MILESTONE

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TOOLKIT

Nasdaq Entrepreneurial Center

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Dear Risk-Takers and Dreamers:

I am privileged to work with incredibly talented entrepreneurs at the Nasdaq Entrepreneurial Center.

Since opening our doors in 2015, the Center has witnessed how challenging it is for founders to gain focus and clarity when they're consumed by day-to-day pressures that only increase in number and magnitude each day. It's critical entrepreneurs align their business goals with their personal definitions of success to unlock maximum impact and value for themselves as leaders, and for their companies. Without mission alignment as a compass, your ability to prioritize, make decisions and drive your business forward is impaired.

That's what we saw happening time and again to some of the most talented entrepreneurs we work with at the Center. We got curious. What might help ground these entrepreneurs? How can we help them gain clarity and focus to plan strategically while building endurance for the marathon they're running?

We leveraged collective intelligence from over 700+ programs, research and community leaders to create a set of interactive exercises that help you align your personal and business goals. And then you can build an action plan based on your highest vision of success.

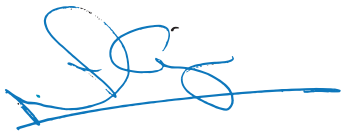
Since then, this toolkit has been developed, tested and refined along with the entrepreneurs we serve at the Center.

Here's why this toolkit matters. At the beginning, you're your company's biggest and most important asset. Who you are as a founder and what motivates you to do the impossible (despite the odds) is the only constant in a sea of complete unknowns.

At the Center, our mission is to deliver world-class resources and mentoring to enable every entrepreneur across the globe to realize their maximum potential. That includes creating toolkits, like this, that help accelerate talented founders forward in their journey of building great companies.

We invite you to share this toolkit with colleagues, friends, family and fellow risk-takers. Let us know what you think as we continue to evolve our resources. And most importantly, keep on dreaming and improving our lives, communities and world!

In admiration,



Nicola Corzine
Executive Director

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Welcome to Milestone Mapping!

What is a Milestone?

A Milestone is your next important business goal that can be achieved in 12 weeks. If this goal is met, it should have an important positive effect on your business.

Milestone /ˈmīlˈstōn/
noun

(1) An important goal you've set for your business that takes time, tenacity, and more than a little creative thinking to attain.

(2) An achievement that signals your business is on its way to the next stage of growth (and that deserves celebration).

This toolkit covers four areas that will help you set goals and map to your vision.



(1) Understand Yourself
You are your biggest asset; clarify how your personal strengths and dreams align to your business objectives.



(2) Build a Plan
Prioritize business goals, assess skills needed and develop a plan to close gaps and achieve your milestone.



(3) Stay Accountable
Define actions that grow resources, build networks and set benchmarks for success to track progress.



(4) Move to Action
Track your progress and measure action. It's time to start again! Get out there and continue your work.

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Tips to Get Started:

Congrats, we know you're being pulled in a million directions and taking time out of your busy day is hard to do. Doing this work is one of the most critical investments you can make for your business.

We recommend you dedicate 5 hours of uninterrupted time to complete the full set of exercises, and allow yourself short breaks to stretch in between. If you are short on time, this can be done in two parts. We'd allow 3 hours to do Sections 1 and 2. The next day, you can tackle Section 3 within 2 hours.

Your environment is important. Make sure you're in a quiet place with a comfortable workspace. This process is effective because it forces you to dig deep inside yourself, clarify your vision of success and then strategically align your business strategy to these goals. You're the most important part in this whole process, so make sure you feel good.

Often we're so accustomed to giving the answer we think people want to hear that we forget to listen to our inner voice. This process requires you to be vulnerable about your strengths and skill gaps. It might take a few extra questions to peel the onion so to speak, and get to your deeper layers of truth.

A few things to remember:

- **Take a few breaths before you start.** Let everything go: the emails you need to send, what you want to eat for lunch, that presentation that is past due. Put your mobile phone and computer away so you can't hear buzzing. This is your time.

- **Be patient with yourself.** It's okay if parts of this are challenging or frustrating, that's a good thing - it's forcing you to gain clarity in new ways. Try not to judge your immediate reactions, be honest and trust in the process.

