THE CEO PLAYBOOK FOR GROWTH

HOW TO CLOSE THE EXECUTION GAP

-Solving The Three Chain Breakers

POWERED BY HOWWE TECHNOLOGIES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE OF GROWTH

Dive into Howwe Technologies' captivating guide, a beacon for modern business mavens eager to master the art of executing strategic initiatives and unlocking rapid growth's enigma.

Venture with us as we decode the complexities many enterprises grapple with: breathing life into strategic blueprints. Discover the magic that bridges visionary concepts like digitization and sustainability into tangible outcomes. It's a dance between pioneering technology for initiative management and a laser-focused growth method.

Journey through a landscape where innovation meets clarity, crafting a seamless, vivid, and transparent pathway to ignite transformative change throughout your enterprise. Let's begin this exhilarating ride!

THE CHALLENGES OF GROWTH AND DRIVING CHANGE

In the swiftly evolving world of business, many companies merely grow at the pace of the market, seldom reaching the growth aspirations they envision. A mere 8% truly surpass their respective market benchmarks. This e-book aims to equip CEOs with valuable insights and actionable recommendations on how to adeptly implement strategic endeavors. By addressing the intricacies of managing growth and ushering in change, we'll guide you in enhancing your chances of outshining the market average.

"Without a strategy, execution is aimless. Without execution, strategy is useless."

- MORRIS CHANG
FORMER CEO & FOUNDER OF TAIWAN SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Morris Chang's poignant observation, "Without a strategy, execution is aimless. Without execution, strategy is useless," encapsulates the intricate interdependence between strategic planning and its actual execution. This symbiotic relationship can be likened to a wheel where the strategy shapes the vision (what we aim to achieve) and execution is the tire that touches the ground, propelling it forward. If either component is missing or flawed, the wheel falters. Both strategy and execution rely on each other: a clear, well-thought-out strategy remains merely a concept if not executed, while even the most meticulous execution can lead to resource wastage if not underpinned by a clear strategy. To maximize organizational success, one must view strategy and execution as two sides of the same coin, each vital in turning vision into reality.

Your company growth is most likely just following the market trend

Market dynamics play a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of business growth. While most companies draft their strategies to capitalize on prevailing growth trends, it is essential to acknowledge that these trends are susceptible to macroeconomic shifts. For instance, the onset of increased inflation and economic downturns can drastically change market conditions. As consumer purchasing power diminishes during inflation, demand often reduces, leading to a deceleration in sales. Additionally, during economic recessions, consumers tend to prioritize essential spending, cutting back on discretionary expenses. This behavior directly impacts businesses, causing them to experience diminished growth rates. For businesses, this underlines the importance of flexibility in strategy and the need to be adaptive.

Increased Pressure on CEOs to Deliver on Their Strategies

In today's fast-paced business environment, the role of a CEO is more challenging than ever. While the core responsibility remains the same – driving the company towards success – the ways they are held accountable have evolved. As the primary decision-maker, a CEO's performance is intrinsically linked to the company's results. When businesses are thriving and producing robust figures, board members often adopt a more laissez-faire attitude, entrusting the CEO to continue on the charted course without micromanagement. However, any sign of stagnation or decline flips this dynamic. The board, responsible for stakeholders and keen to ensure the company's well-being, intensifies its oversight. This increased scrutiny manifests in requests for detailed breakdowns of the company's direction, priority setting, and tangible steps being taken for improvements. Moreover, boards are no longer content with just plans; they demand regular updates showcasing tangible progress. This change in board dynamics emphasizes the need for CEOs to not just strategize but also to ensure that these strategies are actionable, measurable, and communicated effectively to all stakeholders.

THE NEED FOR CHANGE OUTSIDE BUSINESS-AS-USUAL

The CEOs Challenge of Monitoring Progress

The role of CEOs is to create and report progress on initiatives designed to drive change and improvement. In most companies, gathering the necessary data to show progress is a significant task. Organizations often work with multiple systems for different departments, with each department and manager using a system tailored to their specific needs.

Limitations of Operational Department-Specific Systems to Effectively Steer on Lead Measures

Departmental tools, like CRM and accounting software, are designed for daily tasks and monitoring KPIs. They measure routine output, not strategic growth.

CEOs aren't just tasked with maintaining current operations; they're charged with spearheading new growth through strategic initiatives. Yet, many firms lack systems that support these strategic efforts.

Traditional applications from the past decade don't address the CEO's strategic challenges or accelerate enterprise execution. Strategic changes might include entering new markets, launching products, or tackling crucial projects.

Without a CEO-centric digital tool used organization-wide, there's a significant delay, often years, from recognizing a disruption to executing a strategic change. This delay is a luxury most companies cannot afford.

Unlocking CEO Potential In The Digital Age: The Missing Piece Of The Digitalization Puzzle

In today's complex business landscape, CEOs face an urgent need for digital tools that align organizational strategy and ensure effective execution. These tools must promote clarity and prioritize essential tasks, facilitating rapid decision-making and adaptation. They should also offer features that boost team engagement and maintain focus on the bigger picture. Simplicity and user-friendliness are crucial, as complex tools risk becoming obstacles rather than aids. CEOs have the unique responsibility of overseeing cross-functional improvements and driving progress. It's vital for them to select systems that empower effective leadership, keeping the broader strategic goals in sight.

