

# GROW MY BUSINESS

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The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they can't find them, make them.

*George Bernard Shaw*

## Growing and evolving your business, requires intent and a strategic plan.

By Nick Freedman

It's great that you want to grow your business. To manifest your intentions into reality is a journey which includes several phases. When I help clients build strategic plans, I like to bring an educational element into the dialogue, so that wisdom is increased. This way, the next time you sit down to reflect on how to improve your business, you will know how to do it. As the saying goes, give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him to fish and he eats for a lifetime.

Growth is an interesting phenomena. Most people in business want it. Growth, after all, creates new revenue, clients, jobs and profit. The first, and perhaps most obvious, statement we should make is that growth is the final output. It is the effect.

It does not happen without causes. And this is what we are going to focus on. What are the causes, or areas of your business that you want to develop, change, or increase in order to achieve the outcome of growth.

Creating strategy well, requires that you take an objective view of your business. Whereas the mind is always categorising reality into boxes of like/dislike and right/wrong, for this process do your best to remove any judgments you have from your mind. Instead look at reality as clearly as you can, regardless of how you want it to be. The term 'it is what it is' can be of use here, when you need to look at an area which you dislike or believe is wrong in some way. All change stems first from building

a clear picture of what is true, accurate and correct today. With clarity about the current reality, this gives you a springboard to build strategies that will generate positive change in your business.

All businesses have varying degrees of complexity to them. You might be a sole trader offering 2 or 3 services, or leading multiple teams, with hundreds of staff under your wing in the business.

Either way, we need a way to make meaning of your business, because looking at the whole thing in it's entirety, is not going to work. We need a framework to make sense of the eco-system, so that we can break the whole down into parts, and assess the performance of each one.

There is a powerful body of work called Integral Theory, which explains how to develop an effective business, by building strength in 4 key areas. These areas are built by creating 2 distinctions. The first is between being (mind) and doing (action), and the second is between the individual (self or one person) and the collective (us, we). The visual of this map is shown below.

These make four perspectives or lenses through which you can view your business. I go into this model in more depth in the programs I run, so for now, rather than get overly academic, let's anchor into the process of helping you develop your business intentions. What this map gives you is an ability to look at your business 4 ways and seek out the existing strengths and also weaknesses where you want to make improvements.

### MINDSET

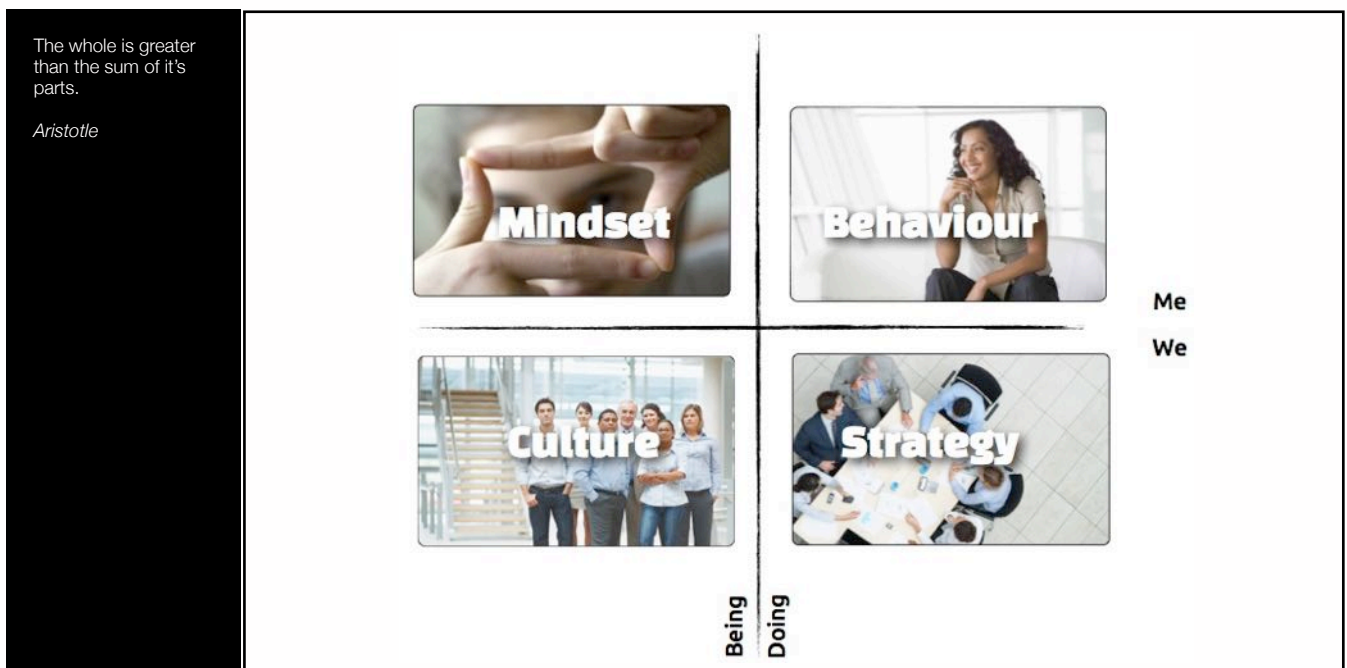
The upper left mindset quadrant is how each individual thinks, feels and perceives the business based on their individual beliefs and values. This quadrant is relevant for you and also every other person that works in the business. Consider for a moment the most positive, enthusiastic team member you've ever had working for you. Chances are they brought a lot of healthy energy to the team and we're able to pick people up who were lacking motivation and bring them along for the ride. Equally consider the weakest link in the chain you've ever had and how on a bad day, their mood might have the opposite effect on the team, dragging people down to their level. This is mindset and it affects everything. You can delve into more depth [with this free tool](#).

