

# How Strategy Helps You Outperform

When you have the skills and tools to think, plan and act strategically, you have advantage



Reaching the top isn't just hard work and long hours. It's being smarter and gutsier than others. Thinking and acting faster. Avoiding mistakes. Looking at things in fresh ways. It means being *very strategic*.

**By Carl Francis**  
CEO, EnvisianStrategic



## **THE CEO WAS TAPPING HIS PENCIL.**

### **A BAD SIGN. He didn't know what to do.**

His people had just been beaten by competitors. They hadn't been paying attention. They weren't prepared. They didn't have a plan.

**And now... it was too late.** If they jumped in now, they would have to settle for scraps.

**It was his fault, and worse, it had happened before.** He told them to go slow. To wait and see what happens. To not spend money yet. There would be time.

**But the truth was** — he hadn't known where to start. Now it's over.

**They lost. Again.** If only they could learn how to be more strategic....

## How Strategy Helps You Outperform

### WHAT IF YOU AND YOUR TEAM BECAME VERY STRATEGIC?

What could that mean for your organization... and your future?

If you became far better at planning, decision-making, setting goals or watching the world outside — would your organization be stronger? Would you make more money? Would you have an advantage?

The obvious answer is — *of course*.

**When you lead strategically, you know how to move faster, smarter and more efficiently.** You save time and money, and make fewer mistakes. The payoffs can become a catalyst.

**But the advantage you create is not all you get.** Your teams become engaged and energized. They want to contribute and win. That is where your advantage multiplies.

**Each strategic skill you master helps move key indicators upward,** create employees who are proud to do what you ask of them and customers that love you.

**Together strategic skills help you make progress — and progress can be energizing and rewarding for everybody in the company. *Everybody*.**

### EACH OF THESE 14 STRATEGIC SKILLS IS LEARNABLE.

With some training and practice in using our exclusive *One Hour Leadership Tools™*, you and your team can become skilled in the tools you need. What's more, every tool can be customized for your organization and your world.

**Carl Francis has trained hundreds** of executives, owners and Board Members to think, plan and act more strategically.

**Imagine what becoming more strategic could mean for you.**

#### Decision Making

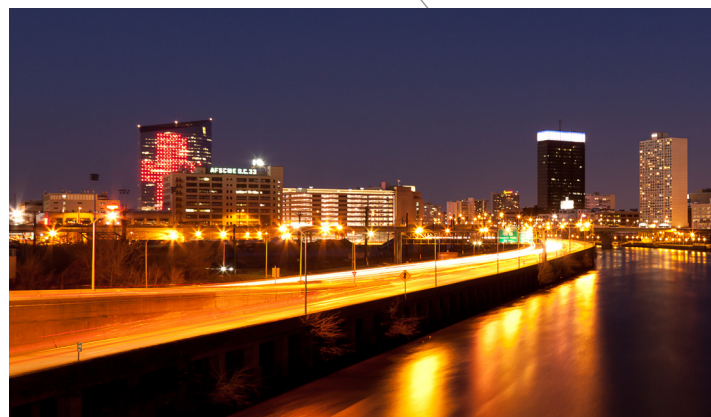
Imagine having a simple system for evaluating and making decisions. Strategic leaders can quickly create their own systems, enabling them to move faster with greater certainty.

#### Planning and Strategy

The ability to quickly assemble and produce a workable plan is a proven multiplier. Good plans focus attention, resources and effort — as well as unify people — around a common cause. Everyone benefits. Without a plan, uncertainty reigns.

#### Taking Action Quickly

Action is far easier to initiate when you know what you want to do and why, and what is likely to result. Recognizing danger or opportunity comes from being alert and then swift analysis, decisions and planning — to get out front of developing situations and your competition.



#### Diagnosing Issues

What's working and what's not? What are we missing? How do our clients really see us? What can we do better? What do we need to do more of — or less of? These kinds of questions and their answers can bring clarity and free you to focus on making progress.

#### Adapting to Change

Change is no longer an option. Leaders who are slow or resistant to change eventually run irrelevant operations. It's important to always know what is changing and what it means, the best ways to adapt, and how to build a culture open to consistent improvement.

### Setting goals and targets

If every goal you set has a dollar sign in front of it, you are not leading strategically. Instead create a mix of goals including customer satisfaction, innovation, productivity, skill-building and other activities to build a culture of achievement and improvement. That mix will drive revenue and profits faster and longer.

### Clarity, Confidence and Control

When you examine and think through an issue thoroughly, first you get clarity. That clarity builds confidence, and confidence is contagious. Together clarity and confidence enable you to pull together what's needed to make the right things happen. That's control.

### Achieving Goals

Strategic leaders set collaborative goals that can be achieved... and are. They know how to lead and motivate people to be successful. And they know how to **deliver**.

### Getting Buy-in

Buy-in is all about getting others to believe in what you believe in. Strategic leaders know that buy-in comes from a combination of credibility, logic and shared beliefs.

### Recognizing + Resolving Problems

Our research shows that leaders typically spend 75% of their time dealing with problems – a reality that often keeps leaders from having time, energy or resources to work on making real progress. Strategic leaders know how to identify problems, assemble solutions and act quickly – freeing time and talent to get to the work that moves the organization forward.

### Leveraging Knowledge and Assets

In an age when knowledge, skills and intellectual property are the primary assets of most organizations, knowing how to maximize their use and increase their value is a priority for strategic leaders.

### Forecasting and Tracking

When you learn how to quickly plot where you are now and where you can be in 1, 2, 3 or more years, it empowers you to look farther ahead. Having simple tools enables you to develop clear targets, track progress, and create accountability.

### Watching the World Outside

The old luxury of ignoring competitors and trends is long past. Today you have to be watchful and learn from everyone around you. Once you fall behind, it's very difficult to catch up.

### Long-term Thinking

Thinking only about today is not enough to build a sustainable organization. You have to be able to merge what you are doing now with what will move you forward for a long time.



## Q+A Carl Francis on Becoming Strategic

**How do we know whether we are strategic or not?** There are always signs: missed opportunities; slow or late decision-making; uncertainty about what direction to go; no clear plans or priorities; always reacting; making the wrong choices



on long-term-issues.

These are a few of the symptoms.

**Give us an example of what a strategic leader can do.** Imagine that you

have one hour to accomplish something important with your team. A strategic leader, equipped with one of our One Hour Tools, could gather her team and be at work within minutes. A quick two-minute briefing, a question or two and then to work. The tools are simple enough that once learned they can be completed quickly and confidently, with details and supporting data or notes added later. Most tools produce a graphic map that can be shared with others who will understand quickly what they mean.

Conversely, a non-strategic leader will call the meeting, discuss the issue at length, ask for suggestions, the discussion will go around and around and the meeting will end with little agreement and low energy. Ordinary and unproductive.

**What is not being strategic costing us?**

Probably *at least* 20% of your gross revenues. Perhaps much more. You are likely missing out on innovations and updates that would be good for customers. You are probably losing good employees who are departing for greener (and more strategic)

pastures. Your retention rate is likely lower than it should be and means you have to add more customers to grow at all. And being strategic is a lot more fun because you win more.

**How will we know if it's effective?**

Imagine using one of my One Hour Tools to start: *Outcomes Mapping*. Not only does this simple tool help pull together and organize what you *want* to happen, but also what you *don't want* to happen. Knowing both sides gives you far greater control because you've thought through what you want and what you don't. That matters a great deal because often you have to work hard to avoid negative outcomes like safety issues, leaks, mistakes, and unintended consequences.

By establishing outcomes you want, it's much easier to know when things are going well and if your work was effective.

**What are these One Hour Tools?** I've built over 60 so far, including: Reality Mapping; Time Zones; Priority Planning; Outcomes Mapping; Progress Lines; Outcome Predictors; Strategic Frameworks; Strategic Options Mapping; and many more.

**Where do we begin?** Let's have a talk about where you are and the challenges you face. I'll show you how I can build strategic skills, help you make faster progress and get better results.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carl".

EnvisianStrategic works closely with CEOs, Owners, and Boards to help them address challenges like growth, competitiveness, planning and innovation. Our services include diagnostics and assessments, planning and strategy, and problem solving and resolution. We also collaborate with Advisers to resolve difficult situations, facilitate transitions, get deals finished and achieve important outcomes.

**CARL FRANCIS** is an award-winning adviser, instructor, inventor and author. His expertise spans strategy, planning, leadership, resolving critical challenges and corporate makeovers. He is an Adjunct Professor and Guest Lecturer in Drexel University's LeBow College of Business' internationally-ranked MBA, Executive/Corporate Education programs and the Strategic Leadership institute. Carl is also the inventor of the Enactix™, platform of One-Hour™ diagnostic and strategic tools.

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