The trend is clear: tools that offer clarity, alignment, and simplicity are the future, and CEOs must adapt to remain efficient and visionary.

DO YOU AS THE CEO HAVE A DEDICATED SOFTWARE THAT ENABLES YOU TO FOCUS AND ACCELERATE THE WHOLE ORGANIZATION ON WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT FOR YOU?

Actually, most CEOs don't and as a result they have an average 52% likelihood of succeeding with their business plan in the next 12 months – Basically, it's a flip of a coin if your business critical goals are met!

DRIVING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES: THE DUAL ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

The Distinctive Leadership for Strategic Growth

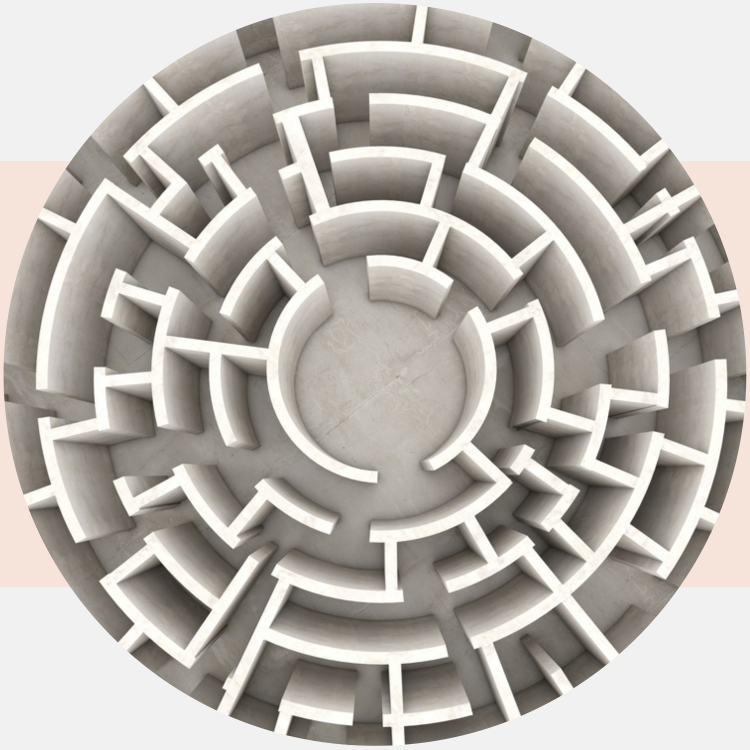
Strategic initiatives demand a distinct leadership style. While operational tasks may allow for reactivity, steering change and fostering new growth require CEOs to be proactive. Effective leadership is the linchpin for initiating and propelling transformative company strategies.

Strategy Creation vs. Strategy Implementation

At the heart of strategic leadership lies an essential dichotomy: the formulation of strategy versus its execution. These are two sides of the same coin, each requiring its set of skills.

- **Formulating Strategy:** This is the realm of vision and foresight, where leaders anticipate the broader business landscape and set the company's direction.
- **Executing Strategy**: Here, the focus shifts to the finer details – mobilizing teams, making granular decisions, and ensuring the strategic vision comes to fruition.

In the business leadership journey, the strategist and the implementer are indispensable to each other. Their collaboration bridges the gap between strategic intent and realized outcomes, forming what we term the 'strategy execution loop'. We'll delve deeper into this concept later, but for now, understand that it's at this intersection that strategies truly come alive.



7 Key Principles for Driving Strategic Initiatives

To navigate change and growth, leaders need new tools and approaches. The leadership required for strategic initiatives is not just about directing but inspiring, not just managing but transforming. As organizations embark on new strategic paths, these principles serve as a compass, guiding them towards success.

TO FORMULATE THE STRATEGY

1. Clear and Prioritized Initiatives

The strategic landscape is often littered with numerous potential paths. To achieve success, leaders must possess a razor-sharp clarity on the initiatives that resonate most with the organization's goals. This means being decisive, setting clear objectives, and ensuring that the chosen initiatives align with the company's broader vision.

2. Leap Logic, Big Potential

In the strategic realm, incremental gains often don't suffice. Leaders need to identify opportunities that promise quantum leaps for the organization. These aren't just minor adjustments but major shifts that can redefine the company's trajectory. It's about seeing beyond the immediate horizon and envisioning what transformative growth might look like.

TO EXECUTE THE STRATEGY

3. Leverage the Management Team

The management team serves as the linchpin between strategy and execution. Ensuring that they are fully on board and equipped to drive initiatives is crucial. Their involvement signifies the importance of the strategic shift and encourages the wider team to rally behind the cause.

4. Lead Change

The process of change is uncomfortable, and more often than not, faced with resistance. The leadership's responsibility is not just to manage this change but to champion it. By staying ahead of the curve, anticipating obstacles, and guiding teams through turbulent times, leaders can ensure a smoother transition.

5. Steer Top-Down

While collaborative input is valuable, strategic initiatives often require a top-down approach. The larger vision needs to be set at the top, ensuring that the entire organization aligns with this directive. It's about blending vision with action and ensuring that the two are in perfect harmony.