### BEHAVIOUR

The upper right behaviour quadrant is how each individual behaves and acts. This quadrant is realm of performance and job output. Whenever you have a conversation with a team member about their performance or KPIs, or you're giving someone a promotion because their skills have reached a level where they are capable of doing more, this is the behaviour quadrant. When this quadrant is strong, you'll see individuals contribute in a planned and meaningful way to the greater team goals. When this quadrant is weak or has deficiencies, it can create all manner of problems, such as unclear boundaries between roles, people not pulling their weight and a lack of understanding about how their goals play a part in the wider business strategy.

### CULTURE

The lower left quadrant of culture is often overlooked, because it is less tangible than strategy. Culture is 'the way we do things around here' and all businesses have one. Not all businesses have gone through the process of placing language around their values to make them known and clear, but they still exist. Cultural alignment occurs when a clearly defined set of values and mottos creates shared meaning in the group. This enables people to decide whether or not they want to align themselves with the culture. If their personal values are similar, this is an easy decision to make, as they'll feel like they belong. When their values are substantially different, remaining as a part of the group (if they don't change) will cause tension. To learn how one of my clients uses their culture to develop their business [click here](#).

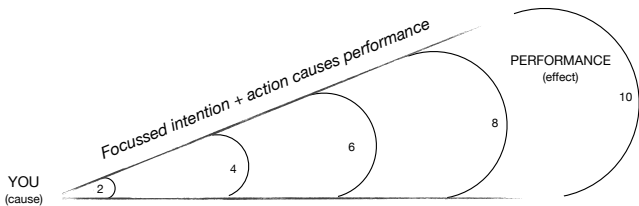


### STRATEGY

Business strategy is the lower right quadrant and this consists of your products, services, systems and structure. This is the territory of what you do both internally as a business and what you trade with your customers and community.

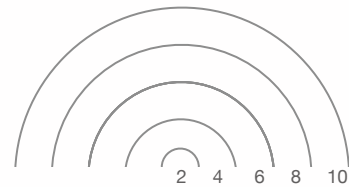
The first part of this planning tool will give you a snapshot in time, about your business today. It will give you clarity and useful information to help you manage, plan and develop the business. So to give an example, when your sales team believe (mindset) they can increase sales by 20% (strategy), then they take the relevant course of action (behaviour), based on prior knowledge and skills to bring this intention into existence, then they have alignment and between what they think, do and create (culture). If on the other hand they started the same journey and believed it was not possible, they would not manifest the result. It is this alignment of the four quadrants which is the quickest path to improve your business performance. It's also known as congruence.

This tool will help you build an objective picture of the current reality in your business today. This raised awareness provides you with a launchpad from which you can create your ideal future reality. You'll see a shape overleaf which has ten sides. Each side of the chart represents one of ten core areas, which are typical functions of a business. These classifications are used to paint a full picture of your current business performance.



