



# MONDAY MOTIVATOR

CREATED BY PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES  
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING GROUP

WILL ROBERTSON / JAY McDOWELL

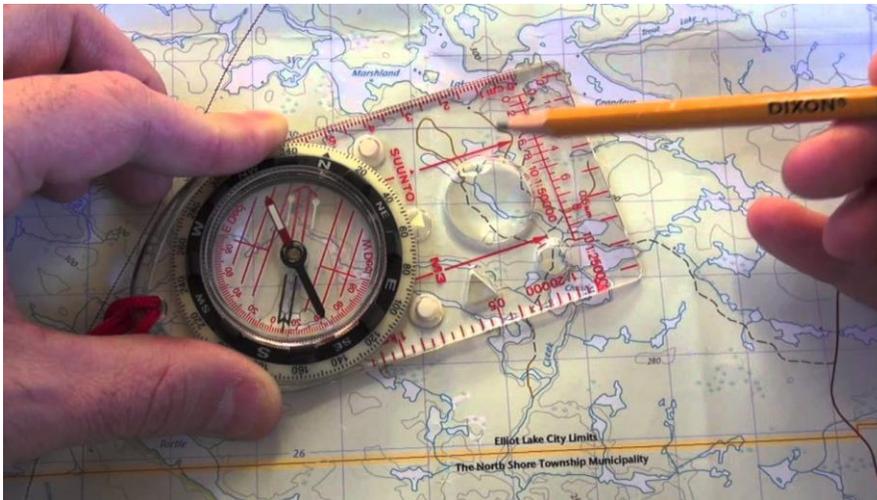
[Will@PS-MCG.com](mailto:Will@PS-MCG.com) [Jay@PS-MCG.com](mailto:Jay@PS-MCG.com)

ISSUE 77

562-577-7000

## Do You Need a Midcourse Correction?

At the time of publication this edition of The Monday Motivator arrives near the middle of the year. Six months have passed. Six more remain on the horizon. Is it time for a midcourse correction? The answer depends on how well your company has organized to hit business targets. Key productivity indicators are where most companies start to measure both effort and results.



For many of us, the dog days of summer mark the mid to waning months of a year-long strategic plan. We have written before in the Monday Motivator about how to maintain your momentum throughout the course of your strategic plan. Now we turn our focus to a mid-course correction, the formal review of your

strategic plan about halfway through the plan year. The goals of the review are:

- **Strategy Review:** to assess whether the chosen strategies are having the impact predicted. Strategies and even projects are revised as warranted.
- **Progress to Vision:** to assess the overall impact of the plan (are you moving toward your vision), and develop corrective actions as needed.
- **Realism Test:** to review and revise accountability and timelines to accurately reflect the work required to get the plan to completion.

What is a midcourse correction? It is a navigational correction made in the course of a vehicle at some point between the beginning and the end of a journey. The same could be said of your business. It does not matter how big or small your business is. The bottom line is the accomplishment of your strategic goals.

Let's begin with the most important goals most businesses deal with on a quarterly basis. Strategic goals may differ depending on whether you are a product or a service business. On average, there are six of them. We call them the six sides of the box we are always being reminded to "think outside of." In this case we need to be thinking INSIDE the box. They are: (not in the order of importance)

- Sales
- Operations / Production
- Customer Relationship Management
- Finance
- Administration
- HR

Each of these six considerations may have many facets to the discipline, but in each case the key goal is to reach objectives set down at the start of your fiscal year. The questions are (a) did you set goals and (b) are you half way to achieving them?

Efforts and results are always going to require adjustments. In the world of aviation, which I am quite familiar with, the wind is almost never calm. Like the ocean, there are huge movements and the aircraft moves with the air movements. Pilots need to adjust for this so their track across the ground is both predictable and leads them to their destination. For this, sometimes the aircraft needs to be flown a little sideways, pointed away from the destination in order to reach it. The same is true of ships. Ocean currents and tidal forces require similar corrections.

In business, such tidal forces may be the industry you are part of. It may be the economy in general. It may be your competition and might even be other nations dumping their goods in our markets because they can. Any of these considerations and many not mentioned can cause you to need to correct what you are doing or how you are doing it in order to reach your objectives.

In short, the mid-course correction is the time to determine if your strategic plan is still an accurate reflection of what you want to achieve, how you are going to achieve it and the environment you are operating in.