6. Pressure Proactivity

Reactive leadership is outdated in strategic planning. Leaders should anticipate challenges, innovate, and lead confidently. It's vital they don't just follow but actively guide the process. With the right tools, this becomes easy.

7. New Behaviors: Leaders are your Biggest Asset, Invest in Them

The most potent signal of change often comes from the actions of leaders. When they embody the change they wish to see, it creates a ripple effect throughout the organization. By adopting new behaviors, leaders can catalyze a shift in the organizational culture, making it more adaptable, resilient, and forward-thinking.

CHALLENGES IN MONITORING PROGRESS

A significant challenge for many is monitoring progress, and the critical question is,

> *How is it going?*

Management teams spend a great deal of time trying to answer this question instead of focusing on value creation. They waste time chasing information when they would rather spend it guiding the organization regarding future plans and addressing blockers, problems, or risks. This is due to a few common pitfalls.

- **Resolution Imbalance:**
  - Struggle with either insufficient or excessive information.
  - Insufficient info hides risks and delays; excessive info includes irrelevant details.
- **Bias in Reporting:**
  - Reports often highlight successes over failures.
  - Multiple managerial layers may "polish" reports, causing discrepancies in accuracy.
- **Timeliness Issues:**
  - Reports often late or misplaced.
  - Results in frustration, inadequate information, and waste of organizational time.

STOP SPENDING TIME ON ANALYZING THE PAST AND START LOOKING FORWARD INSTEAD!

By understanding the unique challenges and requirements of executing strategic initiatives, CEOs are better equipped to drive growth and change more effectively. By adopting a proactive, top-down approach to leadership and fostering a culture of change, CEOs improve the odds that their organizations remain competitive and outperform the market.

Howwe is the Solution for Growth.
The method and software simplify the execution of strategic initiatives. The next chapter will take you through each disciplines of the proven growth method.

YOUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

A HIGH-VALUE METHOD FOR SUCCESS IN STRATEGIC EXECUTION

This chapter outlines the four disciplines of the Howwe Method. Combined with Howwe software, they simplify strategy execution and enhance financial results. The disciplines are interconnected, necessary for bridging the gap between strategy and execution, reducing the 80% failure rate in meeting strategic initiatives on time.

MOST IMPORTANT GOALS

First we prioritize our Most Important Goals. This is WHAT we want to achieve.

The first step is to differentiate between where you are today and where your strategy says you want to be, including your trend. This difference should be the basis for your most important goal. As a management team and CEO, you must establish this foundation before proceeding to individual functions.

To succeed within this discipline, having the ability to prioritize what is most important and communicating it clearly is key.

THE DEFINITION OF A MOST IMPORTANT GOAL (MIG)

MIGs represent a select set of pivotal goals derived from the business plan, deemed most crucial for enhancement, typically focused around revenue and profit.

'Focus on less to achieve more' is a guiding principle. In practice, this means each team commits to no more than 2-3 MIGs.

Quantifiability is key. MIGs are designed to be measurable, preferably on a monthly basis, adhering to the principles of SMART goals.

Moving top-down, teams identify their own Most Important Goals (MIGs) and align them to the team directly above their own, reinforcing the strategic direction while ensuring that team MIGs can be influenced.

COMPANY INITIATIVES

We enable our identified Most Important Goals through our Company Initiatives. This is HOW we aim to achieve our goals, the enablers.

Prioritize & Align on What We Need to Do

This second step is to consider which initiatives are essential for achieving the desired growth (MIGs). Strategic initiatives are typically cross-functional and involve "bigger bets."

Define:

- Identify the 3-6 company initiatives that will enable you to reach your Most Important Goals
- Give each a Purpose and Objective: Why is this initiative important, and what do you hope to achieve with it?
- Each initiative has an owner and which teams are expected to contribute
- Then, break it down into Sub-initiatives: These are smaller, more specific projects within the main initiative.
- Identify which teams or departments will be in charge of carrying out each sub-initiative.

THE DEFINITION OF COMPANY INITIATIVES

Number of Company Initiatives: Typically, you'd have about 3-6 initiatives supporting your set of 2-3 MIG.

Financial Potential: When you add up the potential of all these initiatives, they should help close the financial gaps between your current trend and your strategic budget.

"Company initiatives often feel like they are on top of what one is expected to do operationally. Therefore, it is very important to break this down clearly and, above all, free up time through a structured meeting approach that involves both reflection on past actions and planning for the future."

-Johan Magnusson, Group CEO at Kährs Group in CEO Forum

KEY ACTIVITIES

We focus our effort in our Key Activities. This is WHAT we do.

Breaking down the Most Important Goals and Company Initiatives into Key Activities is when you put your execution into action. Let each team identify the proactive Key Activities that will help them focus on strategical progress on a weekly basis. The real key to achieving goals is to not get caught up in measuring the outcome, to instead focus on the actions – the critical activities that push the goals forward.

These are the things you can control and will determine whether you succeed or not. Do not make the mistake of categorizing what is already being done.