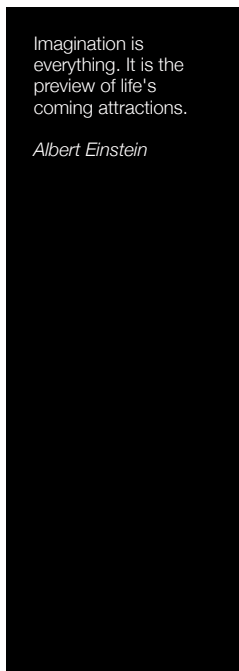
The tiny circle in the middle represents you, the observer and cause of your reality, who has infinite choice about what next steps to take. You'll also see that there are five different semi circles attached to every side of the shape. Each semicircle represents a different *level of performance* for that particular core area, as you can see in the diagram.

The smallest semicircle, which has a rating of 2, symbolises low performance in that area and there are four additional circles, of increasing performance up to the rating of 10 (high performance). So if you had a high performing sales team working for you, that communicated well, worked together cohesively to accomplish their sales targets and went beyond what was expected of them, you might rate the area called 'New Business' as a 10 out of 10.



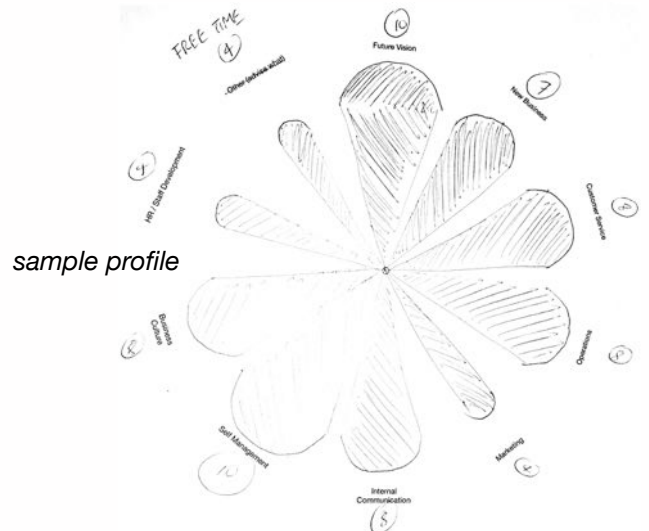
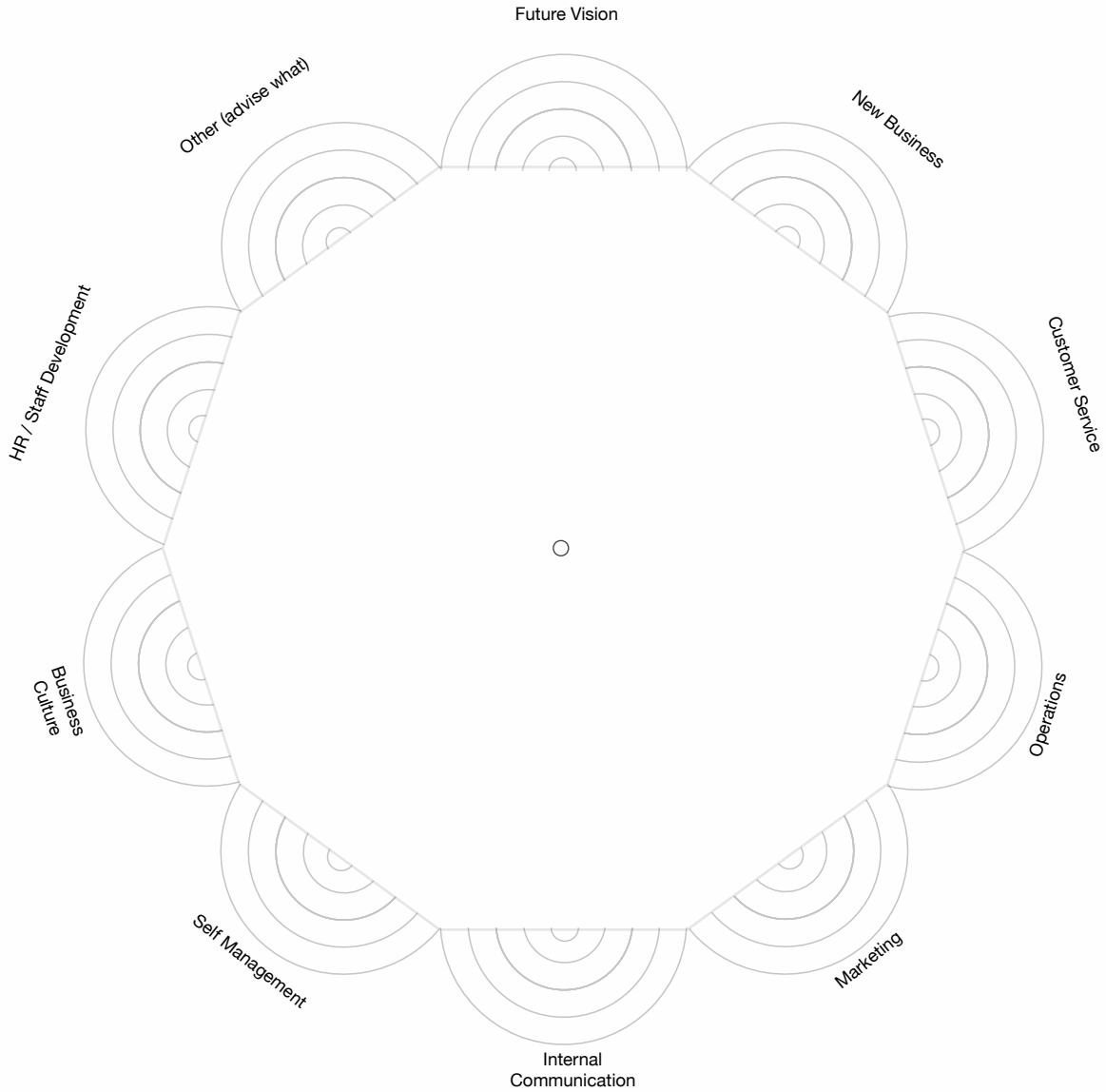
After reflecting on this, rate your performance level for each core area, and fill in the chosen semi circle. Next draw two lines to join the semicircle to the small dot in the centre, then fill in the space. This creates a visual image of your business performance across these different areas.

Once completed, you'll see the *energy that you use to create reality*, is heavily focussed towards certain areas (high ratings) and lightly focussed on others. In some cases where you've scored a low performance you may have made a *conscious choice* to not focus on that specific core area, or it may have no relevance to your business. In others, it may represent a *limiting belief, or some other interference in the system which is blocking progress*. These are the development areas, or causes, which you can work on to positively improve your business.





# Objectively explore each business area, then rate your current level of performance.



# Next observe the interconnectedness between core areas to see the whole story.



## RIPPLE EFFECT

Look back at your profile on page 4. The way it stands, is that it shows the performance levels you are currently achieving. This paints the picture of each business area being separate from the other areas. It's a useful tool, as it enables you to understand each separate area as one single thing. However, as with any process which breaks the whole story down into parts, it has its limitations, as it doesn't illustrate a holistic picture about current reality.

There are always flow on effects of low performance, from one core area into others, and when you can understand the whole, you become empowered to change causes, rather than symptoms. The ripple effect process will help you to

understand how each core area interconnects with others to make up the whole. This will deepen your clarity about your future intentions and will often illustrate how positively changing one area, has a flow on effect to impact other areas. The sample profile on the right, shows how a lack of vision and poor systems has a flow on effect across the entire system.

So what then becomes clear, is that designing a vision and implementing better systems, will have a *positive ripple effect*, throughout many core areas.

In order to see the ripple effect in your business, review your profile on page 4 and ask yourself, *how does one area of low performance impact other areas?* Then draw

arrows and make simple notes to see how the ripple unfolds. See what picture emerges for you. Sometimes this requires input and feedback from others, so working through this process with people in your team may help.





**“If one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favourable.”**

*Senneca*



## Now imagine what you'll have when you're achieving your intended performance rating.

Now you've painted a picture of your business, the creative journey enters into a new space. Your new objective clarity and understanding about your current reality, will give you *insights into what you want to change and what new things you intend to create in your business*. The *Intentions process*, will help you to imagine what your future performance is like.

An important distinction to make here is the difference between a *goal* and an *intention*. In most coaching processes the word goal signifies the end point in the process. It places the end result outside of you, so it is possible to not achieve it, then blame an external circumstance.