- **Ask yourself "why," and ask it often.** If you get stuck, or your initial response doesn't feel fully authentic, ask yourself "why?" It's one of the best ways to unpack each thought and get clarity around the answers inside yourself.

- **Write it out or talk it through.** When the ideas are fresh in your mind, it's good to repeat them back, either on paper or out loud depending on your learning style. If you try and go back later, it's never as detailed as it is in the moment.

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Envision Your Work

Connect work with your authentic self

Ask a friend or colleague to guide you through the following visualization by having them read the following to you calmly and slowly.

It's your ideal workday.

With no constraints, let your imagination run wild. You wake up and it's morning. You feel great.

Where are you? What does the room look like? How does the bed feel? Remember, anything is possible. You go to get dressed. What are you wearing? A suit? A swimsuit? Your clothes fit perfectly. What's the weather like outside? Who are you with?

Take a moment and really soak in what's happening. Are you having breakfast? Where are you and what's happening?

Morning is turning into lunch time. Again, what's happening? Are you in an office, are you at home, are you at a beach? Lunch moves into early afternoon. You keep moving through your ideal workday. What's happening around you now?

It's now afternoon and moving into dinner time. Now the sun is starting to set. What time is it? Where are you? What's happening? Who are you with?

You're now getting ready for bed. What time is it? What is happening around you? What are you thinking about as you drift off into perfect sleep?

Open your eyes and fill this space with your vision. Sketch if you'd like.

TO GROUND YOURSELF, MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN A QUIET, COMFORTABLE SPACE. BEFORE YOU START, TAKE A FEW DEEP BREATHS TO BE IN THE MOMENT. MAKE SURE YOU CAN FEEL YOUR FEET ON THE GROUND AND RELAX.

Summarize or draw your work vision (in a few words):

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Align Your Values to Your Work Vision

Connect your values to your work

(1) Circle the three values represented in your ideal vision. If you don't see a fit in this list, create your own.

- ☐ Authenticity
- ☐ Achievement
- ☐ Adventure
- ☐ Authority
- ☐ Autonomy
- ☐ Balance
- ☐ Beauty
- ☐ Boldness
- ☐ Compassion
- ☐ Challenge
- ☐ Citizenship
- ☐ Community
- ☐ Competency
- ☐ Contribution
- ☐ Creativity
- ☐ Curiosity
- ☐ Determination
- ☐ Fairness
- ☐ Faith
- ☐ Fame
- ☐ Freedom
- ☐ Friendships
- ☐ Fun
- ☐ Growth
- ☐ Happiness
- ☐ Honesty
- ☐ Humor
- ☐ Influence
- ☐ Inner Harmony
- ☐ Justice
- ☐ Kindness
- ☐ Knowledge
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Learning
- ☐ Love
- ☐ Loyalty
- ☐ Meaningful Work
- ☐ Openness
- ☐ Optimism
- ☐ Peace
- ☐ Pleasure
- ☐ Poise
- ☐ Popularity
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Religion
- ☐ Reputation
- ☐ Respect
- ☐ Responsibility
- ☐ Security
- ☐ Self-Respect
- ☐ Service
- ☐ Spirituality
- ☐ Stability
- ☐ Success
- ☐ Status
- ☐ Trustworthiness
- ☐ Wealth
- ☐ Wisdom

(2) What are the top 3 words that represent your work vision?

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Ground in Your Current Work

Connect your current work to your vision

ASK YOURSELF "WHY?" 5 TIMES TO FIND THE INTERNAL DRIVER TO YOUR WORK.

Example

Starting with a vague Why: I help people find the right skincare because I want them to have acne free skin.

Why? I care that people have good skin.
Why? Because if they have good skin they feel good.
Why? Because their skin is clear, smooth, spot-free and they don't have to worry.
Why? Because they know their skin looks beautiful and they feel good.
Why? They feel special and confident.

This reveals a deeper Why: I empower people to feel more confident about their skin and therefore themselves.

(1) What's the goal of the work articulated in your current vision? Why are you doing this work?