THE DEFINITION OF A KEY ACTIVITY

Key Activities are the few impactful activities the team needs to focus on to make progress on reaching their most important goals, or to contribute to one or more company Initiatives.
It's based on the principle that a small number of activities will drive the majority of your results. It's essential to identify these high-leverage activities and focus your efforts there.

Define:
- Owner/s
- Definition of Done: specifies the standards that need to be achieved for the activity to be marked as completed.
- Weekly Numeric Goal or Deadline: This component sets the rhythm. It quantifies the amount of the Key Activity required weekly to significantly influence the Most Important Goal.

STRATEGY STAND-UPS

Strategy Stand-ups are where you create a relentless rhythm of execution. This focus is what shortens the timeline from decision to financial results.

Human nature often draws us towards distractions rather than our true priorities. To counteract this, Strategy Stand-Ups are concise weekly gatherings designed to ensure unwavering focus on the Key Activities needed to reach our most critical goals. These meetings not only maintain commitment but also visualize everyone's progress and contribution. Moreover, they are instrumental in assisting leaders to amplify engagement and accountability towards achieving pivotal progress.

THE DEFINITION OF STRATEGY STAND-UPS

Strategy Stand-Ups are a laser-focused weekly meeting, the only gathering where every team in the company sets aside their operational tasks and zeroes in on driving progress towards the Most Important Goals and Company Initiatives. By steering teams away from the common "whirlwind" of daily tasks and urgencies, these meetings amplify engagement, alignment, and accountability while showcasing each member's progress and contributions.

With a strict agenda, teams review accomplishments, plan forthcoming tasks, and make commitments, turning mere intentions into solid promises. These stand-ups are the heartbeat of relentless execution. Their consistent focus accelerates the journey from decision-making to tangible financial results.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

Ultimately the four disciplines in the Howwe Method accelerate your financial results. Your reward for closing the strategy execution loop.

All of our customers have a Return on Investment of 8-25 times in the first 12 months through heavily accelerated financial improvement.

THE THREE CHAIN BREAKERS

In our exploration of the Howwe Method, we've established that the four disciplines form an interconnected chain. Closing this loop is vital to achieving the strategic goals on time and, consequently, the desired financial outcomes.

However, there are three common ‘chain breakers’ that often compromise the synergy between these disciplines. In this chapter, we'll delve into each of these chain breakers and offer insights on circumventing them.

1 Lost in translation

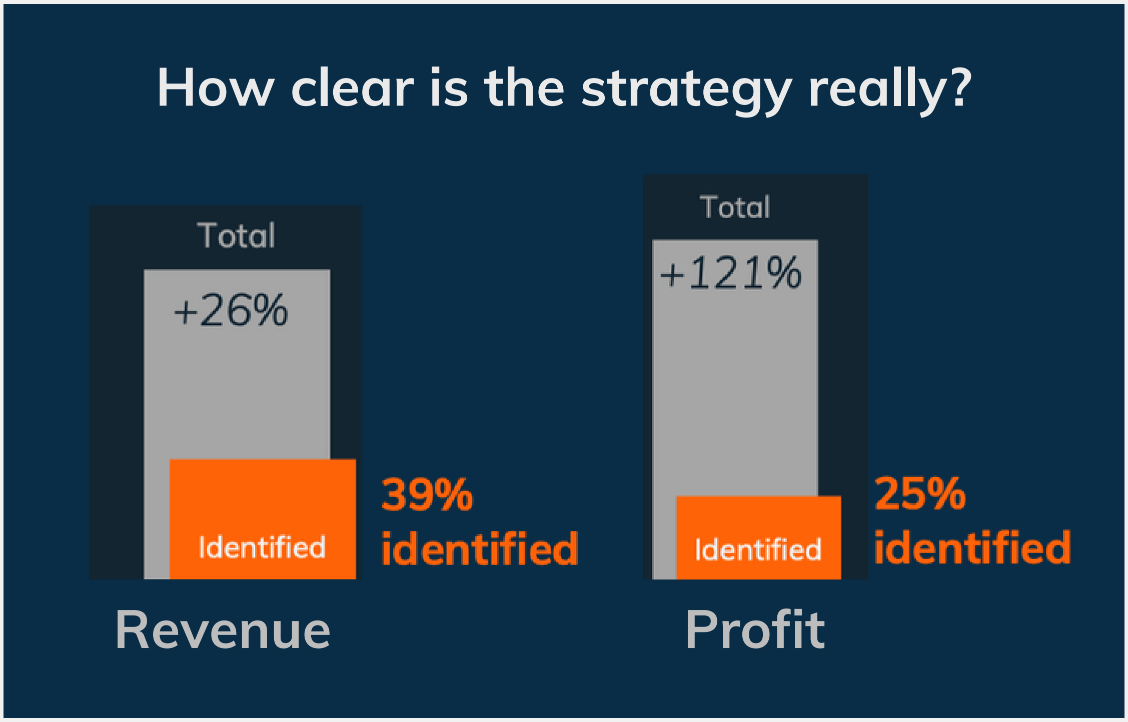
The Pitfalls of Premature Handover

A strategy that is not fully refined before it is handed over to the organisation will inevitably lead to its downfall.

A strategy needs to be clearly defined by management before implementation to drive organizational growth and avoid failure. Essential growth initiatives, such as entering new markets or digitization, should be clear and prioritized.