An intention on the other hand, is something you are responsible for creating. Intentions start on the inside with your beliefs. Intentions do manifest as results, just like goals do, but with an intention, an energetic connection exists between you, your actions & the result.

Firstly transfer the performance rating numbers from page 4 into the column marked present performance. Then consider what rating you intend to have in the future for each area. Write down a number from 1 (low), to 10 (high) under intended performance.

With your ideal ratings now clear, you can think about what tangible things you will create to make this happen. Consider each area, *what you intend to create, and how things will be different from today*. There will be some areas where you already have high levels and want nothing more than you already have. This is normal. Most businesses have *3-5 core areas they want to focus on* and the rest of them take a back seat. And there is often one main area, where you know the biggest scope of change will take place. Also understand that at this stage, *the full picture of all the end results will be unknown, so start with what you do know and trust that the rest will emerge on your journey*.

Because this profile is used for many businesses, there may be some areas that have no relevance to your business. If this is the case, simply mark no in the 'is this area relevant to your business.'

Developing a creative orientation about growth is about *going beyond what you know to be possible today*, rather than settling for what is known, comfortable and safe. As you write your intentions in the last column, *allow your imagination to run wild. Hold nothing back as you write*.

At this point you are simply capturing ideas, dreams and wishes so don't be tied down to the limits of what your past experiences tell you are possible. *Also, be as specific as you can about your intentions*. No-one ever created their ideal business by playing the safe card. If you set your intentions high enough, you'll feel some fear, or disbelief that they are truly possible. These inner signals are advising that you're on the right track.

# Then clarify your specific intentions to start building your vision of a new future.

Core Area	Rating		Is the area relevant to your business? Yes / No	What will you HAVE, when you've achieved your intended performance rating?
	Present performance	Intended performance		
Future Vision				
New Business				
Customer Service				
Operations				
Marketing				
Internal Communication				
Self Management				
Business Culture				
HR / Staff Development				
Other (advise what)				

# Now it's time to turn all of your business intentions into a clear roadmap for growth.

Benjamin Franklin once said 'If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.' There's wisdom in his quote and so with your intentions created, now it's time to start looking at building your roadmap for growth.

This we do, by defining milestones. The idea of milestones which are used in modern planning techniques dates back to the Roman times. As they grew their empire and built more roads to connect their colonies, they would place stone pillars at each mile along the road. These stones would advise travellers on the road how far in miles they were from the capital city of Rome. Milestones in this process, are used to signify the end of a major phase of work. When you reach a milestone, it is often cause for celebration as they signify the end of a sizeable body of action tasks.

In order to define all the milestones on your journey, you'll need to work with each business area separately. The first thing is to reconnect with your intentions. Across the next five pages, you'll see there are 10 columns. There is one for each area of your business. Copy your intentions into the bottom row of the table.

You'll also see that there are six rows each representing a milestone to complete. In some business areas you may only define 2 or 3 milestones, and others you may need 5 or 6. If you're defining more than 6 milestones for one business area, you're being too specific, so think on a larger scale.

The way to complete the exercise is to begin at the end and work backwards in time. So ask, *what's the final milestone I'll need to complete in order to realise my intended future?* Then ask *what comes before that?* And so on, until you get back to the current reality. An example is shown below for marketing.

	Marketing
Milestone 1	Review our existing database to establish who purchased our xyz product in the last 5 years
Milestone 2	Establish patterns to build a clear demographic and persona of who our target market is
Milestone 3	Review existing marketing activities and assess which channels have been successes / failures
Milestone 4	Engage the services of social media agency to help us plan this campaign - review the creative too
Milestone 5	Start new marketing campaign and connect this to website newsletter sign up strategy to get followers
Milestone 6	Grow the mailchimp database of followers over 6 month period
Intention	We have 50,000 customers reading our monthly newsletter for our xyz product range.

Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.

Vincent Van Gogh





# The milestones connect current reality to your intended future to create a roadmap.

	Future Vision	New Business
Milestone <b>1</b>		
Milestone <b>2</b>		
Milestone <b>3</b>		
Milestone <b>4</b>		
Milestone <b>5</b>		
Milestone <b>6</b>		
My intention in this area is to...		

# The milestones connect current reality to your intended future to create a roadmap.

	Customer Service	Operations
Milestone <b>1</b>		
Milestone <b>2</b>		
Milestone <b>3</b>		
Milestone <b>4</b>		
Milestone <b>5</b>		
Milestone <b>6</b>		
My intention in this area is to...		

