



You may be looking for a quick fix to build your team, to motivate them, and to make some profits. Of course, there aren't super easy quick fixes for everything, or we would all be millionaires. However, I am providing some strategies to simplify your teamwork endeavors, like strategic planning that doesn't involve a massive science project, or five steps to tuning up and turning around your business. Cheers to a simplified summer.

Kristin

### IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

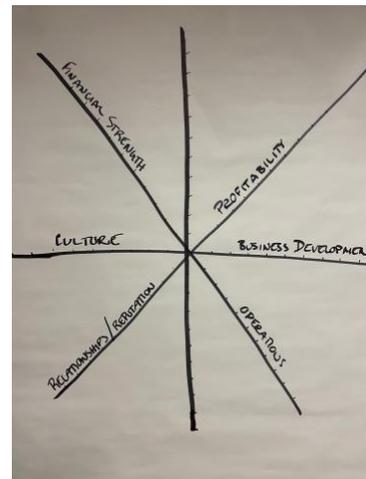
- ◆ [How to Create a Quick Strategic Plan](#)
- ◆ [14 Ideas to Keep Your Panel Discussion Script on Stage](#)
- ◆ [From the Bookshelf: Right Away and All at Once](#)
- ◆ [Contact Kristin](#)

### HOW TO CREATE A QUICK STRATEGIC PLAN

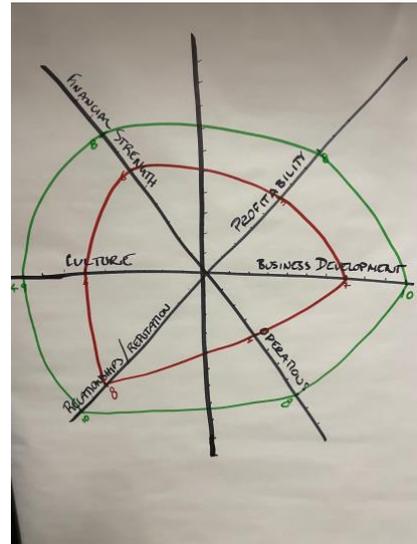
A client recently asked me if there was a way to create a “quick strategic plan.” He wanted to bring his executive team together to get clarity and alignment on what they needed to do in the next year or so – and he didn't want to take a long time nor make it into a massive science project!

I suggested this simple process as a quick way to put together a quick strategic plan:

1. Determine the overall organizational goal or vision. In this case, he was pretty confident that his team knew the destination, but if not, try using the “Read all About It” team activity to get everyone pointed in the right direction!
2. From the vision, identify the critical success factors/key categories that need to be in place/working well in order to achieve the end goal. For example, business development, operations, financing, research and development, infrastructure, customer focus....you get the idea.
3. Ask the team to rate the business *as it rates today* for each critical success factor on a scale of 0 to 10 – with 0 being not in place at all to 10 – AWESOME! I like to draw a wheel on an easel chart with each factor as a spoke. The center of the wheel is a zero and the outside rim is a 10.



4. Put a tick mark on each spoke as the group comes to some agreement on the number. (I usually let the discussion roll for a few minutes and then see where it lands/loudest voice – then confirm with the team before I put the tick mark on the flipchart.)
5. Then ask the team to rate the business where it should be in 2-3 years (pick a specific timeframe) for each critical success factor. (It’s important to note that the team needs to be realistic and not everything has to be a 10 – nor should it be a 10!)
6. When done with these two ratings, draw a circle around the current tick marks in one marker color and a circle around the “to be” marks in a contrasting marker color.
7. Have the team discuss the results: Is there a specific area that is a strength? Weakness? Where are the biggest gaps? Critical issues that must be managed?
8. From this discussion, have the team identify 3-5 key themes. In this example, the team realized that they needed to get their “operational house” in order pronto, realizing that the benefits would help the other areas immensely!
9. The themes become the strategic initiatives – and for each initiative, the team identifies the 2-3 year goal(s) and a plan to close the gap.
10. Finally, for each initiative, identify a champion to ensure that this quick strategic plan lives on past the meeting!