In a recent study using Howwe Technologies' Assessment™, which analyzed strategy clarity among 200+ CEOs, a stark contrast emerged between CEO perceptions and the reality of their strategic plans. While CEOs stated they had clear strategies aiming for a 26% growth, the initiatives they identified only accounted for 39% of this target. Similarly, for their ambitious goal of increasing profitability by 121%, the mapped out initiatives covered just 25% of this aspiration.

This highlights a significant gap in CEOs' understanding of their strategy clarity. Without comprehensively defined and measurable initiatives, achieving these ambitious growth and profitability goals becomes highly challenging.



RISKS OF OVERESTIMATING STRATEGY CLARITY

Overestimating strategy clarity poses significant risks, often leading to underutilization of organizational resources and potential. A study by MIT highlights this issue, showing a clear disconnect between leadership intentions and employee understanding of strategic priorities.

Leaders struggle to focus on the core priorities of the strategy and to complete them in time.

Employees don't know what to focus on, yet 82% want to contribute.

PERCENTAGE THAT KNOW THEIR COMPANY'S TOP THREE CORE PRIORITIES.
MIT– No one knows your strategy - Not even your top leaders

Responsibility for clear strategy communication lies firmly with the CEO and management team. A lack of clarity at the management level can quickly lead to confusion, preventing employees from contributing effectively to strategic initiatives that drive profitability and growth.

"The result of bad communication is a disconnection between strategy and execution."
- Chuck Martin, former Vice President, IBM

HOW ALIGNMENT IS ACHIEVED:
A TOP-DOWN VS. BOTTOM-UP APPROACH?

Misalignment occur due to the company's anchoring logic, which is either top-down or bottom-up.

Top-Down

- Focused on what can truly make a difference (future)
- Enables cross-functional synergies
- Requires consensus in Management Team
- Anchoring requires more clarity

Bottom-Up

- Easily anchored in the organization
- Functional business plans are aggregated
- Less total potential (here and now)
- More initiatives with lower alignment

With a bottom-up approach, the captured value is often low. When asking departments for their plans for the upcoming year, this broad approach results in long lists of ambitious initiatives and projects from each functional area. As the process nears completion, these lists are aggregated and prioritized into a smaller number of company-wide initiatives. The problem is that the most likely captured value is an improvement of existing operations based on the current operational reality. This is why companies generally continue on their trend of organic improvement. While 84% say they have a clear strategy, the reality is that many companies are not being specific enough about their initiatives and goals to drive significant change. The challenge lies in achieving a balance between the top-down and bottom-up approaches, identifying the high-potential initiatives and anchoring them in the organization to create a meaningful impact on growth and profitability.

To ensure strategy clarity and effective execution, CEOs should:

1. Start from the top: Focus on big-picture, transformative initiatives that will push you forward.
2. Keep it real: Always consider your team’s day-to-day operations when planning strategies.
3. Talk it out: Regularly communicate your strategy to make sure everyone’s on the same page.
4. Keep track: Regularly review and adjust your strategies, and hold leaders accountable for delivering results.
5. Stay open to change: Foster a work culture where new ideas for improvement and growth are always welcome.

USING HOWWE SIMPLIFIES ALL ASPECTS OF THE EXECUTION PROCESS

"Building a visionary company requires one percent vision and 99 percent alignment."

- Jim Collins & Jerry Porras in their book Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies

INSIGHTS: HOW TO AVOID THE 1ST CHAIN BREAKER

1. Prioritize & align on what you need to do as a company
Identify 3-6 Company Initiatives and make sure there is consensus and priority in the Management Team. Together, the initiatives have enough financial potential to gap-fill trend vs. budget. Clearly define the purpose and objective of each initiative. Also, break these down into sub-initiatives to increase clarity and secure organizational support.

2. Your Ownership is Key
Delegate a vague direction, receive vague results.

3. Self-awareness is Crucial
Overvaluing personal clarity can lead to organizational confusion.

4. Communication Bridges the Gap
The result of bad communication is a disconnection between strategy and execution.

2 The Strategy Orphan

- the risk of treating planning as someone else's problem

In the modern business landscape, the "strategy orphan" dilemma arises from a combination of factors. Engulfed in daily urgencies, leaders often neglect strategic priorities. Compounding this, a notable lack of strategic planning training exists, causing strategy to be perceived as daunting. Misguided delegation can lead to responsibility voids, and there's a tendency to accept 'good enough' over excellence. This chapter delves into these challenges, offering insights to remedy them.

