

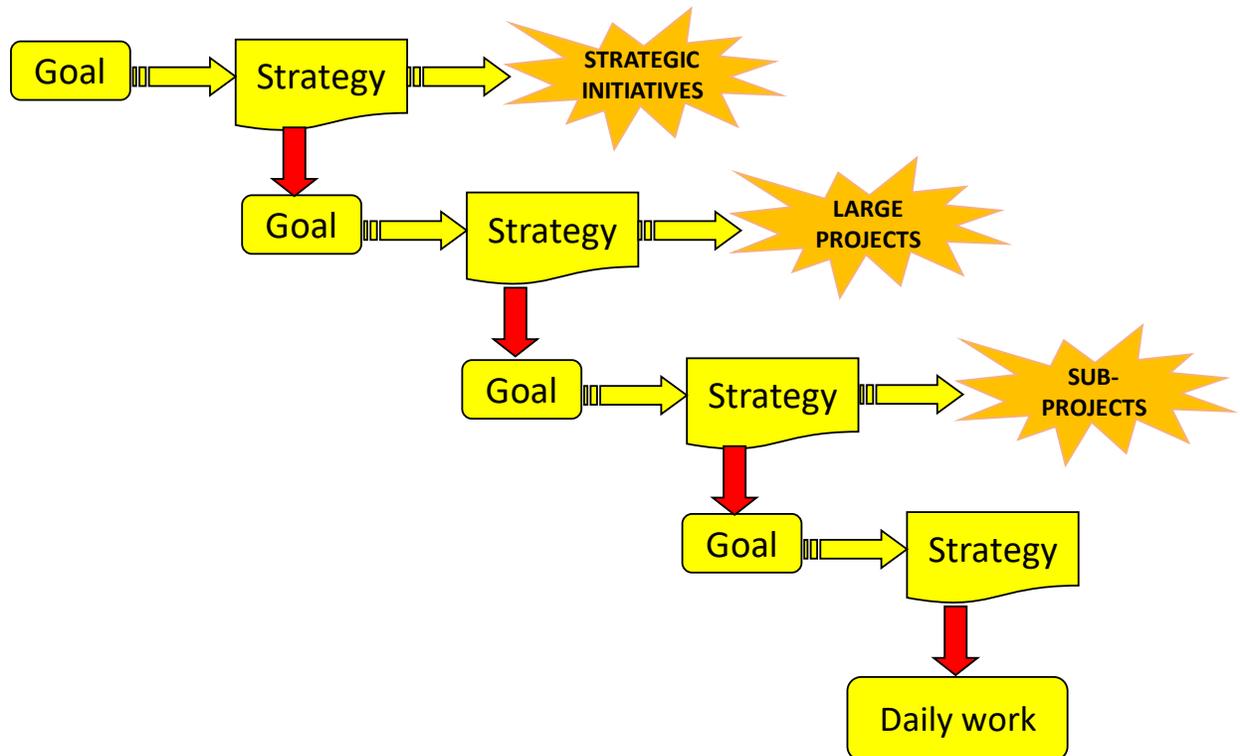
Project Readiness Checklist

A MindPrep Essentials Tool



Business strategy inevitably results in a portfolio of projects to be undertaken throughout the organization. If you want your strategy to succeed you need project success. Use this checklist to assess your chances of executing your project in an effective and efficient manner.

Strategy Cascade



Making strategy real always requires a portfolio of projects, some focused within a unit and some cross-functional.

Unfortunately, few, if any, organizations can brag that their projects are always on-time, within-budget, and deliver full scope outcomes.

Therefore, all efforts to improve project performance are important.

The following checklist can and should be used to identify potential weak spots and correct them before a project launch.

Avoid the temptation to answer the questions for the whole company. Consider your “unit.” You can express you unit as the organization within the company that you can directly impact.

