

### Building a Successful Business Leadership Team

*“Anyone can hold the helm when the sea is calm”*

Publilius Syrus

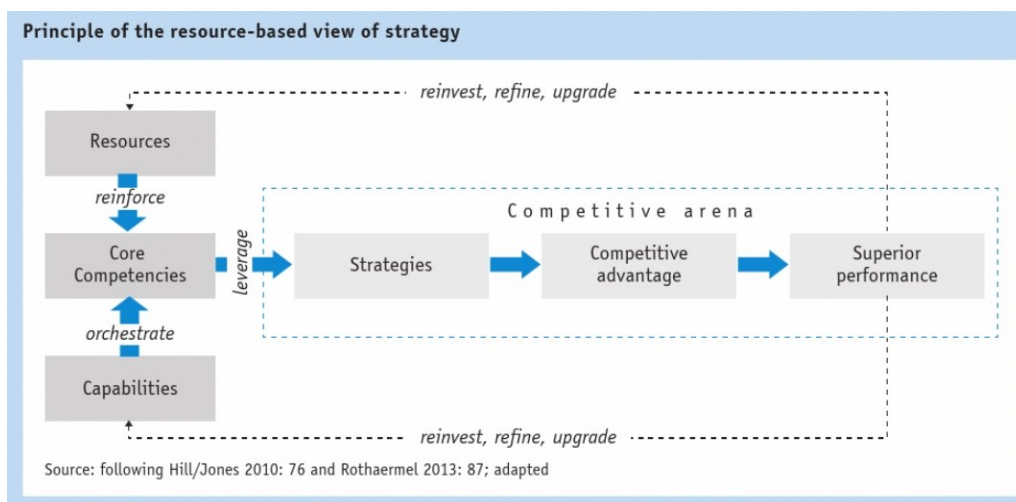


One of the biggest challenges for owner managers is building a leadership team. Many business owners find it difficult to hand over the reins or struggle to find the right people for the job. Generally, the team cannot be built all at once but needs an approach that develops leaders and a team over time.

Without a strong leadership team, a business owner and the business will suffer – always reliant on the owner and the inability of the business to scale beyond a certain capacity. Building a leadership team should be a core strategy that is implemented over time as the business develops.

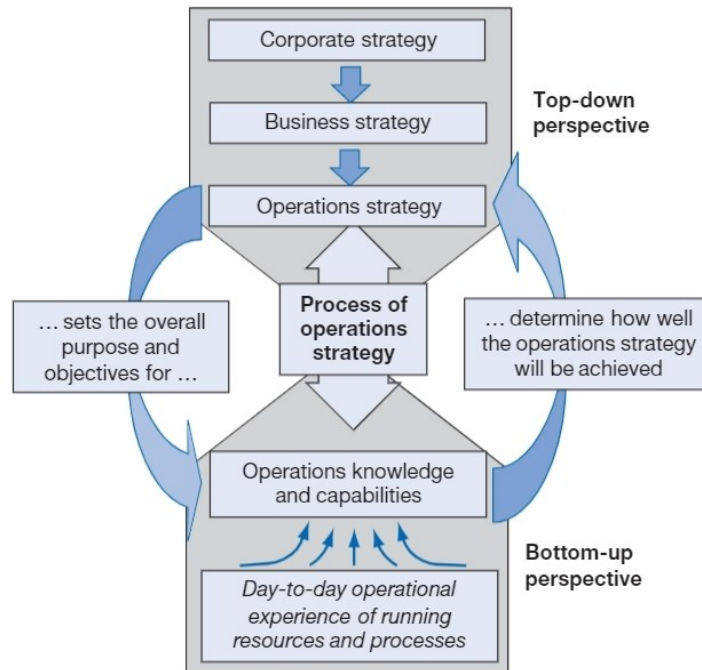
The following steps, as shown in the diagram below, are a useful guide to the approach suggested, to start the business leadership review.

### Business Strategy and Direction



The common phrase “*structure follows strategy*” is a good place to start. **If you know where you’re headed, it’s much easier to start to define the structure and roles that are needed to support the business moving forward.** Without direction, your structure will develop based on organic change or “busy-ness” – you will hire more people to help with day-to-day tasks, rather than a strategic focus or plan.

### Define Your Operating Structure



Once you’re clear on your business direction, start to define the structure that supports it. Think about areas of the business that need to grow and develop, and the types of skills and expertise that support that growth. In most cases you won’t be able to hire all your leadership team at once, it will need to develop and adapt over time. Have a plan in place for the business structure now and into the future.

