



Create your Critical Success Factors (CSF's)

You may have a strategic plan or a business plan in place. You may also have a great company vision or mission statement. But do you know what your Critical Success Factors (CSF's) are? An integral part of creating an actionable plan for your organization is the development of a clear, concise list of CSF's. Many organizations jump into tactical planning and examine their internal processes before they determine what must go right for their goals to be attained.

WONDERMENT® Project Steps:

1. Review your high-level company plans (Vision, Mission, Strategic Documentation, etc.)
2. Discuss your ultimate goals with key management staff and create a summary list of the top three to four key strategic goals.
3. Brainstorm a CSF list of the 10-20 key things that must go right for you to achieve your company goals. Some may be:
 - Industry-specific
 - Time-based
 - Environmental in nature
 - Strategy and/or market position related
4. Review and rank the CSF's by importance, relative to company success. Wordsmith the points and share the list with your staff!

Critical Success Factor(s) Definition

CSF's outline a basic fundamental state or event necessary to achieve a specific goal or objective. Together they define few key areas where things must go well for the business to flourish and for the goals to be attained.

Example: Custom Baker

Elizabeth R. was thrilled with Lizzie's Delights' vision and mission statements. The company aimed to be the #1 producer of baked scones for the Chicago market.

She and her management team understood the goals of the company and each department was clear on their strategic direction and action plans. However, Elizabeth had difficulty making a strong connection between the company vision/mission and the strategies in place.

Elizabeth and the "Super-Scone" team decided to brainstorm their CSF's. They decided to focus on:

- Customer delight (internal & external)
- Completely integrated information systems
- Flexibility on product delivery lead times
- Technology edge in the plant (bakery)
- Ability to maintain proper staffing levels
- Quick reaction to changes in the marketplace
- Focus on emerging industries

What questions does this raise?

- Are company strategies and plans consistent?
- How many CSF's are sufficient?
- Where should you be focusing your resources?
- Who owns the CSF's?
- How dynamic should CSF's be? When are they re-addressed?
- What are most CRITICAL? Today? In the near future?

In Your Company ...

Follow the steps above to create or fine-tune your CSF's. Make sure that the CSF's are absolutely critical to achieving your mission. Remember, we're talking about a limited number of areas to achieve results in. Focus on only the *Critical* Success Factors.

Have fun discussing, grouping and ranking the CSF's. Edit the statements to make them readable and believable. Ensure your CSF's will create buy-in across your company, and find a creative way to share them with your staff.

If you have questions or comments please contact us. Log on to www.jacquard.com or call us at 847.945.8700.