environment.

Quarterly Hot Seat Advising

1-hour of 1:1 virtual guidance (coaching) session with Steve
(REQUIRES 6-MONTH COMMITMENT)

Monthly Virtual Office Hours

MOST POPULAR Evolution Leadership Mastermind Group

\$330

PER MONTH / 10 SPOTS ONLY

Everything in the Evolutionary Community Tier, plus:

Two Deep-Dive Strategy Days to evolve your business (as a group) to set your purpose, vision, promise, values, position, and improve business development.

Monthly Virtual (or in-person if local) Meetings with Steve

Monthly Group Virtual Strategy Day Mastermind with Steve

Unlimited email access in-between meetings.

6-MONTH COMMITMENT

1:1 Rapid Evolution

\$1,100

PRIVATE COACHING

PER MONTH / 5 SPOTS ONLY

Private Rapid Evolution guidance coaching to help Set Business Strategy, Purpose, Vision, Business Development, & Positioning.

Everything in the Evolution Mastermind Group Tier, plus:

2 Private Deep Dive Strategy Days (instead of group days in Mastermind Group)

Twice-Monthly 1-hour 1:1 calls (or in-person meetings if local)

Unlimited email access in-between meetings.

6-MONTH COMMITMENT

“We needed an advisor who could be smart and creative, while understanding how to help us navigate a complex marketplace. Steve was that and so much more.”

– Linda Mignone, Vice President Marketing,
Bridgepoint Education

On Being a Trusted Advisor.

Part of my purpose in life is to help businesses thrive, not just survive.

My work as a trusted advisor in brand and cultural evolution, is to cultivate, amplify, and activate the best parts of a business. **Jim Steeg, then COO of The San Diego Chargers said that “you take businesses to the next level.”**

I've been doing this work for over two decades. During this time, I've had the honor to work with and help evolve more than 250 brands (from Fortune 100 companies, to small businesses, to high-achieving solopreneurs) and well over 3,000 business leaders.

While that is a track-record of stats and figures, its people and teamwork that achieves results. What matters most is the impact and results I've helped to create for businesses, their leaders, their employees, and their customers—this is what I'm most proud of.

- **Businesses reporting back after a brand evolution program have measured business growth of 602% and one company measured the ROI effect on the work at 2,487% over a 2-year period.**
- **One of my clients cited that they “had a hard time keeping up with product demand” (products selling 3x faster than prior to our work with them).**
- **Another stated, “Their customer satisfaction was the highest it has ever been.”**
- **A soloprenuer reported that their income doubled in less than two years while their business services evolved from doing rote work, to higher profit strategic work.**
- **Still another said that they “have led three national re-branding programs internally at previous companies, and the one Steve worked with us on was by far the smoothest; most well received, both internally to the culture and publicly.”**
- **And one more stated that they’ve “raised more money this year than they had in the last three years combined, because of our work.”**

One-Off Leadership & Strategy Guidance	Individual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expert positioning evaluation so your business can stand out amongst the crowd of generalist. Review & analyze brand market position to make the service firm less replaceable; evaluate business development flow; devise an optimal system for predictable lead generation. 	\$4,000; 2-3 weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Development Strategy: Review & analyze current marketing strategy; evaluate strategic marketing opportunities; devise an optimal marketing strategy to attract more of the right customers. 	\$5,000; 2 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand Position & Lead Generation (For Service Firms): Review & analyze brand market position to make the service firm less replaceable; evaluate business development flow; devise an optimal system for predictable lead generation. 	\$6,000; 4 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single Initiative One-Day Strategic Deep-Dive: This is a strategic deep-dive day, with an individual leader or leadership team, on any topic you or your business is facing. Previous Deep-Dive Strategy Days have included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand evolution strategy review, based on in-house created rebrands, designed to test market readiness and exploration of actionable purpose, values and promise. - Rapid response to crisis pivoting, including crisis management, key client loss, or responding to economic turmoil. - Business systems design to create more team efficiency and productivity. - Rapid-business development approaches to capitalize on market changes. - Raising your brand industry profile and identifying positioning expertise. - Team leadership offsites on brand position, core values, strategic visioning, setting a 100-year vision, and leadership team alignment. 	\$5,500; 2 weeks prep; 1 day on-site

What I do for small business leaders.

Having built, grown, run, grown some more, and merged my agency over 23 years, and co-founding three other businesses (one sold, one merged, one folded), I know what it takes to create, manage, evolve and lead.

But, no one does business alone.

I've hired and worked with respected global advisors and learned tons from them. And, I've had the opportunity to work with global business leaders and learned from them, too.

I apply all of this hands-on, school-of-hard-knocks, and experiential learning to help other businesses navigate the complexities of their work and leadership. And I apply my skills as a creative-thinker, artist, strategist, designer and maker into traditional business settings.

