

7 Reasons (Most) Strategic Plans Fail

Hint: It's in the execution!



Solid strategy won't survive poor execution.

Countless hours are invested in developing strategy and building business plans, yet little time is spent on ensuring a seamless execution. Given over 70% of strategic initiatives fail because of poor execution, it's time to rethink this critical element.

1

Not viewing execution as a change initiative

Whenever something new is being implemented or a process is being evolved, change is at the center of it all.

Given an overwhelming amount of people in any organization do not like change, it's important to get ahead of the resistance that will emerge. Helping people envision what's on the other side of this change is critical.

2

Lack of a formal communication plan

As executives formulating the strategy, it's not uncommon to be steeped in the details. Yet when it's time to get everyone on-board, communication is often the first piece that breaks down.

Creating a formal communication plan that contains a consistent message with details around frequency and content will make a difference.

3

Accountability and role ownership is missing

People can't be mandated to get on-board, yet personal accountability and role ownership is critical for the successful execution and implementation of any plan.

The key is to recognize that both of these traits are embedded in mindset. Although mindset is an individual choice, there are tools available that can help make these necessary shifts for the benefit of the employee and organization.



A skill gap exists

Simply put, not everyone has the necessary skills needed to execute seamlessly. It may be that the technical skills of the role are present, but the functional skills are missing.

It's those skills such as communication, organization, collaboration, team alignment, and critical thinking that are inherent to flawless execution. Understanding these gaps will inform what skills need to be learned before a big initiative is launched and goals are missed.



The 'shiny object' syndrome

Employees look to leaders for clarity and direction. When too many initiatives appear to be a priority, confusion, procrastination and disengagement quickly sets in.

People need to understand what's the most important thing they should be focused on, how it ties to what the executive team cares about, and how what they do in their day-to-day work fits into the bigger picture. There are always multiple, competing priorities. The key is to be clear and narrow the focus for those who are tasked with making it happen.



Incomplete vision for the future

Different from the shiny object syndrome, this often surfaces from employee questions such as where will the company be in 3 years? Or why are we doing this again? Often early-stage companies get caught in this vicious cycle when building, acquiring, and scaling at a rapid rate. The reality is the vision may not be as clear.

In times like that, it's important to implement a strong and consistent message that keeps people moving forward and builds trust along the way while the executive team evolves what Company 2.0 looks like.



A process roadmap for implementing the strategy is nonexistent

With so much time spent on developing the strategy, little time is spent on developing the plan to operationalize it. Often the expectation is leaders down the line will own that part. This isn't necessarily wrong, but it is incomplete. If the leaders are inflicted by one of the other reasons on this list, the likelihood of a well-thought out plan that aligns with the executive goals becomes slim.

Providing guidelines, decision making structure, and a strong communication plan are a good starting point to handover. Then, it becomes easier to identify some of these other issues if poor execution continues to emerge.

Improve your business from the inside out

WHO:

The Innovare Group helps organizations *Assess. Align. Accelerate.* the strategic priorities that impact talent, execution, and business growth.

WHAT:

We work with executives, leaders, and teams to provide solutions to align people+process to ensure effective strategy execution. Individual accountability and ownership of one's role are key to flawless delivery.

WHEN:

We are often brought in when an outside perspective is needed, when teams are struggling to align to the strategic vision, when leaders are challenged to grow to the next level, when communication is breaking down cross-departmentally and when goals are being missed.

HOW:

AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL:

Our proprietary 4Ps Organizational Alignment Assessment™ is designed to take the pulse of your business quickly and accurately. This framework focuses on People, Purpose, Process, and Passion™, the four pillars that drive business profitability.

AT THE TEAM LEVEL:

Our skill-building workshops are designed to fill in the gaps holding teams back from executing seamlessly. These are structured as working sessions to make the most of participants time and move business forward.

AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEADER LEVEL:

We believe that leaders evolve best when they are working through their challenges as they lead their teams and business units. Our strategy consulting and coaching work differs from standard coaching alone, as our work combines consulting on the business challenges coupled with coaching leaders to navigate the behaviors and complexities that they are faced with on a regular basis.

About the Author



Kim Bohr is a skilled strategist, author, speaker, and results-oriented business advisor to CEOs and senior executives. As founder and CEO of The Innovare Group, she equips leaders and companies to create aligned, equitable, and competitive workplaces that drive results, deliver value, and attract the best talent.

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM KIM

Business is not for the faint of heart. The biggest risk to solid strategy is ineffective execution. Many companies create detailed vision statements and guiding strategies then face challenges getting the alignment needed to operationalize them. Dealing with any of the seven reasons outlined here will have a negative impact on your plans. Invite us in to help quickly discover what is causing the biggest issues and we will provide the appropriate solutions to align your people + process to ensure effective strategy execution.

TOP QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK AFTER USING THIS GUIDE:

Q. Do we offer a complimentary assessment?

A. Yes, we offer a 30-minute complimentary assessment recorded via zoom video call for you to keep after.

Q. What does the typical engagement look like?

A. Our goal is to diagnose the need and provide the tools as quickly as possible, equipping our clients to be fully independent when our work is done. Engagements are typically a combination of in-person and zoom video conference sessions.

Q. What's different about our approach?

A. We have a 3-phase roadmap we use to guide the work. Once gaps are identified and prioritized, we provide the relevant skills necessary to achieve seamless execution. We do this through targeted working sessions that help move the business forward while developing the appropriate behaviors leaders and employees need.



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