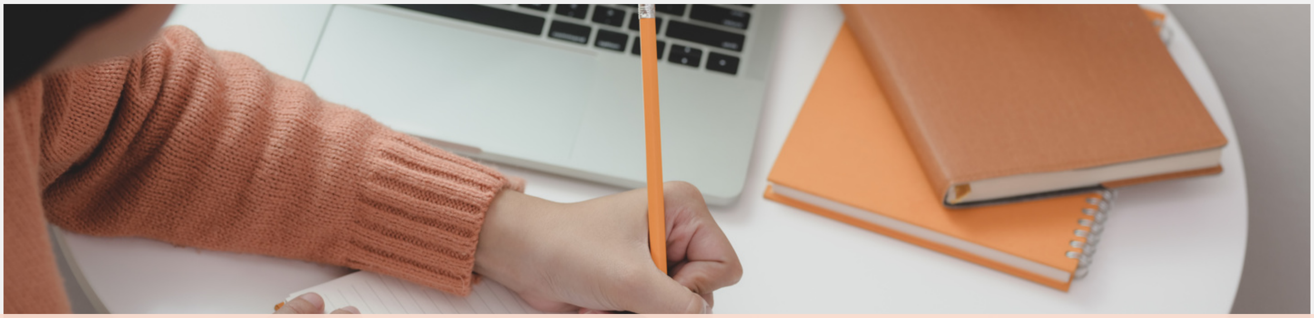
Premature Delegation

The "Strategy Orphan" denotes the peril of relegating planning and strategy as someone else's responsibility, a concerning trend in today's fast-paced corporate environment. The harrowing tempo of the business world often leaves strategies neglected, resembling forgotten orphans, despite their significance. This occurs when senior leaders, blinded by their broad visions, lean heavily on delegation, unintentionally overlooking the intricate details crucial to the strategy.

Lack of Critical Evaluation

A startling research revelation by Garratt is that 90% of directors and vice presidents lack formal training in strategic thinking. This deficiency becomes glaringly evident when they encounter detailed plans and might not spend enough time critically evaluating them. A cursory examination of these strategic blueprints deprives them of understanding the intricate choices embedded within, leading to settling for the status quo instead of aiming for excellence. Consequently, organizations lose out on the full potential of their strategic plans.

Successful organizations, on the other hand, immerse themselves in strategic tasks, thereby nurturing a culture pulsating with innovation and forward momentum. Such dedicated focus on strategy, if embraced, promises a brighter, more directed future for businesses.



"STRATEGY EXECUTION ISN'T SOMETHING OTHER PEOPLE SHOULD WORRY ABOUT WHILE YOU ARE DOING SOMETHING FAR MORE IMPORTANT."

- JEROEN DE FLANDER, DUTCH EXPERT ON STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

FIVE WAYS TO GO FROM GOOD TO GREAT IN STRATEGY EXECUTION

1. Adoption of Strategy Execution

Managers are at the heart of strategy execution. Their active participation, keen understanding, and decision-making skills are pivotal. Drawing inspiration from Peter Drucker, American economist and pioneer of modern management theory, it's not only about performing tasks correctly but also about concentrating on the most significant tasks, which undoubtedly include strategy execution. Invest more in the correct training of your managers.

2. Fostering Alignment and Speed of Execution

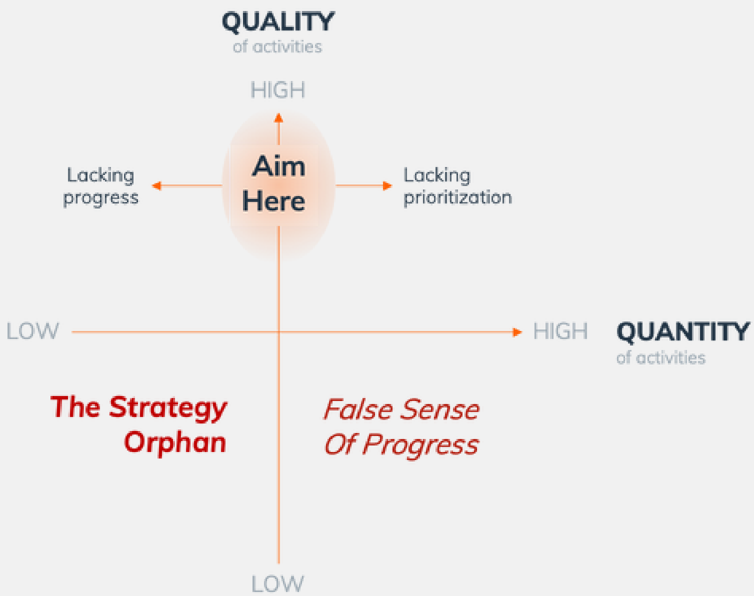
A hands-off approach to strategic planning can lead to confusion and sluggishness in execution. It's vital for managers to create a harmonious link between strategy and action, ensuring the organization operates in tandem and with purpose. Don't be afraid to immerse yourself in the details, at least of what's most important, and don't hesitate to steer top-down when needed.

3. Cultivating Concrete Planning

A well-structured and organized approach is the bedrock of any successful strategy. Managers should champion the development of concise yet overarching plans. This involves focusing on pivotal goals and initiatives annually, outlining milestones for each initiative quarterly, and empowering teams to strategize monthly activities accordingly. The annual planning wheel on page 34 will get you there.

4. Nurturing Quality Over Quantity

Instead of settling for 'good enough', managers should be the advocates for excellence in planning and execution. It's about aspiring for unparalleled quality in strategic thinking, resisting the temptation to accept the merely 'good'.



5. Overcoming the Whirlwind

For companies not adhering to Strategy Stand-Ups, it's all too easy to become engrossed in daily operations and lose sight of overarching objectives. Managers must carve out dedicated time for strategic planning. As Drucker aptly said, efficiency is moot if we're efficient at the wrong things. The emphasis should be on prioritizing the most beneficial tasks.