Project Readiness Checklist

Project: _____ **Assessed on:** _____ **Assessed by:** _____

Discuss each of the categories with your team and see which of the descriptions best fits your actual situation. The majority of the descriptions should be on the left side of the checklist for best chances of success. Any “project killer” descriptions should be cause for you to stop and work on that category before proceeding with the project.

CATEGORIES	Ideal		Neutral		Project killer
Requirements	Statement of work is complete and signed by the project client.	Statement of work is complete, and the client has given verbal agreement	The project has been discussed with the client; however, little has been put in writing	The statement of work has been set by the management team; users have not been consulted	There is no statement of work. Deliverables have been identified, but not detailed.
Sponsorship	Project sponsors will use the deliverable and willingly provide the project budget.	Project sponsors agree to use the deliverable; funding is provided from a corporate account.	Sponsors are indifferent regarding success or failure; funding is provided from a corporate account.	Sponsors see the project as “nice” but have other uses for their constrained budget.	An executive has been told that she will provide the budget for the project and sees the project as an intrusion
Team (quantity and skills)	Team is qualified and already assigned to the project. This will be their sole project.	Team is qualified and this is their primary project. They have minor demands on their time for other duties.	Team is qualified and this is their primary project. However, this is a virtual team	The team is marginally qualified; they have been assigned because they have the available time.	The team has not been identified; all members will have regular work duties in addition to this project.
Budget	This project has a budget that is sufficient and dedicated. Budget is controlled by the PM.	This project has an initial budget that is sufficient and dedicated but controlled by functional management.	This project comes under an umbrella project and will have to compete for resources	This project has a budget that was based on available resources and rough estimates of needs.	This project will have to rely on existing operating funds. The project does not have its own budget.
Project Leadership	The assigned project leader has the right experience and wants to work on this project	The assigned project leader has significant complementary experience and wants to work on this project.	The assigned project leader has little complementary experience and wants to work on this project.	The assigned project leader was chosen because he/she was available but has other duties as well	The assigned project leader has other duties and does not want to work on this project.

Project Readiness Checklist

CATEGORIES	Ideal		Neutral		Project killer
Business needs	This project is considered fundamental to the success of the organization's business strategy by the entire organization	This project is seen as important by the leadership team but the workforce has not been brought on-board	This project is seen as "nice to have," but is not seen as necessary.	Senior stakeholders question the need for this project	Senior stakeholders are opposed to using company time and resources for this project.
Organization's project culture	This organization has a culture of successful projects and has existing policies and procedures for conducting projects	Projects are seen as important but requiring considerable extra effort and time.	Projects are seen as important but as additional, uncompensated work.	Past projects have resulted in winners and losers. There are powerful stakeholders opposed to this project.	Projects are seen as the graveyard for careers that have no future.
Planning and scheduling	The entire project team was involved in the planning process. The deadline is seen as reasonable.	A project plan was developed by the core team and reviewed with the full team. Important changes are made to the plan.	A project plan was developed by the core team and presented to the full team.	A project approach is discussed, but a full plan was not developed and documented.	No project plan exists. Deadlines and deliverables were set by management but not explained to the team.
Portfolio of projects	The organization has an active project management office (PMO) and this project has been included in the portfolio of projects	The organization has an active PMO; however, this project has not yet been included in the portfolio of projects	All major projects are reviewed regularly by the executive team. Cross-functional requirements are explored.	Projects are developed within functional silos and compete for resources and talent within the functional areas.	All projects stand alone and compete for resources and talent.
Change Control	Change control processes exist and are used throughout the organization. Tradeoffs are made as changes arise.	Changes are formally handled within the team. Tradeoffs are discussed and trigger re-planning of the project.	Changes are handled on an ad hoc basis at senior levels. Tradeoffs are discussed and considered.	Changes are handled on an ad hoc basis by the project team. Tradeoffs are brought to senior management as a last resort.	Senior management will not consider changes to deadlines, scope or budget.