## How to make a strategic plan update

To accomplish these three goals does not require a complete reconstruction of the plan at a 3-day retreat. We typically sit down with clients for a one day session in our executive briefing facilities that we call the QS-90 (Quarterly Strategy – 90 Day Plan Review) with this agenda:

Review each project on the plan. Is it still a priority? Is the yearend target for each still realistic? Modifications are made so that the projects stay current and relevant.

Look to the environment. Have new opportunities arisen that are not in the plan? Are there new threats or perhaps opportunities that must be addressed? Projects are added or modified to make sure new opportunities and threats are not ignored. Is your team functioning like a team?

Conduct a brief review of the vision, values and purpose to renew momentum and commitment to the core philosophy of the organization.

And that is it. Relatively quick and simple, and usually essential. We encourage clients to mark up their Lead With Purpose program with the changes to their plan – changed due dates or task assignments, dropped projects and new ones, etc. Then we print new charts so the tool remains an accurate reflection of the strategic work through the end of their plan. To determine if your well-laid plans have gone asunder, ask yourself these essential questions:



### 1. To what extent is our current strategic direction still relevant?

The strategic principle of an organization occurs at the intersection of its excellence, passion, and profitability. It explains why customers choose your products or services, why you earn money at what you do, and why people want to work for your organization. Most importantly, it defines your unique added value—what would be lost to the world if your organization disappeared?

Identifying your current strategic principle and determining whether it should change are the most difficult aspects of strategy correction, because a shift in focus can affect the organization in profound ways. Start by asking which one of these bests defines your core:

- Products / Services—*What* we sell
- Customer / Market Needs—To *whom* we sell
- Production Capability—Production know-how, processes, systems, and equipment
- Method of Sale or of Distribution—*How* you sell your products or services
- Growth and Profit—What we do to become the biggest, most profitable in the industry
- Technology—How we capitalize on our technological capabilities to earn money

Every member of the organization should be able to repeat your strategic principle—your value proposition, elevator speech, and driving force all rolled into a one-page declaration. Start by looking inside your organization and then look at the landscape around you.

## 2. To what extent is the competition affecting us?

Setting strategy based on competition doesn't usually position a company for industry leadership. However, ignoring the competition won't work either. You must understand the competition but not let them define how you'll play your game. What creates this magic balance? Ask:

- What have our major competitors done this year—game-changing new products or technologies, that threaten the playing field?
- What could the competition do to hurt us?
- Are there problems within my company that will contribute to missed objectives?

## 3. What talent changes must we make to meet our short- and long-term targets?

Too often the team that brought you your current success won't be the one to take you to the playoffs. If this were halftime of a playoff game, how would you rate your bench? Do you have stars in key positions? Or have you allowed mediocrity to creep into places you can't afford it? For example, is there a possibility that your head of sales is functioning the way s/he did 25 years ago and as a result, sales are flat or even declining while your fixed and variable costs are rising?

If you haven't developed from within during the tough times, realize that now you'll have to correct for this and do it now. You can't wait to take action when it requires the least discomfort for all involved. Having a top-flight coaching / consulting team on your side provides a lot of direction, guidance, advice and even leadership when and where it may be needed.

In summary, success demands mid-course corrections, but it also requires courage. If you weren't already on this course, would you choose it? A "no" answer means you need to revisit the goals you set at the beginning of the year. Otherwise, your current year targets can quickly turn into your past year targets—or worse.

Will Robertson, Founder / CEO and Jay McDowell, President / MBA are doing business as Performance Strategies as of Jan. 1, 2017. Our offices are located at 1231 E. Dyer Road, Suite 215, Santa Ana, CA 92705. You can reach us at 562-577-7000. Our web site is [www.PS-MCG.com](http://www.PS-MCG.com) Our E Mail addresses are: [Will@PS-MCG.com](mailto:Will@PS-MCG.com) and [Jay@PS-MCG.com](mailto:Jay@PS-MCG.com)



Will Robertson, Founder / CEO



Jay McDowell, President / MBA

Our consulting and coaching focus supports management, sales, customer service and operations. Included are sales and management assessments and surveys as well as leadership, teambuilding, sales operations efficiency and online tracking projects. Our other team members bring additional disciplines as well. We will showcase them in future editions of this business journal. We are all committed to driving the results you want.