# SETTING BUSINESS PRIORITIES

### A Five-Step Exercise for the Leadership Team





### 64% of executives say they have too many conflicting priorities.

Don't be one of them.

For any plan, initiative, or strategic change to be successful, you need to have a set of clear priorities to guide your actions. The priority-setting process lays the foundation and direction for the rest of the business to follow. Having a plan and aligned priorities that support your objectives creates a common view of the goal and the path to reaching it. It ensures people are aligned and informed throughout the process.

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This five-step worksheet will get you started on setting priorities for your business.





#### 1. Get clear on what you are "solving for."

**a.** List your biggest organizational challenge in five words or less.

**b.** Define and align on what you must "solve for" to tackle this challenge.

c. What teams, departments, or lines of business are key to solving the problem or seizing the opportunity?

d. Does each team or department know the "size of the prize" in the problem or opportunity identified?

e. What are the most strategic questions we must answer to solve the "big picture" problem?



#### 2. Define what will propel you forward.

**a.** For each team/department/line of business you named above, list one or two priority actions each must take to answer the most strategic questions.

**b.** For each team/department/line of business you named above, list the tools and skills required to execute these actions.

**c.** For each team/department/line of business you named above, assess whether they have the tools or skills you said are required in question 2b. Note what tools or skills holes exist that need to be filled.



### **3.** Pace and sequence your priorities — for now, tomorrow, and the future.

a. What three things do you need to accomplish to run your business better today?

b. What three new capabilities do you need to build for tomorrow's business?

c. What three things are you willing to bet will mean big growth for your organization in the long term?



#### 4. Communicate and illustrate so priorities resonate.

a. List five key words you would use to describe your strategy and its intended results.

**b.** Now, list five "layman" synonyms for those words to help you better communicate with managers, so they in turn can communicate more effectively with the front line.

**c.** List three examples of behaviors that support the strategy you would like to see emulated by others in the organization.

d. What outcomes will these behaviors drive?



## 5. Delineate milestones to highlight accomplishments along the way.

**a.** What changes should your people be making and seeing in the first 30 days? List three examples.

**b.** What changes should they make and see in the first 90 days? List three examples.

c. In six months, what are the top three things you expect to see change the most?

d. What are the top three things you expect to see change in one year? List three examples.

e. In five years, how will your organization have transformed as a result of this new strategy? List three ways.



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