



**Agile Strategy Execution** breaks new ground with expert guidance for leaders and strategy execution practitioners on how to revolutionize the way they execute strategy.

## Book Summary

Leaders of most firms today are painfully aware of how difficult it is to execute strategies effectively in their organizations. Industry research has well documented this reality, with the needle barely moving over the past 20 years. Adding to these woes are continued drop-off in employee engagement scores, a unique set of work life expectations from millennials or those early in career and even more challenges in executing needed business, operating model and culture changes. No matter what lens is used, current governance and decision making processes must become more *agile*, which from my perspective means achieving better organizational alignment, accountability and responsiveness.

Based on customer experiences both large and small, we've built a revolutionary approach that we are calling the Agile Strategy Execution Framework. It integrates the strengths of agile concepts with strategy execution Best Practices, resulting in an easy to use set of principles and techniques that are organized in a meaningful, practical and quickly deployable way. This ASE Framework™ is composed of six **Dimensions** and two enabling or disabling **Influencing Factors**, which are summarized as follows:

**Dimension #1: Detailed Plans and Metrics** involves incorporating a systematic and disciplined approach that focuses on translating breakthrough organizational goals, objectives and strategies into specific functional area, team and individual plans and their associated metrics.

**Dimension #2: Align and Link** means ensuring that strategic goals are aligned and linked to projects, programs, run-the-business activities and process improvement efforts both vertically and cross-functionally driving progress/actions at all organization levels.

**Dimension #3: Real-Time Updates** involves institutionalizing a transparent Single Source of Truth online for all plan collaboration, engagement and reporting and then driving real-time plan updates based on day to day *triggers*, ensuring properly prioritized & scheduled work.

**Dimension #4: Cadence Decisions** means ensuring proactive real-time resourcing, course correcting solution and backlog management decision-making processes.

**Dimension #5: Innovation Bets** involves identifying and executing small opportunities to study, pilot or test new innovations that reflect current market conditions, new

technology or other advances.

Dimension #6: Refresh or Transform means formally reassessing core business assumptions, updating strategic plans and tactics, reviewing priorities, linkages and alignment and then *pivoting* as needed.

There are also two key enabling or disabling Influencing Factors that must be considered:

Influencing Factor #1 The Culture Impacts involves assessing *formal vs. informal*, and *preached vs. practiced* corporate culture. Leaders can then either use their culture as an enabling driver for managing change or if needed initiate processes to drive needed culture change.

Influencing Factor #2 The Connected Governance™ influencing factor involves connecting leadership practices, employee engagement mechanisms and collaboration processes using leading edge digitization experiences to provide actionable intelligence.

In addition, the authors share the details of an Agile Strategy Execution Maturity Model that can be used to help organizations assess their own progress in executing strategy with more agility on an evolving scale and ascertain where they would like to be in the future. The Agile Strategy Execution Framework™ can then be used to target improvement areas and provide guideposts and methods as to how to move up the agile strategy execution maturity curve.

In the Appendix are a select number of techniques and templates that the authors have found useful to help jumpstart improvement efforts. The ASE Framework™ has been presented through the eyes of organizations where it has been successfully used. The authors' expect this book will help leaders and strategy practitioners revolutionize how they execute strategy by becoming more agile in an aligned, accountable and responsive way.

In conclusion, what makes strategy execution agile is an ecosystem focused on alignment (both functional and cross-functional), accountability (through data-driven with team and individual buy-in and ownership) and responsiveness (to changing internal and external landscapes). In this way strategies and tactics can be continuously adapted, pivoted and realigned to meet execution performance expectations in an agile way.