## 14 IDEAS TO KEEP YOUR PANEL DISCUSSION SCRIPT ON STAGE

A client of mine was just days away from her first panel and texted me in a panic: “How do I bring my panel discussion script on stage?” She had done all the planning and preparation and prepared a detailed agenda (aka “her script”) with specific segments outlined. But she desperately wanted to know what she should carry with her to the stage. Personally, I think this is a matter of preference and your anxiety level, so I’ll share all the different options:

### 4 Strategies to Bring Your Panel Discussion Script on Stage

1. **Nothing.** You’ve done this a million times. You know what you are doing. Frankly, I don’t suggest this, but hey, if you got the goods, and you are that confident, go for it!
2. **One Sheet.** You’ve done enough work that you just need a little confidence to be able to take a quick glance over to remind yourself of a key idea, intriguing question, segment timings, etc.
3. **The Detailed Script.** Perhaps it is your first time and you WANT to bring all your preparation up to the stage with you. Hey, if that will make you more comfortable and confident, I say “Why not?” Just realize that once you get into the panel discussion, you won’t need all that.
4. **Somewhere in Between.** During your prep work/rehearsal, you will naturally be more comfortable with some segments than others. Just print out the pieces you think you’ll need some help with.

### 5 Methods to Bring Your Script on Stage with You

1. **Printed on Paper.** The easiest (and most obvious) way to bring your script with you on stage is to print it out on sturdy, durable paper (20lb is a bit too flimsy, while card stock is a bit too rigid).

2. **Laminate your OneSheet.** If you are only using one sheet of paper (one side or both), why not laminate it or put it in a plastic protector? Spilled beverages can happen too!
3. **Printed on Index Cards.** Print each segment on a separate index card and punch a hole in the upper left corner. Keep them together with a small ring so you can turn the cards easily and they won't fall out of order!
4. **Use a Tablet.** Forget the paper and do the same thing on your tablet. The nice thing about using a tablet is that it doesn't matter how big or small your script is...
5. **Use a Teleprompter.** Just like a TV newscaster, upload your script to a teleprompter. This is a fine option to open and close important panel discussions – but it will get in the way during the actual “discussion” part of the panel!

#### 5 Additional Tips for Panel Discussion Scripts

1. **Create Eye Drama.** Because you are massively multitasking (listening to the panelists, determining what you will do/say next, AND trying to glance at your notes), create a little drama on the paper/screen to attract the eye. Bold, highlight, or underline some of the text. Use color to differentiate segments. Asterisks or stars for things you cannot forget!
2. **Bring a Pen.** You might want to make some notes, so leave some white space and margins to write in.
3. **Go Big!** Print or view the text in a Sans Serif font *at least* 14-point font with 1.5 line spacing (more if you wear glasses and don't want to have to wear them on stage!).
4. **Staple It.** Don't forget to staple multiple pages and put the page numbers in a large font on the top right of the page. Collisions can happen!
5. **Use a Clipboard.** My favorite is to use a white leather clipboard to keep the papers looking a tad bit more professional – and I have a hard surface to scribble some notes on. (If doing multiple panels, I purchase clipboards with the client logos on the back and give them to the meeting organizer as a small token of appreciation and thanks.)

I'm sure I've forgotten something, so let me know how else you bring a panel discussion script with you on stage!

#### FROM THE BOOKSHELF: RIGHT AWAY AND ALL AT ONCE

I have a few dozen books on my bookshelf about critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making. My latest read, Rationality: What It Is, Why It Seems Scarce, Why It Matters by Steven Pinker is now sitting next to Daniel Kahneman's Thinking Fast and Slow. Why? Because both of these are hugely informative yet dense books to read. After I read one chapter, I would have to set it down to ponder and navel gaze as to my own rationality. Would I come to the same conclusion as the author or not? How does that apply to me and my own dose of rationality?

Despite its density, the book makes sense to me. Pinker is a professor of Psychology at Harvard University who has a course entitled "Rationality." I think this is a textbook that covers much of his material, along with interesting exercises, insightful anecdotes, and fascinating footnotes about what is rational and what is prejudice or bias wrapped up as rationality.

A key theme of the book is that "None of us, thinking alone, is rational enough to consistently come to sound conclusions: rationality emerges from a community of reasoners who spot each other's fallacies." And that is also the power of teamwork when done well!

While much of the book reiterates the other dozens of books on my bookshelf, I found the LAST chapter to be the most interesting and hopeful: "Why Rationality Matters" where Pinker states, "exercising our godlike reason...can lead to a better life and better world." Amen to that, but good luck!

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