



STRATEGIC BUSINESS ANALYSIS IN PLANNING PROCESSES

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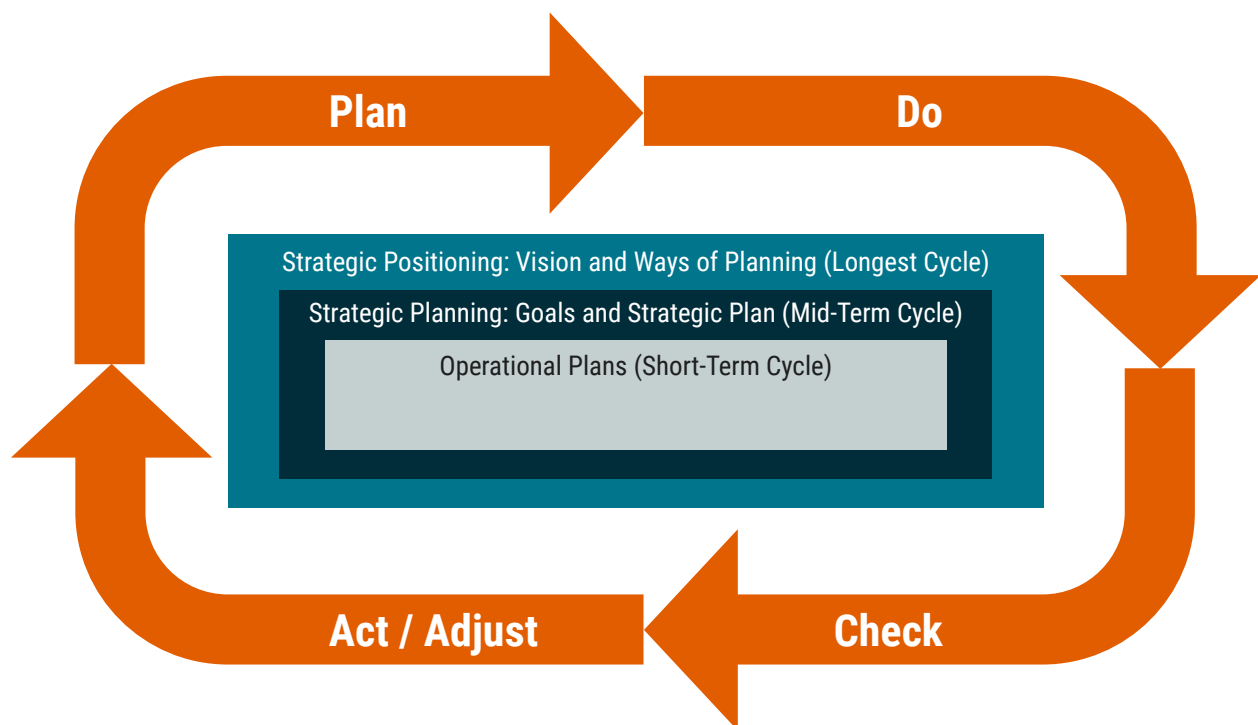
INSIGHT



