



"In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable"
— General Dwight Eisenhower

Business Planning Process

Checklist

WE PUT CLIENTS ON THE PATH TO INCREASED PROFITS → SUPPORT THEM ON THEIR JOURNEY → AND MAKE SURE THEY REACH THEIR DESTINATION

1. Input for your Planning Process. Did you:

- Involve the key people in the company in your planning process?
- Gather information about:
 - The Economy; Your Competitors; Trends in your industry and markets?
- Get input from your:
 - Customers; Suppliers; Industry Association or Chamber of Commerce?
- Identify, and quantify, new Opportunities?
- Identify new and existing Threats; evaluate the risk the Threats will materialize and the impact if they do?
- Realistically evaluate your company's Strengths and Weaknesses?
- Consider that if you achieve your financial goals for the coming year will you need more:
 - People; Operating Equipment; IT systems and infrastructure?

NOTES:

2. Your Financial Forecast. When completing your financial forecast did you:

- Isolate separate sources of revenues e.g.
 - Sales to new and existing customers
 - Sales from new and existing products
- Include potential cost increases or reductions when calculating your cost of sales?
- Compare your gross margins against industry/external benchmarks?
- Budget expenses by starting from zero and building them up or by taking last year's actuals and applying an increase for inflation?
- Compare your EBITDA or operating margins against industry/external benchmarks?

- Document all of the assumptions you used in your forecast so that you can test them for reasonableness as the year unfolds?

NOTES:

3. Execution of your Plan. Did you:

- List all of the things that will have to be done in order to achieve your goals for next year?
- Prioritize the 20% that will have 80% of the impact on those goals?
- Allocate your limited resources – equipment, people and financial - to the priorities?
- Prepare a detailed Action Plan for each of the priorities?
- Clearly identify who will be responsible for completing the Action Plan?
- Ensure each department/division/part of the company has goals that support the company's goals?
- Make sure each person in the company knows the company's goals for next year? And that they know their role?
- Set regular times to review the Action Plans?
- Set dates and times for regular quarterly meetings at which you will review progress against the financial forecast?

NOTES: