

How to Get Stuff Done

A Checklist of Actionable Steps for Businesses to Execute Effectively On Priority Projects

Businesses face disruption on multiple fronts, and they are struggling to get things done. Company leaders must contend with the challenges of managing a remote workforce, supply chain disruptions, demand shifts, resource constraints and more, all while devising critical plans for the road ahead. Combined with uncertainty about the economy, companies are having trouble prioritizing their needs and adapting to the constantly shifting environment.



Here are actionable steps organizations should consider for getting things done in the current business climate. Using these best practices will increase the likelihood of completing your strategic initiatives.



1. DETERMINE PRIORITIES

Figure out what you need to focus on and develop a plan for getting it done.

- Identify priority projects for the next quarter.
- Ensure projects align with the broader organization's strategic plans.
- Sort those projects into individual workstreams with dedicated teams.
- Make actionable checklists for each project.
- Create project benchmarks and define KPIs.
- Establish a monthly/quarterly review cadence for the initiatives with the executive team. Review all major initiatives, progress to date and the current business environment. Reprioritize where appropriate.



2. ASSIGN THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Identify your dedicated team—with the appropriate combination of skillsets and personalities—to ensure the project gets the attention it needs to be accomplished successfully, on time and on budget.

- Designate a specific person or team to be responsible for a project.
- Identify a senior-level champion for the project/initiative to help ensure firm-wide buy-in.
- Ensure the project team has productive group chemistry and the right combination of skillsets. At minimum, you'll need a big-picture visionary, a strategist to turn that vision into an action plan and a tactical executor.
- When building the team, look for high performers outside of your regular circles to spread the opportunity to more professionals and provide them the opportunity to expand their skillsets.
- Be judicious about who is on the team. Keep only those who believe in the project and want it to succeed.
- Be realistic about team members' workloads. Try to offload less important work that project members may be doing so they can dedicate more time to their assignments on the project.



3. BUILD A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

You'll need a method of communicating all the projects happening throughout the business to company leadership and other parts of the organization. Getting a big-picture view also allows you to assess how your people's time is being used, whether you are relying too heavily on a few professionals and if the organization is taking on more than it can handle.

- Track all the various projects in your organization in a centralized location, using common metrics for monitoring success, with the help of dashboards to provide the big picture. Ensure all dashboards are easy to use and are fed by accurate, real-time data. Don't rely solely on dashboards, however. Remain in regular communication with the project team who can provide more context to the data and share qualitative updates that aren't as easily tracked.



4. FOSTER A “FAIL FAST” MINDSET

In the current environment, it is more important to act swiftly than to wait and strive for perfection. If you try to plan for every eventuality, you may be too slow to respond adequately to a crisis or seize a new opportunity.

Don't wait for perfection—start executing. Encourage a “fail fast” organizational culture, and not just for times of crisis.

Assess the progress and value of all projects on ongoing basis—at least monthly and, if feasible, bi-weekly. Are they moving the needle for your business?

Evaluate the progress of each project against predetermined KPIs and milestones. Is the project meeting those KPIs, and do they bring the expected ROI? ROI comes in many forms (e.g., revenue protection, revenue generation, increased profitability, cost avoidance, etc.), so define the ROI you're aiming for to measure the project's success and try to identify quick wins in the early stages.

Based on this evaluation of impact and ROI, determine whether projects need to be discontinued, reprioritized or require more investment and support.



