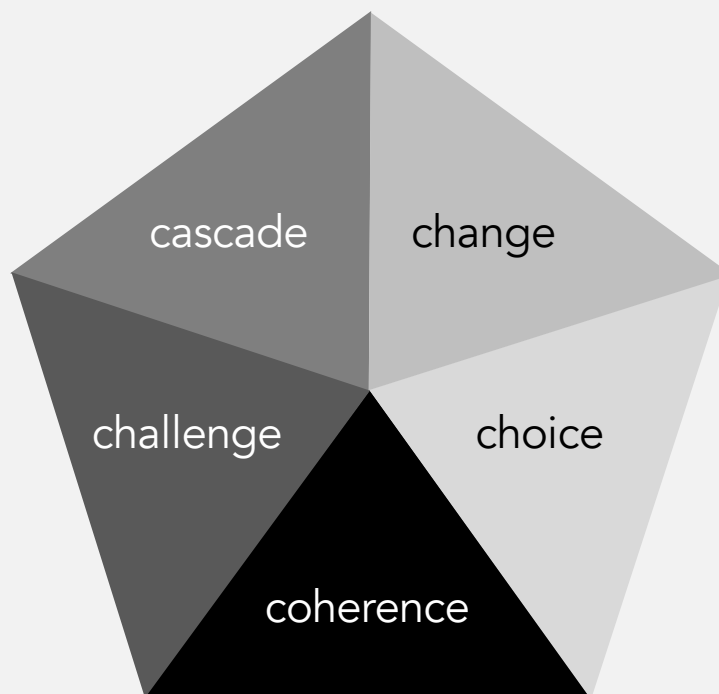


Strategy models and frameworks

The Hallmarks of Good Strategy



The **Hallmarks of Good Strategy** model is a set of criteria you can use to validate your strategy to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose.

The Hallmarks of Good Strategy model features in Goal Atlas Director, Mike Baxter's book '[The Strategy Manual: A step-by-step guide to the transformational change of anything](#)' and is also covered in our [Strategy Workshops](#).

The Hallmarks of Good Strategy

How to use it:

The Hallmarks of Good Strategy model helps you explore whether the strategy you have developed has all the elements required for it to be fit for purpose. The model provides a framework for validating your strategy ideas against each 'hallmark' and can be used to judge whether one strategy idea is better or worse than another in a structured, systematic way.

Explanation:

There are five hallmarks of a good strategy:

1. **Strategy is about change.** The whole purpose of strategy is to seek commitment across the organisation to a future that is different from the one you would arrive at by continuing on your current course. This change of direction is a defining feature of strategy. If you don't seek change, you don't need a strategy. Being clear about the change you seek to bring about is the first hallmark of a good strategy.
2. **Strategy is about choice.** Strategy is fundamentally about choice – what you are choosing to do, and what you are choosing *not* to do. These choices aim to differentiate your organisation from your competitors and leverage competitive advantage. Clearly, the closer you get to considering all plausible options, the more likely you are to choose the best. This requires insightful diagnosis. A good strategy will define the key choices that have been made, backed up by clear and accountable decision-making.
3. **Strategy is about coherence.** Coherence ensures everyone is pulling in the same strategic direction. Achieving coherence is difficult, especially across different parts of your organisation. The solution to this coherence challenge is to link the aims and actions of different parts of an organisation to a common strategic purpose. Achieving this hallmark requires demonstrating that the strategic aspirations of senior leadership are directly linked to, and evident in, the tactical actions of front-line teams, and vice versa.
4. **Strategy is about challenge.** "A good strategy honestly acknowledges the challenges being faced and provides an approach to overcoming them." (Rumelt, 2011). The main strategic challenges to consider are often external to your organisation. What changes are happening in the marketplace, to customers, competitors and suppliers? What political, economic, social and technological changes are foreseeable? A good strategy will identify these underlying challenges and propose ways to address them.
5. **Strategy is about cascade.** Strategy seeks to bring about a commitment to change across the entire organisation. It is, therefore, essential that the strategy 'reaches' all the change-makers across the entire organisation. 'Cascading' the strategic choices made on behalf of the entire organisation down through every business unit and department will shape the strategic choices they, in turn, make. Similarly, strategic choices made at an individual or team level need to aggregate back up through the cascade to serve the overall strategic aims of the entire organisation. A good strategy will provide mechanisms for reaching everyone across the organisation.

Strategy:

Prepared by:

Date:



Hallmarks of good strategy

Strategy Summary:



change

*What changes will
your strategy bring?*



choice

*What key choices
have defined your strategy?*



coherence

*How is your strategy coherent
across your organisation?*



challenge

*What are the underlying challenges
your strategy aims to address?*



cascade

*How will your strategy reach
across your organisation?*



Strategy:

Prepared by:

Date:



Hallmarks of good strategy

Strategy Summary:



change



choice



coherence

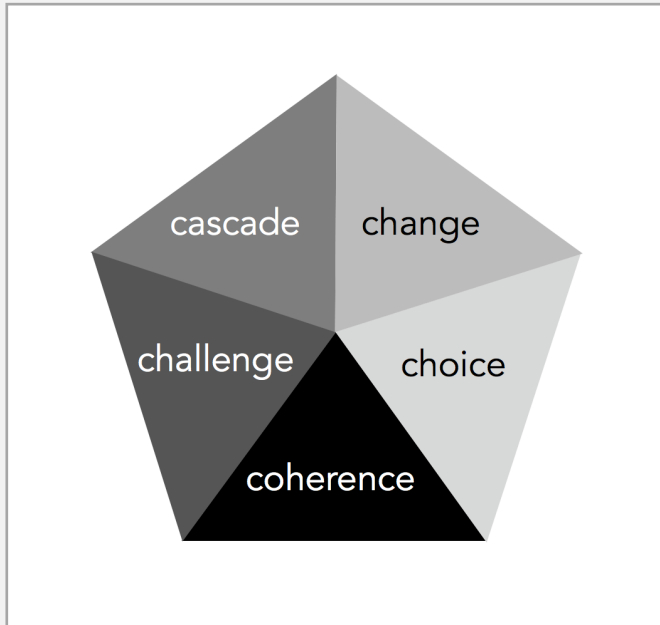


challenge

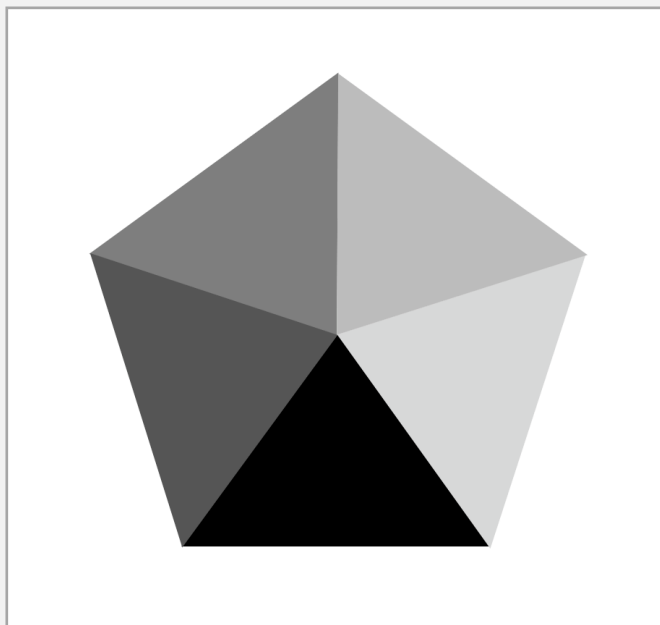


cascade

The Hallmarks of Good Strategy: Downloadable Image Assets



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