# Pax8 Academy

# **Strategic Planning** Tool

Building your company strategically is a difficult prospect. You are juggling 75 different items at any given time. Thinking about your business strategically is critical, so you MUST find time to get this done.

Our Strategic Planning Tool’s aim is to allow you to build your strategic vision for the next 5+ years of your business. We’ll start by building a high level view of the future, and work our way towards an actionable plan to move your business forward.

## **Page 1 Directions**

### Mission/Purpose and Values

As you build your business you should have a clear Mission or Purpose statement and Core Values. Enter your Mission Statement and Core Values in the boxes provided. You will use these words as a litmus test to make sure that your vision and goals align with “who” your company is.

Exit Plan

You need to know what your exit plan looks like. It’s especially important if it’s coming up in the next 3-7 years. If your target valuation numbers are far apart from where your business currently lives you should identify this as early as possible so you can make the necessary changes to hit these numbers. Even if you don’t have a clear exit plan it’s time to put some thought to it. Write down what that looks like for you and revise over time if necessary.

5 and 3-Year Vision Boxes

The next two sets of boxes are the 5 and 3-year visions for your company. Start with the 5-year vision and milestones and cast a vision for what you’d like your business to look like 5 years from now. What has changed from today? What is the same? What are the milestones you want to hit by the 5-year mark? This 5-year vision is likely a little blurry. That’s okay.

Next consider your 3-year vision. Your 3-year vision should be a little clearer than your 5-year vision. The goal with your 3-year vision is that it needs to be on the path to your 5-year vision. If they line up it makes it much easier to achieve what you want to hit by year 5.

1 Year Vison

You’re a little closer to the ground here. Describe what your company looks like at the end of the year (Or one year from now – it’s your plan. Make it yours.).

Since it’s just a year out you should consider metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Enter those KPIs/Metrics that you want to see by the end of this plan year. These are the targets for page 3 of this plan.

## **Page 2 Directions**

### Target Client Profile – Today & Future State

You MUST have your Target Client Profile (TCP) identified and locked in as you look to grow your business. Think about the size of client, their vertical, their location, their attitudes toward technology, and perceived budget. One thing to keep in mind is that your TCP should be your ***target*** not a wide swath of clients you’re willing to work with. Truly dial this into what your target is. For example, if your TCP says 10-75 workstations as a target that’s too broad. Work to dial this into a 10-machine swing. Dial this into who you would LOVE to do business with repeatedly.

Once you have your TCP of today dialed in, think about the TCP of the future. How does your TCP change as you grow your business? Write down what the TCP of the future looks like in the box provided.

### Differentiating Value – Today & Future State

Your Differentiating Value Proposition (DVP) is what sets you apart from your competition. It’s NOT that your team is smarter and faster than the other guys. That may be true, but it’s impossible to prove.

Your DVP is likely something related to the expertise on the team, how you view IT, how you leverage AI, or something of that nature. If you don’t know your DVP ask some of your clients. They likely can share why they picked you over your competitors.

Like the TCP boxes, think about what must change about your DVP over time. Are you going to enter a new vertical? Do you need to become experts in a different type of technology? As your client base changes your DVP will as well.

### SWOT Section

Next is a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) exercise for your business. There are things that you do well and things that could be improved. This section is designed for you to reflect on your business and think about the current state and the direction you may want to aim for.

One side-effect of performing a SWOT analysis on your business is that it often will reveal beneficial data/thoughts regarding both your TCP and your DVP.

***Strengths and Weaknesses***

We’ve separated both Strengths and Weaknesses into 5 different domains to make it easier to think through.

Write down your strengths and weaknesses and be honest with yourself. The goal here is to identify things you should maximize as Opportunities, and weakness to minimize as Threats.

***Opportunities and Threats***

Next shift down to the Opportunities and Threats section. Opportunities are areas where you want to lean into as often as possible as they routinely yield growth. Are you becoming a thought leader in AI, or is your security offering so whizbang awesome that you should lean into with your clients and prospects? Those are opportunities.

When working on the threats, consider both *internal* and *external* threats. Weaknesses can lead to threats, but so can external factors like changing landscapes and new technologies.

