

evolve

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① Kindness is a language which the blind can see and the deaf can hear. ~ Anon

② The more disciplined you become, the easier life gets. ~ Steve Pavlina

③ There are two things over which you have complete dominion, authority and control your mind and your mouth. ~ African Proverb

④ Lost wealth may be replaced by industry, lost knowledge by study, lost health by temperance or medicine, but lost time is gone forever. ~ Samuel Smiles

Spend eighty percent of your time focusing on the opportunities of tomorrow rather than the problems of yesterday.

- Brian Tracy

**HOPE... IS THE
COMPANION OF
POWER, AND THE
MOTHER OF SUCCESS;
FOR WHO SO HOPES
HAS WITHIN HIM THE
GIFT OF MIRACLES.**

SAMUEL SMILES

Planning A Great

2018

*Bill Fotsch and John Case,
Contributor Opinions expressed
by Forbes Contributors are their own.*

Careful planning is essential to sustained business success. It defines winning for the next 12 months. It gives you—and everyone in your company—a road map for decision making. It helps you figure out where to invest, and how much. So here are six tips for a productive planning process, culled from many years of experience helping entrepreneurs and company owners create thriving businesses.

1. Begin by defining your goal.

Every company's situation is unique, because every owner's situation is unique. Some aim to sell their business in the next few years. Some are looking to grow the long-term value of the company. Some want to maximize short-term cash flow. Differing objectives naturally call for different plans.

2. Do your homework. As Thomas Edison said about inventions, planning is 99% perspiration and 1% inspiration. Heading out to an offsite—the kind of meeting where everyone spouts off without any supporting data—isn't planning, it's corporate self-indulgence.

A good plan requires several different kinds of data. Sales, costs, and other financial figures, of course—usually for the past three years. Detailed information about the profitability of different products, services, and customers. Trend lines showing (for example) gross margin and SG&A as a percentage of revenue.

3. Involve your customers in your planning.

One key source of good data is your customers. Ask your customers how likely they would be to recommend your company to a friend or colleague who's in the market for what you offer. Probe to find out what they like and don't like about doing business with you. Ask for their insights into potential changes in the marketplace.

By the way, not only will you get great input for your planning discussions, you're also likely to get a good deal of repeat and referral business out of this process.

4. Get front-line employees involved as well.

Anyone who has worked on a company's front line knows that these workers see things that management doesn't. They know where the bottlenecks are. They know where time and materials are

wasted. They often spot opportunities for new products and services or new ways of doing thing. Do they bring these observations to management? Not always—in part because management never asks.

So here's a huge opportunity. Ask people, either in person or through a simple survey, what their biggest challenges are and where they see the most promising opportunities. Ask them if there was one thing they could change about the company, what would it be? You'll be surprised at some of the answers—and you can use the input for creating a better plan.

5. Write your plan down, and use it as the basis for your financial budget.

The budget—essentially a projected income statement for the next 12 months—should derive from and reflect your plan. Let's say you're aiming to increase profitability by boosting gross margin, and your plan spells out the measures you intend to take to reach that objective. The budget should specify the target gross margin by quarter, and it should project profits accordingly. At the end of each quarter you can see how close you came to the goal and alter your course when necessary.

6. Specify other quarterly deliverables, at least for the first quarter.

Let's imagine that you want to get closer to customers and grow your sales, so in the first quarter you plan to start using a customer-relationship management program. Or maybe you want to increase efficiency, so in the first quarter you plan on conducting your first lean event. Each of these actions should help drive results. The point of the quarterly deliverables is to ensure that these objectives don't fall between the cracks. Remember, the objective of any plan is to advance your goal. Planning that does not advance the goal is of little value. But planning that moves your company forward toward the goal is indispensable.

A Blueprint for Your 2018 Sales Planning

Written by John Rode

Sales planning season is almost upon us. Numbers need crunching. Stakeholders need wrangling. Process needs defining. Objectives need agreeing. Nobody is better positioned than sales operations to shepherd the organization to victory.

2018 Sales Planning Is Upon Us

Sales ops is a foundational element of the process.



There is nothing new here for sales ops. Each piece of the planning process has been done before. But quite often it's done in an ad hoc manner. Attempts should be made to follow a documented process for sales planning. If the process doesn't exist - start making it.

Objectives

What is the overall objective of the company with respect to sales and profitability goals. This may be already widely known and just needs confirmation. Or if things are going particularly well (or not), adjustments made be required. But this is the starting point all other steps in the process cascade down from.

Alignment

Although sales often appears as the lone wolf running out ahead of the pack, it has many supporters. In particular, Marketing and Product need to be on board with what sales is trying to deliver. Everyone needs to put their skin in the game when it comes to leads, custom features delivered, etc. Sales ops may not be the one driving alignment, but they can ensure everyone is progressing towards the alignment goal. The deliverable from this stage is agreement on a specific, measurable commit from sales and the supporting functions.

Goals

With corporate objectives in hand and head nodding around the executive table, sales can now break it down to determine goals by geography, channel or market segment. Sales ops plays a big role here by providing input on historicals and counts on sales resources available so reasonable goals can be defined.

Sales Strategy

The trend here is clear. The further along the process you go, the more important sales operations becomes. In this stage of planning, sales must ensure the right resources are deployed in the right places. This includes proposed quotas, hiring plans,

new rep ramp rates. All of it. And it's not enough to coalesce around a single plan. Look ahead to determine worst, best and expected scenarios and have contingencies plans for how you will react in each case.

Functional Plan

Now you're ready to translate the sales strategy into a tactical plan. Accounts are assigned, territories are designed and quotas are calculated. This stage should pull directors from the sales team to validate the plan, and provide input on how to realign teams, territories and accounts.

Execution

With everything agreed there are several steps to ensure all the systems reflect the agreed plan and work nicely together. That means you'll need to dust off your CRM admin skills, find the marketing automation guru, and figure out how to make the reports contort into the dashboard everyone will be asking for. This stage is a bit like changing the tires on a race car during the race, because the current quarter isn't going away either.

"One of the keys to aligning an organization from top to bottom is to align the metrics that each level uses to measure success."





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News from Printex

- Mr. Gomez Ignasi (Sales Engineer – Cresa) is visiting Pakistan in Mid of February. During his stay will visit the Valuable customers and share his technical expertise.

- Mr. Rui (Marketing Head – Roq International) & Mr. Vitor Simao (Sales Engineer – Roq International) is also visiting Pakistan in Last Week of February for Promotion of Roq Printing Machines.



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Towards Innovation



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