

Chapter 1—Strategy Execution Plan

These questions will help you pinpoint the actions you need to take to ensure excellent execution of your strategy. Take time with each question. Pose the questions to your boss, your team, and your peers in the organization.

1. Focus on the top goals.

- What are the most important one, two, or three goals of our organization—goals that absolutely must be achieved, or nothing else we achieve really matters very much?
- What one, two, or three goals does my team need to achieve in order to support the organization's top goals?
- For each goal, what are the lag measures that indicate success? (Remember to express them using this formula: From X to Y by When.)

2. Make sure everyone knows the specific job to be done to achieve the goals.

- For each goal, what one, two, or three actions do we need to take as a team to ensure achievement of the goal?
- How will we track the lead measures—that is, the measures of success on those actions?

3. Keep score.

- How will we display the lag and lead measures?
- Where, when, and how will we maintain the scoreboard?

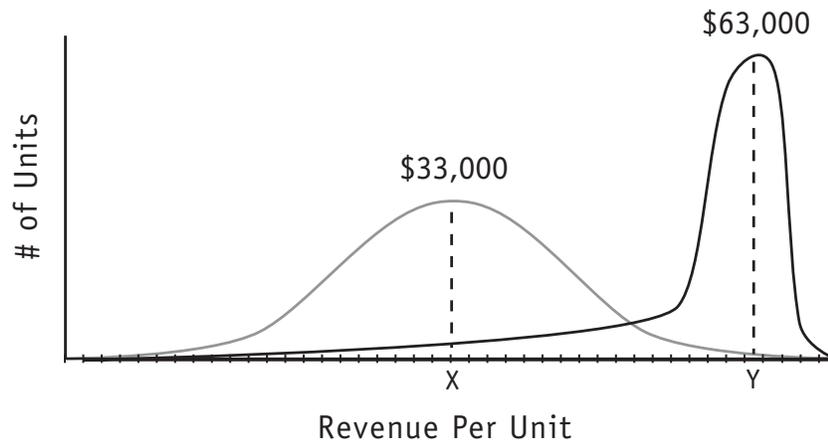
4. Set up a regular cycle of follow-through.

- When and where will we hold our regular team meetings to account for progress on the goals?

Chapter 1—“Moving the Middle” Plan

This procedure will help you improve the performance of the middle performers in your team or organization.

1. Set a goal for “moving the middle” to a “right and tight” position on the chart using the FROM X TO Y BY WHEN formula.



Sample Chart: In this organization, the key performance indicator is revenue per unit in thousands of dollars. The current average revenue per unit is \$33,000 (X). The desired revenue per unit is \$63,000 (Y), the average of the top 20 percent.

- a. On the chart, plot the key performance indicators for each unit of your organization. This will give you a general distribution curve. The top of the curve is X, your current average. (Key performance indicators might be revenue for a sales group, speed of collections for a finance group, quality ratings for a customer-service group, and so forth.)
- b. Plot the point to the right where you'd like the performance to be by a certain date. The top of that curve is Y, where your top performers already are.
- c. Use the Strategy Execution Plan above to execute your goal.

Chapter 1—Teach to Learn

The best way to learn is to teach. It's a commonplace that the teacher learns far more than the student. If you really want to internalize the insights you've learned in this chapter, in the next day or so, find someone—a co-worker, a friend, a family member—and teach him or her those insights. Ask the provocative questions here or come up with your own.

- What generally makes the difference between the first and second teams in any competitive situation?
- Why do some teams and organizations perform so predictably well year after year, regardless of the conditions?
- Every organization works hard at developing a strategy. Why do so many good strategies fail?
- Which is more important—a good strategy, or good execution? Why?
- Is it better to have many goals, a few goals, or no goals at all? Why?
- It's one thing to have a goal—it's another to know how to achieve it. How do you decide what to do to achieve a goal?
- What's the difference between a lag measure and a lead measure? Which measure do you watch more closely if you want to achieve a goal? Why?
- Which is better—to let the team run with a goal without input from the leader, or to check progress regularly and frequently? Why?
- Which is likely to have more impact on your success—a grand new strategy, or doing better the things you already know how to do? Why?
- Why is there so much variation in performance across an organization? What would you do to reduce the variation and get better results?
- If you were a leader, what would you do to help people move beyond the mindset of doing just what's required toward a mindset of making a real contribution?