## **Page 3 Directions**

It’s time to build out the plan to execute for the next year. The 1 Year Business Plan is designed to build out the strategic steps to hit your business goals for the next 12 months and allow your team to prioritize the work that must be done to hit those goals.

### Mission/Purpose and Values

Much like page 1, the Mission and Values of your organization are vital to the entire decision-making process. This page is also designed to be shared with your team, so copy and paste them from page 1.

### Company Targets and KPIs

The next section is designed to describe the goals you are aiming for, and the metrics to measure in the pursuit of those goals. Your targets should be aligned with the 1-Year Vision on page 1, and the KPIs should be designed to hit those goals.

If a Target is to bring in 6 new clients for the year, your KPIs should be measuring sales activities, pipeline, and that sort of thing. KPIs should be a leading indicator of success against your Targets which are a trailing indicator of whether you got there or not.

### Sales and Marketing Strategy

Most MSPs are hoping to grow. To grow, you must hit your sales targets. You also must build a strategy around what you will be doing for sales and marketing. This box is designed to include a few bullet points of the core components of your sales and marketing strategy to hit your growth numbers.

### Quarterly Initiatives and Company Goals

The last sets of boxes are around the actions you and your team will be taking to hit the targets. Break down the initiatives you will be working through to move the business forward into quarterly goals. The key is to set a *realistic* number of goals to hit. You and your team have a day-job in addition to any initiatives you are moving forward so one or two per team per quarter is about the most you can get done.

With the last set of boxes, it’s time to start defining what the goal looks like including the owner, due date, and what KPI or Target is designed to help. If there isn’t alignment to a KPI or Target, consider if this is a goal worthy of your team’s time and energy.

From here it’s time to execute against the goals. Build a very *clear definition of what complete looks like* and a project plan to track progress towards the goals.

### Review and Regroup

Now that you’ve completed this plan it’s important to review and regroup at least quarterly. You will want to track progress with your weekly meetings and cadences built into your business.

The important piece here is that someone MUST pay attention to hitting the goals, and accountability is key if you are to get to the vision that you’ve developed in this process.

Build this into your strategic meetings throughout the year and review/recast as needed. Each year should have a new 1 Year Plan which aligns to the updated 3 and 5-year vision.

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| --- |
| 5-3-1 Company Vision |
| **Mission / Purpose** | **Core Values** |
|  |  |
| **Describe Your Exit Plan** | **Metrics** |
|  | ***Exit Date*** |  |
| ***Valuation*** |  |
| **5 Year Vision** | **Milestones** |
|  |  |
| **3 Year Vision** | **Milestones** |
|  |  |
| **1 Year Vision** | **Metrics** |
|  | ***Revenue $*** |  |
| ***EBITDA $*** |  |
| ***# of Staff*** |  |
| ***# of Clients*** |  |
| ***# of Endpoints*** |  |

|  |
| --- |
| Target Clients / Differentiating Value / SWOT Analysis |
| **Target Client Profile (Today)** | **Target Client Profile (Future)** |
|  |  |
| **Differentiating Value (Today)** | **Differentiating Value (Future)** |
|  |  |
| **Company SWOT Analysis** |
| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
| *Technical* |  | *Technical* |  |
| *Sales/Marketing* |  | *Sales/Marketing* |  |
| *Finance* |  | *Finance* |  |
| *Strategy* |  | *Strategy* |  |
| *Operations* |  | *Operations* |  |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
|  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 Year Business Plan | **Plan Year:** |  |
| **Mission / Purpose** | **Core Values** |
|  |  |
| **Company Targets** | **Department KPIs** |
|  | ***EOY Target*** | ***KPI*** | ***Target*** |
| Revenue |  | Sales: |  |
| Staff |  | Sales: |  |
| Clients |  | Service: |  |
| Endpoints |  | Service: |  |
| **Sales/Marketing Strategy** | **Quarterly Initiatives** |
|  | **Q1** |  |
| **Q2** |  |
| **Q3** |  |
| **Q4** |  |
| **Company Goals** |
| ***Goal Description*** | ***Owner*** | ***Dept*** | ***Due Date*** | ***TGT/KPI Alignment*** |
| G1: |  |  |  |  |  |
| G2: |  |  |  |  |  |
| G3: |  |  |  |  |  |
| G4: |  |  |  |  |  |
| G5: |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |