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# IDEABRIDGE



The IdeaBridge White Paper Series:  
Strategic Planning Outline:  
Short Version

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## STRATEGIC PLANNING OUTLINE: SHORT VERSION

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### Summary

The quicker a Strategic Plan is developed, usually the simpler and easier it will be to execute. Keep the plan simple and don't get too many people involved in the initial phases, it will just slow down your progress.

The best strategic plans tend to be simple and focused. Most, however, simply gather dust because they are overly complex and theoretical. When developing your plan, keep these major points in mind:

1. The plan must be S-I-M-P-L-E! It is unlikely that you will be personally executing the plan. Most often, strategic initiatives must be executed by the employees, and it's rare that employees will share your same level of passion, determination, stamina or drive. Therefore, the acid test of your initiatives should be the following question; "Can employees of average intellect and drive effectively execute this plan in the allocated timelines and budget?" If not, then your plan should be revised.
2. It must be quick to complete: Don't get too many people involved, as this will only draw-out the process and water-down the message.
3. The Plan must be designed to lead to tangible, measurable results within six to eight weeks.

### The strategic positioning of your company can be divided into the following core components:

- Your Corporate Philosophy
- Your Mission Statement
- Your Strategic Message: Your Concept and why you are different.
- Major Strategic Objectives
- Critical Milestones with deadlines, accountabilities and action plans

### The Corporate Philosophy

Your corporate philosophy expresses the underlying purpose for motivating executives, managers and staff to pursue your specific business objectives. Why should they go the extra mile to help you build your wealth? If you can't answer that question, don't count on your employees to execute the plan.

### The Mission Statement

The mission statement defines the desired *future* of the company, and the company's efforts and activities in broad terms. Designed primarily for internal use, it should be lofty and goal oriented. But keep it to just a few sentences. Think about what could be possible five to ten years down the road. Describe what the place looks like when you're finished building it the way you want it to be. It's healthy to put a stretch goal out there, but do a reality check first.



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### **The Strategic Message/Your Concept**

Your Concept conveys to your prospects the essence of your business proposition, your mission statement and your strategy. It's a visual expression of a distinct, unique and visible market position, and is communicated to prospects in your unique offer, in your slogan, your positioning, your tag line, your sales reps, the way your people answer the phone, etc. It serves as a guidepost for everyone in the company. Take FedEx's: "Absolutely, positively overnight. Guaranteed." This says it all in a few words and *everyone* gets it. Visual and other marketing materials should buttress your tag line, concept and unique selling proposition.

### **Major Objectives**

What are the major objectives you must achieve in order to reach your strategic objectives? Major objectives should pertain to the biggest drivers, the 80/20 Rule. These are often best thought of as "The Big Chunks" of the overall project. In order to ensure that your major objectives will work in a strategic plan, make sure they are goals which are: obtainable, measurable and profitable.

### **Targeted Milestones**

These relate to the activities needed to create short term results in the company within a period of 6 – 8 weeks. The short fuse on the deadlines acts as a call to action and forces you to select those objectives that will start building momentum. Think of the milestones as all the interim objectives between the Big Chunks. It's most effective to link the Major Objectives and the Milestones into a Detailed Action Plan and Timeline, complete with accountabilities.