GRIT GUIDE

NO. 03

ONE RED NUMBER ONE CHANGE THIS MONTH

How to Turn One Red Number Into One Change This Month

Featuring Nick Talarico and Eric Knox

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

THE PROBLEM

At the Do it Best Spring Market in Denver in March 2026, the co-op launched a tool that colors a member store’s floor plan. Nick Talarico, Chief Operating Officer of Do it Best Group, described it from the show floor: “So, like green, yellow, red.

Pick one weak spot your numbers show, take it to the person who is paid to help, change one thing and look again on a set date.

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

THE PLAN

7 STEPS

01 FIND THE REPORT YOU ALREADY HAVE

02 READ IT FOR TWO THINGS

03 PICK ONE RED AREA

04 TURN THE NUMBER INTO SOMETHING A PERSON DOES

05 TAKE IT TO THE PERSON WHO IS PAID TO HELP

06 CHANGE ONE THING AND PUT A NAME AND DATES ON IT

07 LOOK AGAIN ON THE DATE YOU SET

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

WORDS TO KNOW

POINT-OF-SALE DATA

The record of what actually sold at the register, item by item. Often shortened to POS data.

PEER SET

The group of comparable stores your numbers are measured against.

TERRITORY SALES MANAGER

The person at a co-op, buying group or supplier assigned to a group of stores, who works with the owners on plans like this one.

TOP LINE SALES

Total sales before any costs come out. The first number on most reports, and the hardest one to act on directly.

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

01

STEP 1 OF 7

FIND THE REPORT YOU ALREADY HAVE

Most stores already get more numbers than anyone reads. Start with one report that compares parts of your business to something else: last year, your budget or similar stores.

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

02

STEP 2 OF 7

READ IT FOR TWO THINGS

Eric Knox, director of LBM sales at Do it Best (LBM is short for lumber and building materials), reads his reports for two things.

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

03

STEP 3 OF 7

PICK ONE RED AREA

Now choose one. Write it as a sentence: “Our [area] is [how far] below [what it is compared to].”

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

04

STEP 4 OF 7

TURN THE NUMBER INTO SOMETHING A PERSON DOES

A red number is a result, and nobody can do a result. People can do the things that produce it. Knox makes the same point about sales goals: “And if the only goal is I want to grow sales, okay, great. How are you gonna do that?”

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

05

STEP 5 OF 7

TAKE IT TO THE PERSON WHO IS PAID TO HELP

Do not work the red area alone. Bring your sentence and your list to your territory sales manager, your rep or whoever explains the report.

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

06

STEP 6 OF 7

CHANGE ONE THING AND PUT A NAME AND DATES ON IT

Write the change down: what it is, who owns it, when it starts and the date you will look at the number again. Give the owner the reason as well as the task.

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

07

STEP 7 OF 7

LOOK AGAIN ON THE DATE YOU SET

On the date, pull the same report and look at the same area. Then decide one of three things: keep the change, adjust it or stop it. Write down what you learned either way.

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

> “I’m generally looking for what categories or what vendors are down the most from a dollar standpoint because I’m losing business.”

Eric Knox (7:59)

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

THE CHECKLIST

CHECKLIST: ONE RED NUMBER, ONE CHANGE

- [ ] I found one report that compares areas of my business to something
- [ ] I know what each color or comparison means
- [ ] I circled the areas down the most in dollars, and the area where we win
- [ ] I picked one red area and wrote it as a sentence
- [ ] I listed two or three changes a person could make this month
- [ ] I took the area to my territory sales manager, rep or the person who explains the report
- [ ] I chose one change and gave it an owner, a start date and a review date
- [ ] On the review date I looked at the same number and decided to keep, adjust or stop

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

OUR TAKE

FIX ONE RED AREA AT A TIME

Stefanie Couch teaches strategy the same way. Find the biggest thing holding the important work back. Remove one constraint at a time. Keep one to three priorities and one clear first move.

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

FINISH LINE

One area of the business picked from a report, one change written down with an owner and two dates, a conversation with the person paid to help, and a second look at the same number on the date you set.

- One area is named in a sentence, with its number.
- One change is written down with an owner, a reason and two dates.
- The person paid to help has seen it and weighed in.
- The second look happened on the date you set, and the decision is written down.

Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint · © 2026 Grit Blueprint · gritguide.com · Educational content, not professional advice.

THE SOURCES

1. Independent Retailers Need Better Data. Do it Best Has The Tools. (Grit Blueprint Podcast, Nick Talarico with host Stefanie Couch) Grit Guide
2. How To Win in 2026: Sales Data, AI, And LinkedIn (Grit Blueprint Podcast, Eric Knox with host Stefanie Couch) Grit Guide

Quotes © their speakers, used with attribution. For educational purposes. General information, not personalized professional advice. AI may assist content creation. Use your judgment, verify information, and consult a qualified professional when needed.

GRIT GUIDE

BY GRIT BLUEPRINT

READ THE FULL GUIDE

gritguide.com/how-to-turn-one-red-number-into-one-change/

© 2026 Grit Guide by Grit Blueprint. gritguide.com. Free to share unchanged, with credit and the link. Not for sale.

For educational purposes. General information, not personalized professional advice. AI may assist content creation. Use your judgment, verify information, and consult a qualified professional when needed.