

# Strategic Business Planning



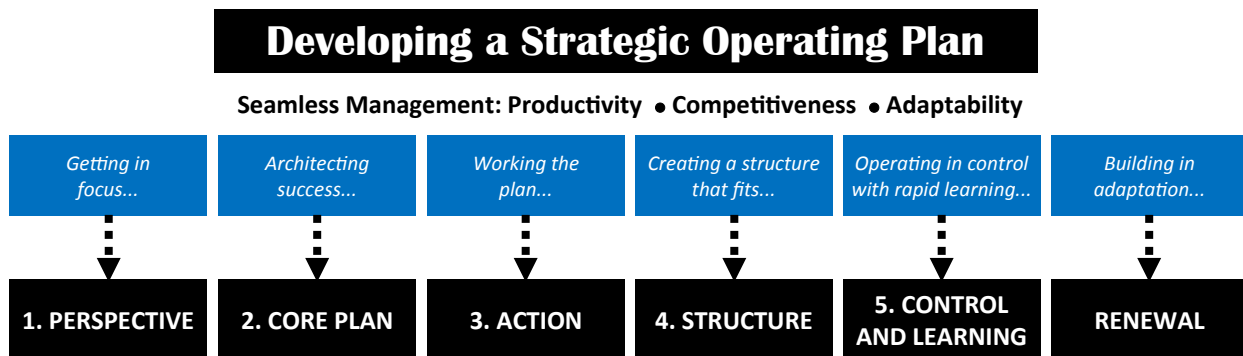
Management teams are under intense pressure to focus and organize for the greatest return on investment. Even top producers throughout the financial industry are struggling to figure out their one-, three- and five-year plans, as well as how to measure their business. That is why Communicate to Connect is offering the most comprehensive and in-depth strategic approach toward business operating plans available anywhere. Nothing else in the industry approaches the depth and scope of what we're offering.

Our president, Steve Craver, spent several years learning a strategic business planning process from Tom Paterson, who is considered the greatest practitioner of business process of the last fifty years.

For thirty-five years Paterson worked alongside Peter Drucker and is known as the *process practitioner* while Drucker is referred to as the *business theorist*. Paterson spent several years in corporate planning with companies like RCA, IBM and Douglas Aircraft before striking out on his own. His credits include filing the first patent for

the ATM machine, being the lead inventor of the DVD, and working on the Lunar Lander for the Apollo project.

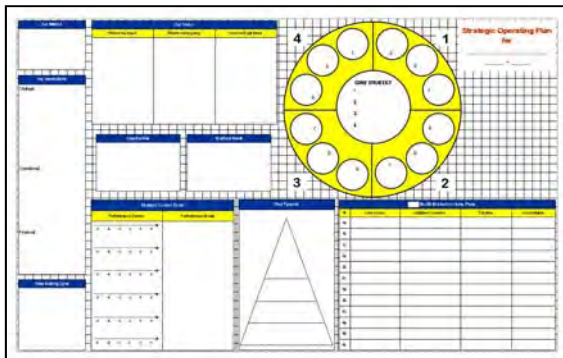
Steve Craver became a certified strategic business facilitator so Communicate to Connect could work with our clients to help them develop strategic operating plans. What is most impressive about Strategic Business Planning is the fact that it results in truly business changing, paradigm shifts in the approaches companies and teams take to their work. There are six major steps to developing a strategic operating plan.



Strategic Business Planning is a strategic operating planning process that guides a company in the design and installation of a balanced business plan in just three days. Once the plan is installed, leaders are equipped to systematically manage the company's core issues by managing the whole of the organization rather than its parts. *Managing the whole* means:

- Managing for the *tomorrow* we want *today*. *Tomorrow* (the *strategic*) can only be managed *today*.
- Managing for the *today* we want *today*. *Today* (the *operational*) can only be managed *today*.
- Managing the organization as a *system*, a unified team, and not managing the parts as parts but as parts of a whole. It's the difference in running a company as a *continent* rather than a group of *islands*.