Frequency and timing of strategic planning

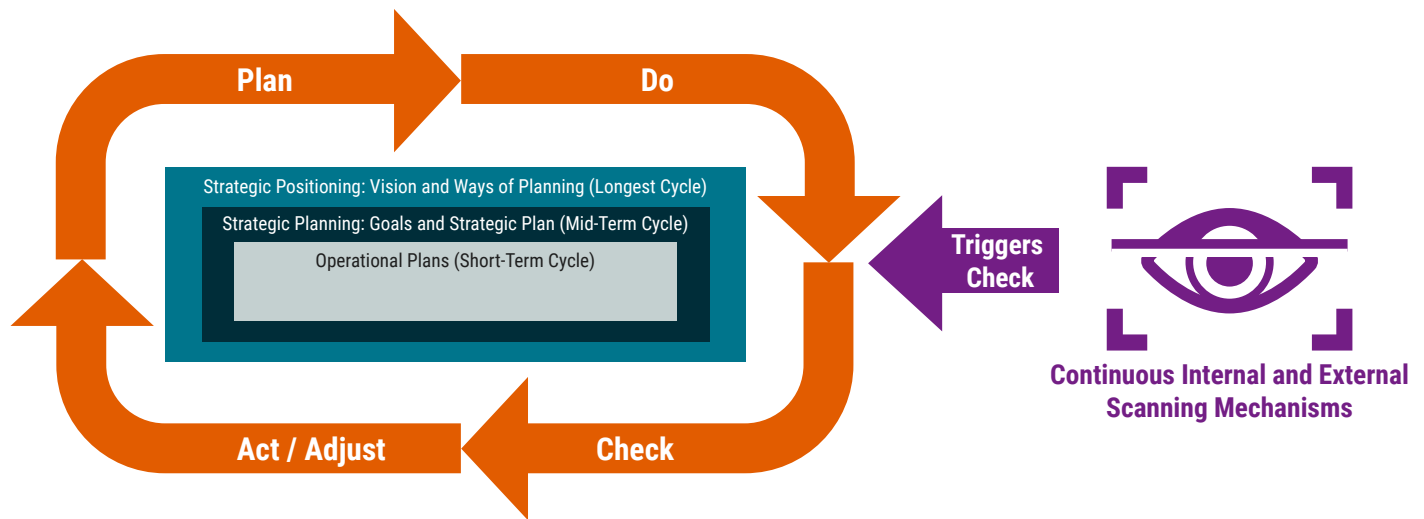
Strategic positioning and planning is not a one-time task. Rather, it must be continuous, agile, and integrated into the organization's core. The more volatile the enterprise context...

- The more often “plan, do, check, act/adjust” strategic events must occur
- The stronger the environmental scanning and feedback mechanisms must be



Business analysis professionals can provide benefits to their organizations by considering the process and timeline of strategic activities in relation to their specific roles and initiatives. Potential considerations are:

- Links with shareholder/stakeholder reporting, both regulatory and non-regulatory
- Cadence of strategic and operational plan deliverables (for example, yearly game plans)
- Links with budgeting and other financial activities
- Links between strategy and risk/compliance boards and committees
- Links with capital and capability improvement initiatives (for example, digital transformation, buildings, equipment, human capital, training)
- Who reviews the enterprise's motivation and when, and how does the organization assess:
 - That the strategy is suitably cascaded and operationalized?
 - That the right programs, initiatives, and operating models are suitably “achieving” the strategy?
- Would the organization benefit from a more formal strategic lifecycle with assigned roles, responsibilities, and timings?



Importantly, organizations need external and internal monitoring mechanisms that can trigger strategic checks, adjust activities, and schedule reviews. Business analysis professionals who work in programs, initiatives, and operations are well-positioned to analyze and package feedback:

- For operationalizing strategic thinking and plans, including assessing the feasibility and impact of changes on the organization
- In tools and methods being used by other organizations or under development that could disrupt or create opportunities

Strategy organizational units and roles

Many enterprises now have organizational units and roles for strategic execution, such as Chief Strategic Officers (CSOs), strategic analysts, and strategy/governance support staff. Review current roles involved in strategic analysis and operationalization and consider whether improvements can be made in how the operation collaborates.

These might include:

- The board
- Executive management/senior management
- Portfolio/program offices
- Continuous improvement groups and teams
- Capability boards

Also consider how to contextualize, communicate, and operationalize strategy across portfolios, programs, initiatives, and operating models

Strategy as data/information

- How are systems of operation linked with goals, objectives, and strategic courses of action?
- How does data trigger strategic conversations?
- How are data analysts and data scientists structured and positioned within the organization? Is this working to implement and monitor strategic progress? If not, how could roles and the organization's structure change to facilitate this?

If your organization has these roles, consider how you can leverage their knowledge to support your business analysis work. If you hold one of these roles, consider how you can strengthen links with program, initiative, and operational teams. If your organization does not have these strategic analysis roles, consider whether developing such roles and structures could be beneficial.