In strategizing, it's crucial to balance both the quality and quantity of activities. The quadrant illustrates four zones: 'The Strategy Orphan' signifies minimal strategic effort with low quality and quantity; 'False Sense of Progress' shows numerous activities, but of poor value. Ideally, aim for the middle-top, combining optimal quality with a feasible number of activities, ensuring genuine progress without losing focus.

"The important thing is that there is a methodology and structure to both look forward, check the current situation and alignment, and at the same time take experiences from what we have done. That is when we elevate the organization from good to great."

-Mattias Lindhe, CEO at Orbit One AB in CEO Forum

INSIGHTS: HOW TO AVOID THE 2ND CHAIN BREAKER

Standard of Excellence - What Good Looks Like

Choose your planning horizon. Start at where you need to end up and plan backwards. Focus on the big stuff, the milestones. Per initiative you own, ask the question:
“What do we need to accomplish for each period to ensure that the initiative impacts our final goal enough?”. How to make it happen:

- **Looking Forward - Quarterly**

Review and approve upcoming milestones for each initiative, making amendments where necessary, and bringing in initiative owners for discussions if required.

- **Looking Back - Monthly**

Assess progress towards milestones, engage in dialogue over delayed milestones, and take corrective action where needed.

- **Weekly Commitments & Follow-up (15 minutes)**

The weekly Strategy Stand-Ups help every team to stay on course. Facilitate focused discussions on Key Activities essential for achieving critical goals, maintaining a consistent commitment and visualizing collective progress and contributions. These gatherings are pivotal, empowering leaders to enhance engagement and accountability in navigating towards essential objectives.

3 The Silent Saboteur

The Risks When Autonomy Overshadows Accountability

In the journey of executing a strategy, we often come across what we term the "Silent Saboteur." It's a subtle hindrance, making strategy adoption more tedious than it needs to be.

Consider your team being so busy with daily operations that they lose sight of the broader strategic goals. It's like being in a fog, where everything close up is clear, but the distant landmarks are hard to see. For leaders, the challenge is to shine a guiding light through this fog, ensuring everyone remains on the right path.

However, sometimes the hindrance isn't just about being too engrossed in daily tasks. There are moments when some team members seem to be on board with a new strategy but, in reality, are hesitating to adopt it. They might ask numerous questions or claim to be tied up with other tasks. It's a form of passive resistance—hard to pinpoint but essential to address.

Lastly, while engaging everyone's input is valuable, there are times when the usual approach can be too slow, especially during significant shifts or disruptions. Leaders must then identify when to switch gears, ensuring that strategy is not just planned but executed timely.

Understanding the "Silent Saboteur" is about recognizing these nuances. It's about ensuring that while we value autonomy, it doesn't overshadow the equally important aspect of accountability.

"CHANGE IS HARD BECAUSE PEOPLE OVERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF WHAT THEY HAVE AND UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF WHAT THEY MAY GAIN BY GIVING THAT UP"

-JAMES A. BELASCO & RALPH STAYER
AUTHORS OF SOARING TO EXCELLENCE

PATTERNS FROM THE TOP (SENIOR MANAGEMENT)

Lost in Illusions, Diluted Direction, and Ignored Realities? Navigating Senior Management's Challenges.

The Autonomy Illusion

Senior managers might have an overly optimistic view of how autonomy is being received and implemented by their teams. They might assume that autonomy automatically leads to innovation and productivity, without realizing the need for guidance, oversight, and accountability.

The Consensus Trap

Senior managers might put too much emphasis on consensus, trying to please everyone and avoid conflict. This can lead to watered-down strategies that lack focus and direction, slowing down decision-making and execution.

Ignoring the Elephant in the Room

Senior managers might avoid addressing major issues or changes in the business environment, hoping they will resolve themselves. This can lead to a lack of preparedness and slow response to market changes.

PATTERNS FROM THE RECEIVING END (FRONT-LINE MANAGERS AND TEAMS)

Narrowed Vision, Drowned Priorities, and Skill Gaps: Overcoming Front-Line Challenges in Managerial Alignment.

The short-term smoke-screen

Front-line managers and teams might focus too much on short-term tasks and goals, losing sight of the bigger picture. This can lead to suboptimal long-term results and misalignment with strategic objectives.

The "Wait-and-See" Spectator

Front-line managers and teams might adopt a passive stance when change is introduced from above, choosing to remain distant observers in hopes that the new directive fades away. This attitude can hinder strategic momentum and prolong the inertia of the status quo.

The Distracting Whirlwind

Front-line managers and teams might get caught up in their personal whirlwind of daily tasks, failing to prioritize strategic initiatives. This can slow down execution and lead to a lack of progress on important objectives.

Lack of Skill and Understanding

Front-line managers and teams might lack the necessary skills and understanding to effectively implement strategic initiatives. This can lead to poor execution, mistakes, and misalignment.

"Working systematically on initiatives and reviewing them monthly in our management team meetings allows us to identify shortcomings early on. These shortcomings might be because we either lack resources, don't have a shared perspective, or both. Yet, with Howwe, we discover issues sooner."