# The milestones connect current reality to your intended future to create a roadmap.

	Marketing	Internal Communication
Milestone <b>1</b>		
Milestone <b>2</b>		
Milestone <b>3</b>		
Milestone <b>4</b>		
Milestone <b>5</b>		
Milestone <b>6</b>		
My intention in this area is to...		

# The milestones connect current reality to your intended future to create a roadmap.

	Self Management	Business Culture
Milestone <b>1</b>		
Milestone <b>2</b>		
Milestone <b>3</b>		
Milestone <b>4</b>		
Milestone <b>5</b>		
Milestone <b>6</b>		
My intention in this area is to...		



# The milestones connect current reality to your intended future to create a roadmap.

	HR / Staff Development	Other
Milestone <b>1</b>		
Milestone <b>2</b>		
Milestone <b>3</b>		
Milestone <b>4</b>		
Milestone <b>5</b>		
Milestone <b>6</b>		
My intention in this area is to...		



## What are your first action points?

Well done to have reached this point. Mapping out a business growth strategy takes a fair amount of time and effort. I'm sure you'll have increased awareness about your business through this process, or perhaps you clarified and confirmed

what you've known for sometime. Now it's time for action. Nothing changes without it. We can start to get more granular and specific here. Think about the most pressing priorities this week and detail out your first steps. Enjoy!

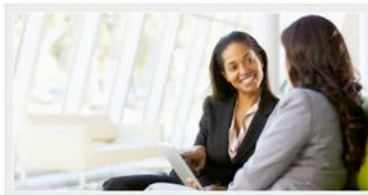
	What will you be doing?	By when?
Action <b>1</b>		
Action <b>2</b>		
Action <b>3</b>		
Action <b>4</b>		
Action <b>5</b>		
Action <b>6</b>		

## What capabilities does your business need to develop in order for these intentions to become a reality?



### 1. Be Conscious

- Know your values
- Use time wisely
- Develop mindfulness
- Lead with purpose
- Work with polarities



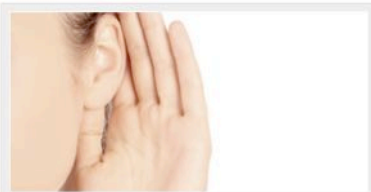
### 2. Collaborate Mindfully

- Understand your behaviour
- Build rapport with all types
- Develop your listening style
- Acquire information and clarity
- Seek out common ground



### 3. Build Cultural Alignment

- Understand the whole system
- Build awareness of culture
- Agree on values and behaviours
- Apply values through projects
- Keep aligning people to values



### 4. Empower Your Team

- Understand your diversity
- Create means to upskill
- Coach your team to step up
- Delegate with autonomy
- Give meaningful feedback



### 5. Implement the strategy

- Observe current reality
- Build your business vision
- Define KPIs and milestones
- Manage organisational change
- Monitor ongoing performance

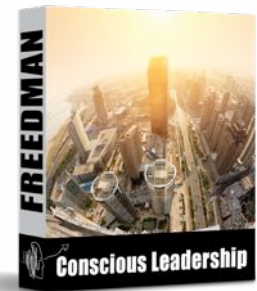


### 6. Adapt and Evolve

- Obtain stakeholder feedback
- Challenge reality every month
- Streamline innovation process
- Adapt strategic direction
- Realign team and stakeholders

The intent of this ebook has been to help you build a strategic plan to grow your business. This ebook is not a full and complete tool. It's designed more to generate clarity about what you intend to create and act as a launchpad for the future. Often at the end of this type of exercise, people

find themselves seeking additional programs to help them bring the intentions to life. If you're interested in exploring how I may be able to help your business, visit my website [www.nickfreedman.com.au](http://www.nickfreedman.com.au) or send me an email to connect directly - [clarity@nickfreedman.com.au](mailto:clarity@nickfreedman.com.au)



## About Nick Freedman

Since 2002, I have been designing and facilitating development programs which have helped 1000s to transform their lives and businesses from the inside out. My clients include organisations like Salesforce, Yahoo, Westpac, AoL, Ronald McDonald House & Coca-Cola, as well as 100s of SMEs & not for-profits.

To gain more insight into me and my approach to personal and business development, watch my TEDx on the homepage.