My focus is always to help you discover what's best about your leadership and business offering. This is your brilliance and your genius. Working with you I help to mine, guide and activate your unique *something-special* and instill it within your leadership, brand character, market position, and business planning, so you can consistently attract more of the right customers and tap the unmanifest abundance within.



If you perceive the universe as being a universe of abundance, then it will be. If you think of the universe as one of scarcity, then it will be...I always thought that there was enough of everything to go around –that there are enough ideas in the universe and enough nourishment.

— Milton Glaser

“The impact of our work with Steve is beyond measure. Everyone seemed to double down on their commitment to our mission and vision once we'd grounded it in “Our Why,” and every staff member is 100% committed to delivering on our brand promise in every aspect of our work.”

— Jennifer Tucker-Tatlow, CEO of The Academy for Professional Excellence

Steve's work as an artisan and with artisan-entrepreneurs.

I began my career in the creative industry after earning my **BFA in fine art** (with minors in **Psychology and Philosophy**), and then **MFA in Design** from Temple University, Tyler School of Art. There I studied with some of the brightest minds in the industry including, **Milton Glaser, Joe Scorsone, Lanny Sommese, Seymour Cwhast, Paula Scher, Raphal Olbinski, Peter Coreston (Rolling Stone)**, and many others.

After graduate school I worked in a variety of east coast agencies, mostly in Washington, DC before moving to San Diego in 1994 to start my own agency. Over the next 24 years I built and grew this agency. Most recently known as Mth Degree (prior to that Morris Branding) to have an international reputation for strategy that tethered the business goals of an organization to their brand and marketing expression. In 2017 I merged the marketing side of my agency with another firm so I could focus my strategy efforts on brand and business evolution programs.

During the course of this agency we were honored by the American Marketing Association as *Marketer of the Year* (three times), by INC. Magazine's *INC. 5000* (twice) and won more than 120 design awards.

I've been honored to speak at nearly every national and global creative and design conference including, AIGA, HOW Design Live, AMA, Creative Mornings and many others.

As well, I've been honored to work with the poet-philosopher **David Whyte**, and his faculty, through a year-long immersion in his Invitas program. This work was centered around the artistry of conversational leadership.

This poetic, leadership and philosophical application led me to co-found **The Studio**, with poet **Libby Wagner** and Irish musician-composer **Owen Ó Súilleabháin**. **The Studio hold performances and workshops to help leaders rediscover their wholehearted human artistry.**

I'm author of *Brand Love & Loyalty* and *Humanizing Marketing*, and am working on my next book *The Beautiful Business*, which will be published in early 2021 by Conscious Capitalism Press.

"You are one of the best and brightest minds in our industry. A true industry master and a really good guy. I've worked with and covered Steve and his industry leadership for more than two decades. He's a popular draw at our events and always pushes creative business leaders to grow."

—Bryn Mooth, Writer, Author; Previous Editor, HOW Magazine; Conference Organizer, HOW Design Live

Since 1994 I have had the honor to serve more than 250 brands and 3,000+ business leaders. This is just a partial list of my client-partners.

SAMSUNG

Microsoft

SONY

Habitat
for Humanity®

San Diego
Foundation
Building the community

ThermoFisher
SCIENTIFIC

SHARP

LG

BUTTER & SALT CLOUDS

Barrett Values Centre



DivX



HUBBS
SEAWORLD
INSTITUTE

Escondido
Creek
Conservancy

Disney

ResMed

Directed
ELECTRONICS

UNIVERSITY
TECHNICAL
INSTITUTE

Seniors Community
FOUNDATION

HG FENTON COMPANY

bridgepoint
EDUCATION

Miracosta
COLLEGE

LEET
SCIENCE
CENTER

CONSCIOUS
COMPANY MAGAZINE

Ashford
UNIVERSITY

AIGA

INTA
International
Trademark
Association

new balance

SIERRA
CLUB



USA
SCIENCE
&
ENGINEERING
FESTIVAL

puma

monarch school
Montessori Elementary School

CONSCIOUS
CAPITALISM

Jack
in the box

Green Flash

CHUAO
CHOCOLATE

THE
LOTUS
CENTER

Jewish
Community
Foundation
San Diego

Latitude
33°

LATITUDE
33°

HESS

MARRIOTT

SURFHOUSE

Kingston
TECHNOLOGY

SD

ESPN

WORLD
WARCRAFT

LaNcT LiUsDmE

Upper
Deck

X
GAMES

ease
interactive

BALBOA PARK
CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP
Collaborative for Arts, Science & Culture

MARVEL

DJ

NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY
IN QATAR

SANDAG

eagle creek

“This is precisely the time when artists go to work. There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That is how civilizations heal.