-Klas Franzen, CEO at IKEA Industry Hultsfred in CEO Forum

INSIGHTS: HOW TO AVOID THE THIRD CHAIN BREAKER

Streamlining Steering with The Yearly Governance Wheel counters silent sabotage and resistance, ensuring leaders set clear expectations, preventing a focus loss in short-term tasks, and fostering organizational alignment for accelerated strategy execution.

The Yearly Governance Wheel:

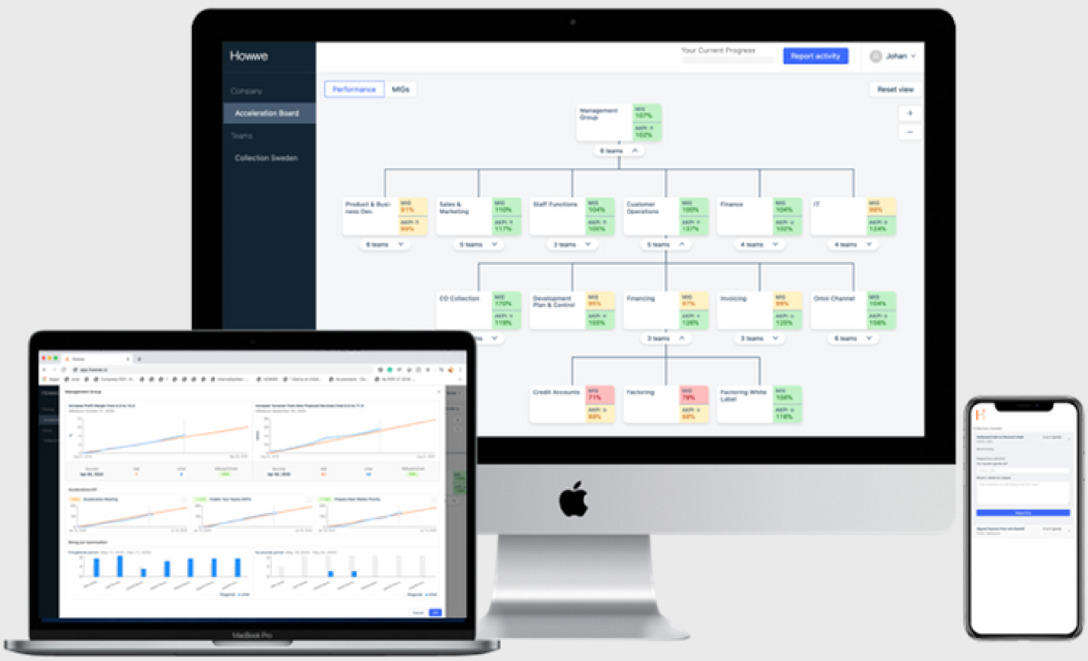
1. Budget Process (September/October of the Previous Year): Start by discussing essential investments and outlining the Most Important Goals for the forthcoming year.
2. Initiative Planning (October/November): Translate broader objectives into actionable steps. Evaluate the relevance of ongoing initiatives, ensure they align with Most Important Goals (MIGs), and detail sub-initiatives while emphasizing strategic communication.
3. Team Preparations for the Upcoming Year (Mid-November to Mid-December): Anchor new MIGs and initiatives, formulating MIGs across organizational levels and planning Milestones. Each team sets the date for the first Strategy Stand-Up to ensure a proactive start to the new year.

Initiative Steering Governance Structure:

1. Milestones Deep Dive (Quarterly): A proactive planning session led by the CEO that reviews initiatives, evaluates milestones, and hold teams accountable. It emphasizes strategic interventions to support segments of the organization facing challenges.
2. Initiative Focused Strategy Stand-Ups (Monthly): An evaluation of the organization's monthly progress, it reviews performance, addresses challenges, and adopts an action-oriented approach. This meeting ensures that while the broader organization is focused on execution, the management team remains strategically engaged.

Learn more about the Yearly Governance Wheel in this video

BY SIMPLIFYING THE GROWTH JOURNEY, HOWWE IS HERE TO REDEFINE STRATEGY EXECUTION



Execution with next generation technology

Imagine executing every strategy as effortlessly as following a recipe. Howwe transforms complex growth strategies into clear, actionable steps for everyone, from the boardroom to the breakroom.

Just as GPS navigates us through unknown paths, Howwe acts as your business's digital roadmap. Merging a time-tested growth method with a user-friendly platform, it steers companies through corporate growth, reshaping how they operate.

Our mission is clear: bridge the strategy-execution gap with clarity and foresight. No more missed targets or deadlines. Envision a synchronized company, unified by best practices and empowered by digital precision. Amidst market upheavals, Howwe stands firm, enabling businesses to not just adapt but proactively excel.

In an era of endless data, Howwe simplifies growth. It's beyond digitalization—it's a pledge to clarity, ease, and unified progress.

Howwe is the Solution for Growth. With our method and software, we simplify the execution of your strategy.

LET'S TALK

Howwe®

SIMPLIFYING GROWTH

Learn more

[CEO Forum](#) | [Other E-Books](#) | [Howwe.io](#)