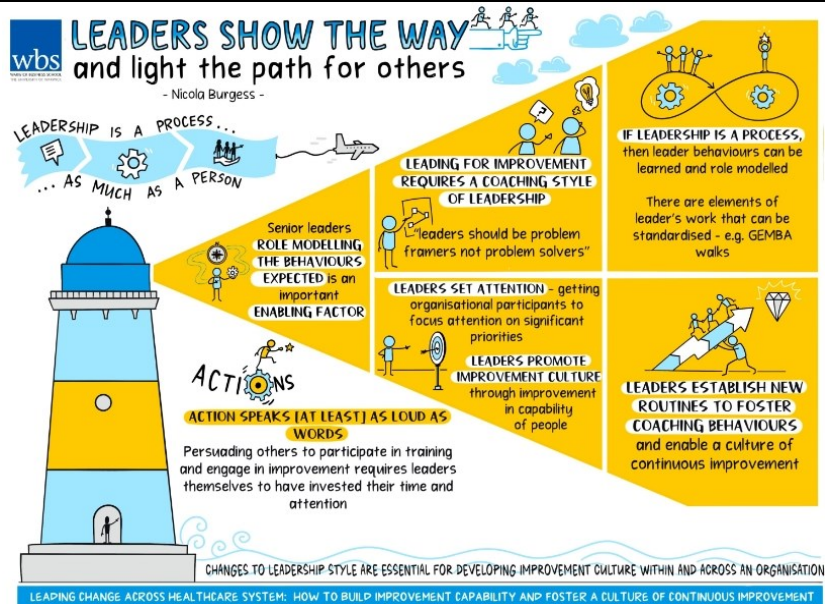
### Assess Required Skills and Expertise

Start to develop a skills and expertise matrix associated with the various roles and responsibilities within your defined structure. This capability matrix should assess the skills that are required now and those that will be required in the future.

### Identify Current Leaders



**Look for potential leaders within your business who possess the skills and qualities you need, in line with your strategic direction and the skills matrix that you have developed.** Consider their experience, skills, and track record of success in the organisation and alignment with the business needs moving forward. In many cases it may be easier to grow and develop an existing staff member than recruit externally.



**Source:** Warwick Business School – UK – Refer to additional resources below for full article

### Communicate Your Vision & Direction

**Communicate your vision and structure moving forward** to the developing leaders. Give them a sense of their role and how it fits with the overall direction of the business. Get their buy-in for what you're trying to achieve.

### Clearly Define Focus, Responsibilities, & KPI's

Once you have selected the potential leaders, **be clear about the expectations for the roles and the impact they will have on the business** moving forward. With focused and responsible management leadership, supported with appropriate KPIs, the better the results the business will achieve.

### Provide Support and Training

**Actively work to develop your leaders over time.** On-the-job development can be the most effective method to enhance skills if it follows a planned and structured approach. Use mentors, coaching models, and work-based projects to actively support, challenge and grow leaders over time. Targeted external training and development can also help speed up the process.

### Establish Regular Leadership Team Meetings

Set up an Agenda for holding regular meetings to plan, report and evaluate the performance of your leadership team members. Patrick Lencioni's "*Five Dysfunctions of a Team*" are a useful guide: **Focus on Results, Hold Self and Others Accountable, Commit to Decisions, have Unfiltered Constructive Debate, create a Transparent & Honest Environment.**

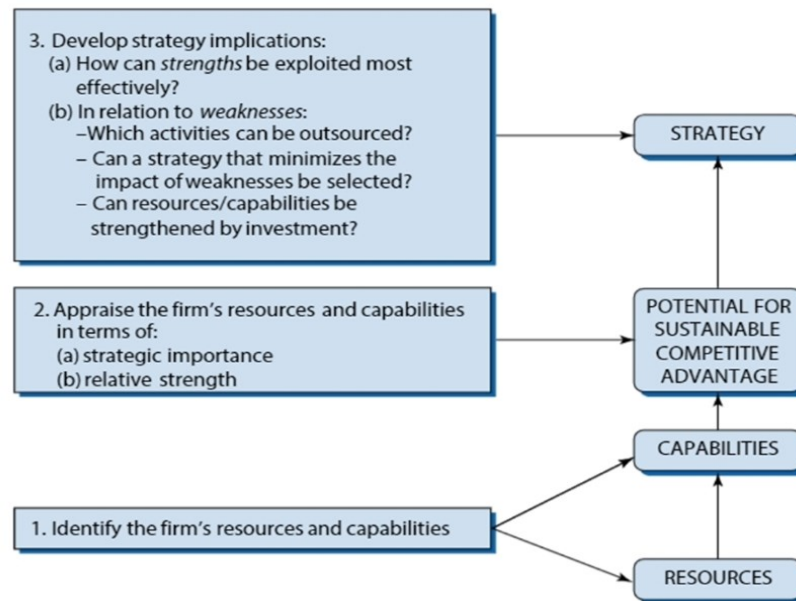


**Building a leadership team takes time and effort and is most effective when you have a planned approach.** Don't just leave it to chance. Without an empowered team you will find yourself stuck in your business and the value and scalability of your business will be limited.

## Conclusion

By getting a strong leadership team together in the business, there can be some good benefits flow to the owners/operators of the business, including:

- More time for working on making the business less reliant on them (the owners/operators) being involved in the day-to-day operational stuff and more focused on the strategic side and enhancing the value of the business;
- Assisting with management/leadership succession discussions, mentoring and planning;
- Providing more management resources, to help process and progress the steps shown in the diagram below.



## Additional Resources

For a copy of the article – “*Leaders Show the Way and Light the Path for Others*” by Nicola Burgess - click on the link [HERE](#).

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