



# Align Your IT Strategy with Your Business Strategy

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One of the first comments I receive from people when I ask the question

***Is Your IT Strategy aligned with your Business Strategy***

is

***Of course. However, it does not matter; I am not spending any more money on technology.***

Aligning your technology with your business does not necessarily mean investing in new application systems, hardware or technology related tools. It might mean changing or restructuring what you are doing so that you get more out of what you already have.

I believe in employing technology to reduce costs and improve efficiencies. Technology should only be deployed when it supports a strategic business objective.

The goal of this article is to provide a guideline so that you can improve your business by identifying technology enabled opportunities – reducing costs, increasing productivity and staying competitive. It is divided into three sections.

1. Assessment
2. Gap Analysis
3. Plan for your IT Future

## **Assessment**

A technology assessment can be very detailed; test can be run, reports studied in detail, etc. This type of assessment should be performed at various points as a company grows, but an assessment does not need to be so detailed. A quick and easy way to obtain an assessment is, ask your employees and your customers for areas of improvement. You might be surprised with what you hear.

Consider including in the assessment:

- New system functionality such as imaging (cuts down on the paper).
- Support Issues such as connectivity speed, e-mail and security (eliminates potential complaints).

- Tools such as voice recognition (improves efficiency).
- Training needs such as Microsoft Office (reinforces functionality).

## **Gap Analysis**

Perform a gap analysis. Are your systems meeting your current business needs? As businesses grow or downsize, the requirements change, and the related business processes and systems need to be modified.

The analysis should include:

- A determination of what is being spent on technology
- An evaluation of the technology infrastructure
- Determination of duplicate data and processes
- Manual business processes that could be automated
- Automated processes that could be automated even more

## **Plan for Your IT Future**

Once you understand your current environment and areas for improvement, it is time to develop the plan.

Focus on the following steps:

- Compile the results of the Assessment and Gap Analysis
- Develop a list of projects
- Develop cost/benefit analysis
- Set a Budget
- Assign Priorities
- Start working the plan

**Keep in mind --**

***Planning a company's technology future is an ongoing process.***

For more information, contact:

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