



## Tailor your strategy implementation method – Agile strategy implementation toolbox

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# Tailor your strategy implementation method

## Agile strategy implementation toolbox

Formulating a strategy is a difficult task – and making it work is even more difficult (Hrebiniak, 2006). The world is changing rapidly and there is a high degree of uncertainty for organizations on how to run their businesses. This specifically applies to strategy implementation based on our empirical findings. Our empirical findings are based on 36 interviews with high-level executives and strategy consultants.

This poster explores how to address the uncertainty through four approaches identified in our empirical findings. The identified approaches are all centered around being more agile in a strategy process. The approaches are 1) having the user in focus, 2) applying an iterative learning process, 3) co-creating with users of the strategy and 4) prototyping to validate or reject assumptions and hypothesis.

Based on empirical findings and a literature review key uncertainties in strategy work have been identified as:

- Objectives and market needs
- Execution
- Feasibility

<b>EXPLORE THE CONTEXT</b> Strategies should reflect reality. Understanding where we are, where we want to go and who to involve is highly important. Putting the user in focus allows for a deeper understanding of the context, the needs and the competencies it takes to reach the goals.	<b>DO ITERATIONS</b> The world is changing rapidly and we cannot predict the future. An iterative implementation process creates flexibility for adapting to changes as well as continuously evaluating and adjusting the projects invested in. It's a way of uncovering risk earlier and having the possibility of mitigating them.	<b>CO-CREATE WITH USERS</b> Employees, customers and managers are the driving force in getting the strategy from paper to reality. Motivating, involving and mobilizing them is highly important. It can create a basis for getting expert knowledge and increasing motivation and commitment for the strategic initiative.	<b>PROTOTYPE EARLY</b> Prototyping and testing provides reality checks by acquiring knowledge through experimentation and reducing uncertainties in multiple dimensions. Benefits of prototyping include validation or rejection of assumptions and hypothesis and uncovering different uncertainties.
<b>WHAT UNCERTAINTIES IT ADDRESS?</b> 	<b>WHAT UNCERTAINTIES CAN IT ADDRESS?</b> 	<b>WHAT UNCERTAINTIES CAN IT ADDRESS?</b> 	<b>WHAT UNCERTAINTIES CAN IT ADDRESS?</b> 
<b>HAVE YOU CONSIDERED?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Who is the user of your strategy?</li> <li> How will the strategy affect their work?</li> <li> How can your strategy be designed for a social system?</li> <li> Which concerns may your users have? How can you address them?</li> </ul>	<b>HAVE YOU CONSIDERED?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> How can you integrate the formulation and execution?</li> <li> How can you create a strategic direction that allows for an iterative process?</li> <li> How can you ensure organizational learning?</li> <li> How can you handle unknown situations that might arise? Can you even leverage them?</li> </ul>	<b>HAVE YOU CONSIDERED?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Why do you co-create?</li> <li> Who should you involve?</li> <li> When should you do it in the process?</li> <li> How do stimulate creativity and trust?</li> </ul>	<b>HAVE YOU CONSIDERED?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> What kind of uncertainty do you want to address?</li> <li> What do you want to learn from your prototype?</li> <li> Who should be involved?</li> <li> When should you do it? And for how long?</li> </ul>

*“I’m changing people’s lives. When they come to work on Monday, we implement a strategy on Wednesday. By Friday their life is different. And if I don’t consider that and really appreciate what I’m asking, it’s a selfish and short-sighted endeavor.” (Strategy consultant)*

*“To me, agile is not absence of planning at all. I think you may plan even more in agile than you do in a traditional world. But it’s on a continuous basis. That’s the difference.” (Head of Strategy and Enterprise Architecture)*

*“People have to be part of the decision-making. In my mind, that creates more engaged employees. And then one more thing is that I can’t know it all. So if I thought I knew it all, then I would probably miss some valuable knowledge that my employees have.” (Head of Strategy and Enterprise Architecture)*

*“You do it as much as you can, with as much time and money as you have available to you. If you can only do it once, do it once because you’re smarter than if you didn’t do it. If you can do it 1,000 times and it’s reasonable, do it 1,000 times.” (Strategy consultant)*