Why? _____

Why? _____

Why? _____

Why? _____

Why? _____

(2) What is your deeper **Why**?

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Write Your Vision Statement

Align your work to your vision

I want to _____

(What is your work vision? Exercise 1.1)

by _____

(How will you do this work?)

because I believe _____

(Why is this work important? Your Deeper Why, Exercise 1.3)

_____.

I am uniquely positioned to do this work because I _____

_____, _____

_____ and _____.

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Bridge Your Vision to Your Goal

Identify key actions to work towards in the next 3 months

(1) Brain Dump all of the actions you need to accomplish in the next 12 weeks. Circle your top 3.

(2) Write down your most critical need from the list. Which item feels the most pressing?

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Set Your Milestone

Identify a path to get there

(1) Take your priority action from Exercise 2.1 and make this goal a milestone.

Milestone: _____

_____

Example: Build a scalable sales pipeline

Remember: a milestone should be only what is in your control. You can build a pipeline; you can't determine when a customer will buy.

(2) By accomplishing your milestone, what do you gain?
Example: I understand what makes a good customer
How it helps: Sustainability → I don't have to work on every deal, starting from market validation → customers leading growth

(3) Let's Stress Test Your Milestone

- Why this milestone? What does that do for your business?
- What is the transformative moment that happens if your milestone is achieved?
- What does this allow you to do in 12 weeks?
- How will this be achieved?
- Are you in full control of this milestone (i.e., do you rely on someone else to accomplish it?)

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Plan Your Milestone

Identify skills or resources needed

(1) What skills do I need to develop?	(2) What connections or support do I need to build?	(3) What resources do I need to find?

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Milestone Calendar, Month 1

Create an action plan at the beginning of each month

(1) Write your Milestone Statement.

In the next 3 months, I will _____
(Write your milestone from Exercise 2.2.)

by _____.
(Actions you will take to acheive your milestone. See Exercise 2.3.)

(2) Hold yourself accountable.

_____
(Date at the end of Month 1)

At the end of the month, I know I am successful when…

(3) What do you need to accomplish in order to achieve your milestone? Remember, things can take longer than expected, so plan accordingly.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

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Milestone Calendar, Month 2

Create an action plan at the beginning of each month

(1) Write your Milestone Statement.

In the next 2 months, I will _____
(Write your milestone from Exercise 2.2.)

by _____.
(Actions you will take to acheive your milestone. See Exercise 2.3.)

(2) Hold yourself accountable.

_____
(Date at the end of Month 2)

At the end of the month, I know I am successful when…

(3) What do you need to accomplish in order to achieve your milestone? Remember, things can take longer than expected, so plan accordingly.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

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Milestone Calendar, Month 3

Create an action plan at the beginning of each month

(1) Write your Milestone Statement.

In the next month, I will _____
(Write your milestone from Exercise 2.2.)

by _____.
(Actions you will take to acheive your milestone. See Exercise 2.3.)

(2) Hold yourself accountable.

_____
(Date at the end of Month 3)

At the end of the month, I know I am successful when…

(3) What do you need to accomplish in order to achieve your milestone? Remember, things can take longer than expected, so plan accordingly.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

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Reflect and Reset on _____

(Date your milestone is set to be completed.)

Honor your learning

(1) Write your Milestone Statement.

In the last 3 months, I have _____

(Write your milestone from Exercise 2.2.)

by _____.

(Actions you took to acheive your milestone. See Exercise 2.3.)

(2) What did you accomplish towards your milestone?

(3) Reflect: What resources and networks did you build that you're most proud of? What skills did you gain?

(4) What are your key learnings/takeaways from this experience?

SET A CALENDAR REMINDER TO REVISIT THIS PAGE AT THE END OF YOUR MILESTONE.

(5) What's your plan for your next milestone?

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Congratulations!

You've made it to the end of your milestone.

Time to Start Again...

An entrepreneur's journey is never linear. Repeat this Milestone Mapping process as many times as you need.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, we want to hear from you. Your feedback allows us to create greater value for future entrepreneurs. Our 5-min survey is here (http://bit.ly/2zHwYeQ) or drop us a line at circles@thecenter.nasdaq.org.



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