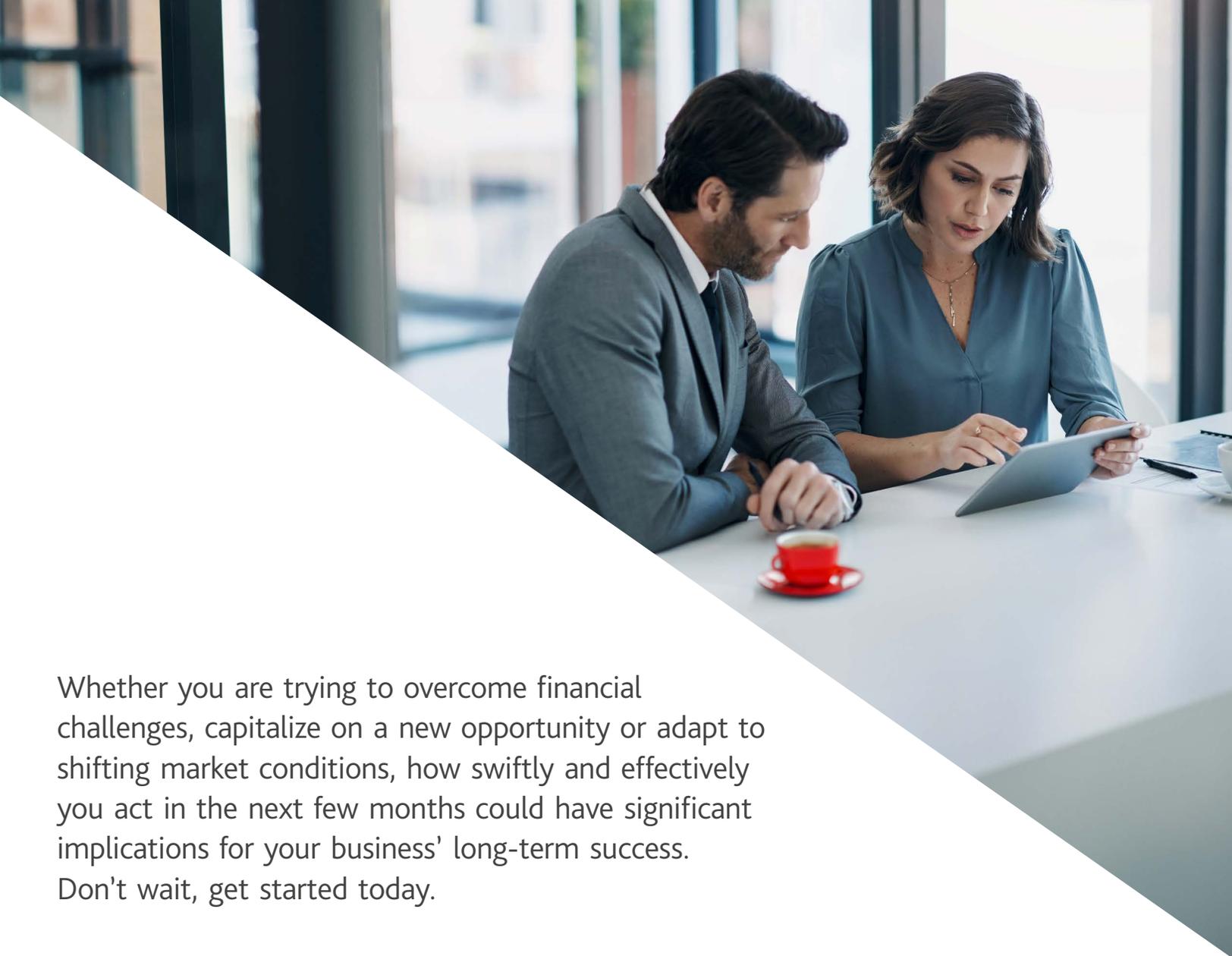
5. DEVELOP THE NEXT GENERATION

Even in a crisis period, make sure you are still taking steps to train your people and provide them with new opportunities.

As you address immediate needs, don't neglect your organization's future. Provide avenues for junior staff to get exposure to opportunities that further their growth.

Include at least one junior person on every project team. Even if they are just involved in project management, expose them to strategic conversations that are beneficial for their development.

Teach them to be students—and, ultimately, champions—of the “fail fast” mindset you're encouraging in the organization. The next generation of leaders will take up that mantle.



Whether you are trying to overcome financial challenges, capitalize on a new opportunity or adapt to shifting market conditions, how swiftly and effectively you act in the next few months could have significant implications for your business' long-term success. Don't wait, get started today.

Our purpose is helping people thrive, every day. Together, we are focused on delivering exceptional and sustainable outcomes and value for our people, our clients and our communities. BDO is proud to be an ESOP company, reflecting a culture that puts people first. BDO professionals provide assurance, tax and advisory services for a diverse range of clients across the U.S. and in over 160 countries through our global organization.

BDO is the brand name for the BDO network and for each of the BDO Member Firms. BDO USA, P.C., a Virginia professional corporation, is the U.S. member of BDO International Limited, a UK company limited by guarantee, and forms part of the international BDO network of independent member firms. For more information, please visit: www.bdo.com.

© 2024 BDO USA, P.C. All rights reserved.

