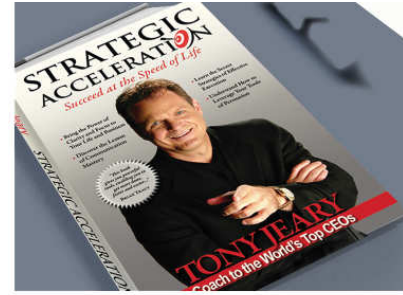


STRATEGIC ACCELERATION

Succeed at the Speed of Life



Exercise 12: Get Clear on Current Conditions

There are two critical categories of information that must be collected to produce clarity concerning your current condition: Strategic Positives and Strategic Negatives.

Strategic Positives

Strategic positives are the strengths you possess that most powerfully impact your ability to succeed. There are 5 questions to ask that will help you identify those strengths, listed in the following questionnaire.

Your Strategic Positives

Question	Definition	Your Answer
1. What is your competitive advantage?	Things that make your offering unique and determines market share and overall success.	
2. What has made you great?	Things that have produced the foundation for your current success.	
3. How do your customers and associates view you?	How your customers and employees view you as well as the value they receive from your offering, and why they buy it.	
4. What are the top 3 facts about your business that determine your ability to win?	2 or 3 core strategic principles that drive success over a long period of time.	
5. What Strategic Opportunities exist that you should pursue?	How you can add value to your product or service or create new opportunities.	



Your Strategic Positives: Example

Question	Definition	Your Answer
1. What is your competitive advantage?	Things that make your offering unique and determines market share and overall success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Great reputation</i> • <i>Strong brand presence</i> • <i>High-quality product</i> • <i>Proprietary process</i>
2. What has made you great?	Things that have produced the foundation for your current success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work ethic</i> • <i>Talented staff</i> • <i>Unique product offering</i> • <i>Strong marketing resources.</i>
3. How do your customers and associates view you?	How your customers and employees view you as well as the value they receive from your offering, and why they buy it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Low prices</i> • <i>Recognizable brand</i> • <i>Great service</i> • <i>Good value for the money.</i>
4. What are the top 3 facts about your business that determine your ability to win?	2 or 3 core strategic principles that drive success over a long period of time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Always provide value that exceeds my customers expectations</i> • <i>Complete tasks and projects ahead of schedule</i> • <i>Create and sustain a highly consistent brand that reflects the value my customers will receive.</i>
5. What Strategic Opportunities exist that you should pursue?	How you can add value to your product or service or create new opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Turning negatives into positives</i> • <i>Better meeting customers' needs</i> • <i>Setting and meeting more aggressive deadlines</i>

Strategic Negatives

Strategic negatives are the factors that most powerfully contribute to failure or less-than-satisfactory results. There are 4 questions to ask that will help you identify those negatives, listed in the following questionnaire.

Your Strategic Negatives

Question	Definition	Your Answer
1. What internal complaints have historically created challenges and affected the satisfaction of your employees?	Consistent complaints that come from within.	
2. What are your top 3 customer complaints?	Consistent complaints that come from the outside.	
3. What do your competitors believe to be your strategic shortcomings?	What competitors are saying about your potential strategic weaknesses.	
4. What are the top 3 factors that can cause you to lose?	Issues that consistently contribute to your failures.	



Your Strategic Negatives: Example

Question	Definition	Your Answer
1. What internal complaints have historically created challenges and affected the satisfaction of your employees?	Consistent complaints that come from within.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Too many meetings</i> • <i>Overwhelming workloads</i> • <i>Minimal advertising budget</i> • <i>Draconian management</i> • <i>Poor reliability</i>
2. What are your top 3 customer complaints?	Consistent complaints that come from the outside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>High price</i> • <i>Lack of positive customer service experiences</i>
3. What do your competitors believe to be your strategic shortcomings?	What competitors are saying about your potential strategic weaknesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Unstable management</i> • <i>Saturated market</i> • <i>Poor value for product quality</i>
4. What are the top 3 factors that can cause you to lose?	Issues that consistently contribute to your failures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>High price</i> • <i>Inability to communicate value</i> • <i>Inability to effectively communicate selling position</i>