I know the world is bruised and bleeding, and though it is important not to ignore its pain, it is also critical to refuse to succumb to its malevolence. Like failure, chaos contains information that can lead to knowledge — even wisdom. Like art.”

—Toni Morrison, from her essay entitled No Place for Self-Pity, No Room

What others have to say...

“Steve is an unignorable business leader. Having known and worked with him over the years, he has always demonstrated an unique ability to lead his team, his peers and his clients. He is a one of the best business advisors I know.”

David C. Baker, Author, Advisor, ReCourses

“Steve has one of the best minds and hearts in the business. He’s a brilliant coach and advisor. Fresh, creative, thoughtful and wholehearted.”

Dorie Clark, Best-Selling Author of *Entrepreneurial You*, Speaker, HBR writer.

“I joined Steve’s Mastermind group at a turning point in my business when I brought on my husband as my full-time business partner. Steve is such a wise and thoughtful mentor who has helped us navigate business challenges. He asks the right questions to help people arrive at solutions without being prescriptive. We’ve adjusted our positioning and processes under Steve’s guidance, and our business revenue has increased as a result. More than just financial outcomes, we’re more productive and happy since we have defined our purpose, mission, and values under Steve’s leadership. I can’t imagine not having Steve in my life as a mentor. He motivates and inspires me to be a better business leader and person.”

Angela Noble, Co-Founder & Design Director, Noble Intent Studio

Services: Mastermind, strategic advisor and consultant.

“Steve has worked with me a close advisor and guide for my businesses. He helps me see through the clutter of my organizational world and get to the heart of what matters. My business and life are better for his thoughtful guidance.”

David Matthew Prior, Executive Coach and Advisor, Columbia University, Harvard University

Services: Strategic advisor and consultant.

“You have a way of getting to the heart & soul of what a company and brand really is. Not just fluff and great marketing words. You are caring, connected and respectful of your clients and what they have built. I often heard you quote that our new brand image would be just a better version of who we are. It goes without saying that you are highly experienced in your field of expertise and a true professional. As a small business owner it can be hard to take a critical look at what you built. Your process and approach allowed us to follow your lead to create an amazing new brand, and a well-formed long term marketing plan.”

Roseann Iovine, Founder & CEO, Outdoor Travel Adventures

Services: Brand evolution program, strategic advisor and consultant.

“I love how Steve infused leadership and artistry into our work. It deepened my skills as a leader and as a creative.”

V. Pomar, Owner, 12-person marketing agency, Seattle

Services: Mastermind, strategic advisor and consultant.

“Steve has the interesting mix of being a laid-back overachiever. He’s always generous with sharing his insights, valuable experience and guidance. The mastermind group was a big benefit for my business.”

R. Dietz, Owner, digital agency, Seattle

Services: Mastermind, strategic advisor and consultant.

“I met Steve after his TEDx talk (The Beautiful Business). What speaks to me is his integrated approach for business and life. As a creative professional, this has always be important. Our work together helped me be better as a leader and as a strategist.”

J. Rasterbaum, Owner, brand strategy firm, Chicago

Services: Mastermind, strategic advisor and consultant.

“We’ve worked together for a year now and that work continues. He’s a trusted advisor that I turn to, to help me and my business grow.”

D. Plekhanov, Owner, motion graphics firm, San Francisco

Services: Mastermind, strategic advisor and consultant.

“He has the mind of a strategist and the heart of an artist. I learn from him in every interaction. He always challenges me to be a better version of myself.”

A. Nohre, president, 6-person design office, Washington, DC

Services: Mastermind, strategic advisor and consultant.

“Steve was the perfect fit for our Growth and Product Track during Temecula Startup Week. We invited Steve to speak on *Brand and Belonging* and how the importance of culture is essential to the growth and scale of an organization. His presentation was considered one of the best and most valued during the conference based on attendee feedback, and on the surface. I saw many of the attendees approach him for additional advice and inquiries regarding his services. Steve is a true artist, teacher, and though provoker. He left our attendees inspired and enthusiastic to take the next step in their business.”

Marlino Bitanga, Organizer, Temecula Start Up Week

Services: Keynote presentation and workshop.

“You have a genuine ability to put people at ease in a room and allow space for people with varying views. This gives our insight and innovation lots of opinions. You’re masterful at group dynamics, with a easy-going manner.”

C.S., Sr. Executive, H.G. Fenton

Services: Workshops, brand and marketing strategy, focus groups.

“Wow! You did great work with me. Thanks in part to you and our hard work together, I’ve pivoted my business into one that makes me more money doing more of what I love to do. Oh, and I got my life back.”

J. Payne, UX agency leader (25+ employees), Cincinnati, OH

Services: Strategic advisor and consultant in cultural engagement programs.