

GOSH Template

Too often I have seen documents which announce the Company strategy in great detail—but withhold the context in which the strategy is set. The detail the How without any of the Why.

Recall the movie, Apollo 13 and the famous statement, “Houston, we have a problem.” How successful, motivated and creative would the NASA engineers have been in the absence of context?

Why is knowing the context important? Because we want an organisation that engages the full skills and energy of the people in the organisation. Informing individuals as to what we are doing and why, allows them to be flexible, proactive, and engaged. Individuals who have a strong, positive sense of their contribution are more motivated to give even more.

The GOSH template was designed to bring a close and tight alignment between the Company’s aspirations, the barriers blocking the way, and the actions (strategy) needed to remove the barriers. It has been found to be beneficial in stimulating thinking about strategy, and a useful communication tool in subsequent exercises.

Here are some recommendations on how to complete the template.

- 1. Goal:** Record what you believe to be the goal of the business. The time horizons you should be considering is 3-5 years. Limit yourself to just one goal. I repeat. Limit this to one goal. The goal can be specific or ambiguous; my recommendation is to veer toward the ‘ambiguous’ end of the spectrum. The process will take us to specific actions and measures quite quickly.
- 2. Obstacles.** List the 3-7 obstacles preventing achievement of the Goal. Make these as specific as is feasible. Obstacles can be sourced from anywhere. Some may be internal; a lack of a particular skill or asset. It may be external; unpredictable market conditions; too few acquisition candidates. Or they might be technical; our existing, capital-intensive processes with high fixed costs are being surpassed by an alternative technology.
- 3. Strategic Responses.** What are the 3-7 strategic responses required to overcome the obstacles and deliver the Goal? You have creative freedom with your responses, but all responses must be coherent and cohesive. That is, there should be alignment between an obstacle and a response, and the whole of the responses should be provide a more powerful company than the sum of the responses.
- 4. How will we know we are moving forward?** We need to have measures that indicate progress. These cannot all be financial. We need balance. What measures in the form of output or leading indicators, should be monitor to assess progress.

GOALS

What is your Goal—a reasonable ambition of achievement in the planning period?

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OBSTACLES

What the 3-7 obstacles/road-blocks/motivating problems preventing you from achieving your Goal?

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STRATEGIC, COHERENT RESPONSES

For each of your motivating problems, what is response? What are the Who, What, Why, When, Where and How activities that will resolve the motivating problems and therefore move your function toward achieving the Goal?

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HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS?

What are the measures of success? What are the leading and lagging indicators which will give us confidence we are overcoming the obstacles and moving toward the Goal?

QUICK CHECK

Is your strategy coherent? Does each activity reinforce the other so that the whole is greater than sum of the parts?

Is it;

Practical?

Feasible?

Actionable?

Communicable?

PROVOCATIVE THINKING.
THRILLING PERFORMANCE.

