

Strategic planning is essential for the success of a business because it provides a clear roadmap for achieving your long-term goals and adds clarity and direction in times of uncertainty. This process enables leaders to ensure that everyone in their organization is moving in the same direction in the most effective and efficient way possible. The plan also works as a roadmap for making better-informed decisions, prioritizing initiatives, and allocating resources for sustained growth and profitability.

From knowing what information you need to get started to keeping the momentum going for the entire year, use this checklist to help guide your next strategic planning session and make it your best year yet.



PRE-PLANNING



PLANNING SESSION



AFTER PLANNING

PRE-PLANNING

- Review previous strategic plan and performance
- Gather relevant market research and industry trends
- Identify key stakeholders and involve them in the planning process
- Set clear objectives and goals for the planning session
- Determine the timeline and schedule for the planning process
- Allocate resources and assign responsibilities for planning activities
- Communicate the purpose and expectations of the planning process to all participants
- Prepare materials, agenda, and facilitation tools for planning sessions

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PLANNING SESSION

Who should attend? This can vary based on business needs, organization size, and industry; but ensure that decision makers are present, which typically includes senior leadership, department heads, initiative owners (Tip: It can be helpful to have an experienced, neutral third-party facilitating the planning session(s) to keep agenda focused.)

- Discuss agenda so that everyone is on the same page
- Establish goals with stakeholders in attendance
- Highlight recent wins and successes
- Review key stakeholder feedback, interviews, surveys
- Conduct SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- Prioritize needs for the year based on business impact
- Confirm or set mission, vision, and values
- Define key initiatives using the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) framework
- Discuss and agree upon milestones for initiatives
- Develop SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals and performance expectations, including KPIs
- Build action plan
- Summarize and debrief the day
- Document decisions, action items, and next steps in a platform that offers real-time tracking and updates

AFTER PLANNING

- Create and communicate the strategic plan to all stakeholders
- Establish and assign responsibilities for implementation
- Allocate resources and budget for implementation
- Schedule Accountability Calls
- Monitor progress against goals and KPIs regularly
- Review and adjust the strategic plan as needed based on changing circumstances
- Provide ongoing support and resources to teams working on strategic initiatives
- Celebrate milestones and achievements along the way
- Update and refine the strategic plan annually based on performance and feedback
- Talk about 3-5 year plan

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