The Strategic Business Planning process moves a leadership team towards breakthrough perspective and creates a one-of-a-kind Business Plan-on-a-Page™ with an underlying playbook that seamlessly implements an organization's



core strategy. By monitoring system performance drivers as *one team family*, with one *vision* and one *playbook*, the process equips leadership to manage for strategic, operational and financial results.

The Strategic Business Planning process en-

compasses six phases, each one addressing a key element of a company's strategic operating plan. The phases are not necessarily chronological, rather critical elements of a living, breathing process a team follows to arrive at a strategic operating plan.

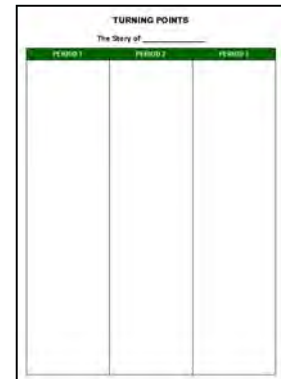
### Phase 1— Perspective: Getting in focus

The objective of stage 1 is to guide a team to experience breakthrough perspective, identifying the true status of an organization.

This is achieved by capturing the knowledge and wisdom of a company's leadership, and guiding them to gain perspective on the current standing of the business. It clarifies where the organization is gaining, where it is losing, what is currently confused, and where the voids and risks are in the company. Both inductive and deductive logic are used to move from the specific to the general and from the general to the specific.

Multiple interactive tools are used to lead a team to gain perspective. One of these is called

Turning Points, which prompts the team to literally tell the organization's "story". Another is Four Helpful Lists, which digs deep into what's right, what's wrong, what's confused, and what's missing in the organization.



Others probe internal and external patterns and trends, show how market economic cycles occur, demonstrate how an organization can respond to opportunity, describe performance models and drivers, and identify and rank what's putting the organization at risk. Phase 1 also focuses on how leadership and teams function

within the organization.

**Phase 2— Core Plan: Architecting success**

In stage 2 the organization develops a core strategy that shows it where it is going.

A core strategy is always driven by mission and vision, which are at the heart of any strategic operating plan. Both mission (purpose) and vision (a mental picture of where the organization stands, where it is headed, and how it will get there) are evaluated. If either is unclear, misunderstood or off target, the facilitator guides the team to clarify and develop it fully.

The core strategy is also driven by core issues the organization determines it must focus on. The core issues are called W.I.N.s because the company redirects its attention to what's important now. Most planning processes make the mistake of limiting their focus only on tomorrow. The Strategic Business Planning process focuses both on managing the company's tomorrow today (strategic) and managing its today *today* (operational). That means the company ends up with a true strategic operating plan.

A critical element of Phase 2 is visualizing what the organization wants to be like in three-five years (performance models) and the factors (performance drivers) that will determine whether those models will be achieved. Each perfor-

| FOUR HELPFUL LISTS |                |                    |                 |                   |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| What is right?     | What is wrong? | What is important? | What is urgent? | What is critical? |
|                    |                |                    |                 |                   |
|                    |                |                    |                 |                   |
|                    |                |                    |                 |                   |
|                    |                |                    |                 |                   |
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|                    |                |                    |                 |                   |
|                    |                |                    |                 |                   |

| W.I.N.s For _____ |                                                   |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| PERIOD            | CORE ISSUES (What is critical, urgent, important) |
|                   |                                                   |
|                   |                                                   |
|                   |                                                   |
|                   |                                                   |
|                   |                                                   |

**Core Issues**  
The issues at hand will probably show up that core issue. We address the items, getting each one sorted. This means to identify and explain what we're doing about the core issue.

| PERIOD      | STRATEGIC ISSUES (What is critical) |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1st quarter |                                     |
| 2nd quarter |                                     |
| 3rd quarter |                                     |
| 4th quarter |                                     |

(What is critical? Does it impact business? Is it a strategic priority? Will it affect the success of the 1st quarter? Is it worth the getting it that cost price?)

mance driver is fully mapped out, indicating its status and the direction in which it is moving.

