



getting off to a fast start in your new year

This time last year, Brad McSwain wrote in Right Lane Review of the tendency for many organisations to ease off the pace in the first quarter of the financial year.

by brad mcswain

'Having just navigated through our planning and budgeting cycle, and polished off as much as we can by 30 June, we take a collective breath. We reflect on the past year's performance, including that of our staff. We deal with management issues that have been pushed to the side. Whether or not we take a break from the office, we recharge our batteries.

Before we know it, the first quarter passes. And with our annual plans usually being ever-optimistically front-loaded, we find ourselves pulling out all stops to meet those Christmas/ New Year deadlines.'

Brad shared six ideas that can help you get off to a fast start in the new year.

Building on these ideas, we would like to suggest that clients give particular attention to performance management and accountability at the start of this new financial year.

Right thinking

Six ideas that can help you get off to a flying start in the new financial year:

1. **Organisational agility:** Increase your strategic freedom, capacity and focus, and knock down structures limiting your effectiveness
2. **Partnership alignment:** Harness the power of your business partners to get things done
3. **Project delivery:** Get major projects moving and make sure they are on track to deliver results
4. **Visual metrics:** Adopt highly visible, team-based performance measurement
5. **Rhythm of engagement:** Set up dynamic board and executive teams interactions to track the progress of your strategy
6. **Interaction quality:** Improve the productivity of your meetings to liberate your team's time and get better results

Excelling at strategy execution requires a culture of performance, which starts at the top. We believe that there are two conditions for successfully increasing performance accountability:

- providing executives with the necessary information to know whether the right actions are being taken, whether they are having the intended impact and, if not, what corrective action will be taken; and
- providing the forums (1-1 and team) to have the right discussions at the right time.

These concepts are illustrated in the following charts. Executive team scorecards and dashboards align expectations and facilitate information flow. Executive team operating rhythms provide the forums for the right discussions at the right time. Clearing up both can help executives to clarify expectations, foster a culture of performance, enable the rewarding of team and individual excellence and maintain alignment of agreed prioritisation and resource allocation.

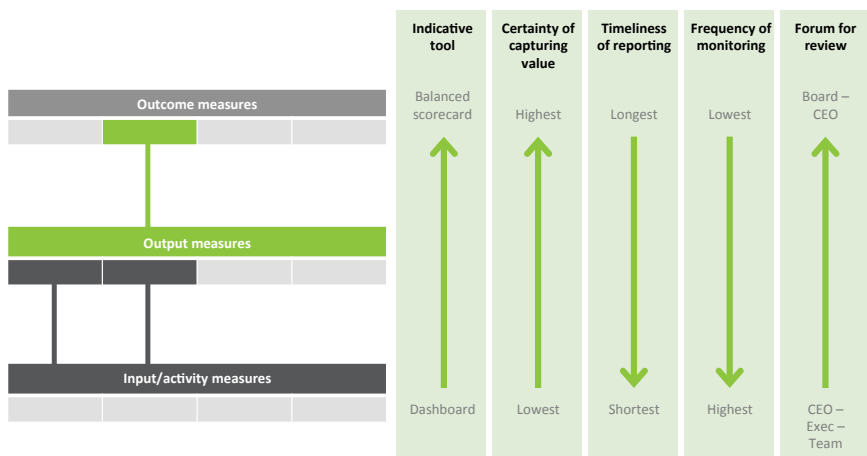
Consider these questions to determine whether this should be a focus now at your organisation:

- Do you know which of your reports is accountable for each business outcome?
- Do you know, at any point in time, which business outcomes you are on track to achieve, and which you are not?
- Are you able to reward your reports based on their contributions to business performance?
- Do your reports understand how they can work together to achieve your priorities?

Note: This is a reprise of original article '[Getting off to a fast start in the new year](#)' published in the June 2014 edition of Right Lane Review.

Excelling at strategy execution requires a culture of performance, which starts at the top.

Executive team scorecards and dashboards align expectations and facilitate information flow



Source: Right Lane 2015

Executive team operating rhythms provide the forums for the right discussions at the right time

TOPICS		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
BOARD	Review: scorecard (outcome measures)												
	Decide: CEO KPIs												
	Review: strategy and priorities												
CEO/EXEC TEAM	Review: scorecard (outcome measures)												
	Review: scorecard (input/output measures)												
	Review: strategic portfolio (rolling six-month)												
CEO/EXECUTIVES	Review: progress of initiatives												
	Decide: executive KPIs												
	Review: executive dashboard (input/output measures)	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN
EXECUTIVES/TEAMS	Review: progress of initiatives												
	Decide: team member KPIs												
	Review: team dashboard (input/output measures)	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
EXECUTIVES/TEAMS	Review: team member dashboard (input/output measures)	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN
	Review: progress of team initiatives	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
	Review: progress of team member initiatives	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN	FN

Source: Right Lane 2015; Casal, C & Caspar, C, 2014, Building a forward-looking board, *McKinsey Quarterly*, February

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want to know more?

If you would like Right Lane to help you get off to a fast start in the new financial year contact **Brad McSwain:**

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