

Capture More **VALUE**

THE RED PILL EXECUTIVE WORKBOOK

CHAPTER 6



WORKBOOK INTRODUCTION

Now you know our secret... You know that there is a Red Pill way and a blue pill way. You might have had a feeling all along that something like this was true. Maybe you've butted up against blue pill thinking and wondered why it was so hard to drive projects that succeed by the "Iron Triangle" measures. Perhaps knowing that a Red Pill approach exists was novel and inspiring to you. Either way, after reading the book, the next question becomes, How do I navigate my own Red Pill journey? This workbook can serve as a guide, prompt valuable reflection, support your own and your team's Red Pill development, and drive Red Pill conversations and practices.

You'll find exercises and tools to help you think through Red Pill operations in relation to:

- Yourself
- Your Team
- Your Organization

Leverage the Workbook

Roll up your sleeves and dive into this work. This exercise will do very little if you skim over it. Think deeply, write down your thoughts, be brutally honest in your assessments, make Red Pill choices and learn from the results.

Make the workbook work for you. This chapter is part of a larger series, you can download the full workbook here: <https://www.thinkconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Red-Pill-Full-Workbook.pdf>. The work is not meant to be completed sequentially. Use the tools in the order that makes sense for you, your starting point, and your journey.

Re-use the tools and exercises. This exercise can and should be used more than once. Assess and reassess over time. Use the completed exercise as a reference point to measure growth and adoption or as justification for making new choices.

Enlist others. Gain valuable insights by having colleagues, peers or subordinates complete part or all of a tool/exercise. Use the workbook to develop Red Pill thinking in others.

CAPTURE MORE VALUE

To learn more about these concepts, review Chapter 6: The Currency of Effectiveness.

Efficiency is doing things right; effectiveness is doing the right things.
- Peter Drucker

Introduction

You've read about how strategic alignment of your efforts is critical to your success. That's easy enough, but how do empower not only your own decision making to capture more value, but also that of your direct reports? The answer isn't difficult, conceptually, but it is tricky to operationalize. Communicating and maintaining focus on why you are undertaking efforts all the way down to why you are expecting certain deliverables from your team is key. When you know you are doing the right things and have a rationale for all of the little decisions that direct how things get done, you enable everyone to work toward your goals in the most effective way possible.

1

Let's start by listing the top 3 strategic goals for your business.

Examples:

- Decrease time-to-market
- Grow market share
- Invest in innovation
- Empower and grow operational teams
- Delegate decision making down the organization

Determining your strategic goals and communicating them clearly across your organization is only step-one to mastering effectiveness. Strategic goals are intentionally high-level and thus present an interesting challenge when it comes to honing your focus.

Once your strategic goals are defined, assess potential initiatives based on the true business value they deliver. Executing to attain business value is a straightforward way to remain in strategic alignment.

2

Now, let's consider one of your highest priority projects or initiatives. Connect the business value it will deliver to one or more of your strategic goals.

Examples:

Name: Migration to Data Lake

Name:

Business Value	Strategic Alignment

Business Value	Strategic Alignment
Enhanced DevOps	Decrease time-to-market
Customer focused product management	Grow market share
Reduced fixed on-prem costs by move to cloud	Invest in Innovation

A keen understanding of “why we’re doing what we’re doing” is essential to remaining in strategic alignment. Each project/initiative should have a clear and logical tie to business value. How do you know what constitutes project success? If you maintain focus on the business value, your portfolio of top projects should be naturally aligned to your strategic goals.

3

Next, select one of your business value areas and describe key deliverables that are needed to make it successful. Then describe how each is strategically aligned.

Business Value:

Deliverable	Alignment Description

This is when we begin to see the value cascading through the levels of your organization.

Strategy → Business Value → Project/Initiative → Deliverables

It's not coincidental that this is also how you grow your operational teams. This is what everyone "rowing in the same direction" looks like in practice.

Examples:

Business Value: Enhanced DevOps

Deliverable	Alignment Description
Workflow and process diagrams	Ensure team understands the multitude of processes and how each contributes overall. Do it correctly, consistently and fast.
Automated testing tool selection and acquisition	Automated functional and regression testing provides fast feedback to development teams and accelerates product releases.
Expert implementation	Contract vendor to enable expert implementation of automated testing.

Key Takeaway

Ok, so we've done the easy-ish part of determining why we're dedicating time and resources to our effort and articulating how the deliverables link to strategic goals. With this alignment, you should begin to recognize new opportunities and be able to adapt toward capturing more business value. Now comes the hard part. The goal is to identify hidden value, while simultaneously avoiding risks. A number of risks will arise during your project and it's important to look at them from different perspectives. Some risks will be obvious and need to be dealt with head on (e.g., a tendency to rebuild our old processes in a new app rather than embrace a new workflow). Another perspective involves opportunity risks. This is where "hidden" business value often lurks. Identifying them requires you to identify the nuances that exist within your operations and the culture of your organization.

Example: Continuing the example from above, the plan was to contract a vendor to enable expert implementation of automated testing. While this may keep the project within the original timeline and budget, you might want to slow down the initiative in order to develop that capability in-house and spread it into other areas of the business. This option may pose additional risk, but it is an option and should be evaluated against the total value that you can deliver to the business.

Risk	Opportunity/Hidden Value
Lack of system or process adoption	Use data generated by operational teams to receive management's buy-in. This will empower the teams and strengthen reporting structures.
Gathering incomplete requirements	Use interviews to uncover opportunities that are only visible to few but could have an important impact. The view is different depending on where you sit.

EXERCISE CREATED BY:



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Ben Adrian, Project Manager and Operations Consultant with an MBA focused in Management Information Systems and a BS in Finance. Experience leading projects and driving change management in multiple industries including healthcare, education, broadcast, as well as work in government and non-profit sectors. Ben has a track record of leading major operational and technological initiatives that align organizations for long-term, lasting success.