**Phase 3— Action: Working the plan**

Plans do not self execute so the details of each core W.I.N. are fleshed out into action initiatives.

| STRATEGIC CONTROL PANEL FOR _____ |                   |                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| RISK PYRAMID                      | PERFORMANCE MODEL | PERFORMANCE DRIVERS |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|                                   |                   |                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|                                   |                   |                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|                                   |                   |                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|                                   |                   |                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Each plan comes with its own six-month projection, reducing all activity into focused, accountable timelines. Every six months, the plan rolls forward to the next six months. To facilitate this, the entire plan is put in a one-page playbook, called a Business Plan-on-a-Page™. This one-of-a-kind instrument tells everyone who is accountable for everything the company needs to do to successfully carry out the plan.

Each action initiative is measured with a color-coded status. Red means something wasn't done, yellow means there are glitches, and green means the initiative was accomplished as planned. The company must know where it is at all times, and the plan must be managed to make sure it accomplishes

| ACTION INITIATIVES |                     |           |             |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| CORE ISSUES        | INITIATIVE CONCERNS | TIME LINE | ACCOUNTABLE |
| IA                 |                     |           | IA          |
| IB                 |                     |           | IB          |
| IC                 |                     |           | IC          |
| IA                 |                     |           | IA          |
| IB                 |                     |           | IB          |
| IC                 |                     |           | IC          |
| IA                 |                     |           | IA          |
| IB                 |                     |           | IB          |
| IC                 |                     |           | IC          |
| IA                 |                     |           | IA          |
| IB                 |                     |           | IB          |
| IC                 |                     |           | IC          |

what it says it will accomplish. That's what ensures the company getting the results it sets out to get.

**Phase 4— Structure: Crafting a structure that fits**

Often, organizational structure must be changed

in order to create a seamless and productive culture. The team identifies the boundary conditions that must be met, and top management and staff work to restructure the organization as needed.

**Phase 5— Control and Learning: Operating in control with rapid learning**

The Strategic Business Planning process helps leaders monitor the company’s business life cycles so it can anticipate the future. Things change rapidly today and can easily spiral out of control. Rate of change is central to the Strategic Business Planning process. Products and services go through an accelerating, booming, decelerating and tanking cycle. It’s vital that a company see tomorrow before it happens.

**Phase 6— Renewal: Building in adaptation**

Embedding renewal into the culture of an organization is critical to its long-term success. The Strategic Business Planning process ensures that leaders are equipped to sense and seize opportunity when it occurs, and review and renew as needed to keep the organization healthy and moving in the right direction.

The facilitator is process; the team is content. The Strategic Business Planning process strives for a plan that will bring a team to breakthrough levels of thinking. It’s not a “cookie cutter” process. It’s a very methodical and creative process. It’s about teamwork and the team respecting

each other’s wisdom and experience.

Breakthroughs come when teams work together horizontally. No silos. It leaves a team knowing that it’s their plan. They created it, not some consultant who came in and created a plan for them. That’s ownership, which is critical to seeing a plan implemented at all levels.

Developing a strategic operating plan requires up to three days. It could be the most significant planning process your company ever invests in.

**Strategic Business Planning Outcomes**

- Clarify where your business is currently, including what’s right, what’s wrong, what’s confused and what’s missing.
- Develop a highly focused core plan for the business, called W.I.N.s.
- Develop a set of flexible and measurable action plans, including who is responsible and how plans will be executed.
- Set in motion a system for monthly reviews of plans and making adjustments as needed.

Communicate to Connect is a solutions-oriented provider of coaching and training for executives and staff in the financial industry. Steve Craver is the founder and President. Steve Williams is the Creative Director.



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